

News Release – For Immediate Release

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**Novel Protein Refolding Technology used at Major European Research Centre
Results in 75 Times Greater Yield of a Therapeutic Protein**

Cambridge, UK: Novexin Ltd (“Novexin”) a company specialising in protein processing technology is pleased to announce that Belgian based VIB (Flanders Institute of Biotechnology), one of Europe’s leading biotechnology institutes, is successfully using Novexin’s refolding system to generate excellent yields of a previously insoluble IL15 protein.

Researchers at VIB are cloning an IL15 gene into a range of VIB expression vectors known as *FastScreen*[®] (Biotechnol SA) and are then expressing recombinant IL-15 in *E.coli* strains including K12 and BL21. They found both their wild type and mutant IL15 clones were producing insoluble proteins and consequently very low protein yields (less than one percent). However, when they used the Novexin refolding technology in their purification process, protein yields increased by over 75 times.

Professor Nico Mertens, a Project Leader at VIB explained: “We want to develop an inexpensive cloned pro-inflammatory cytokine, IL15. This protein is expressed in several inflammatory disorders, including rheumatoid arthritis and psoriasis and may therefore serve as a useful therapeutic target.”

“We were having real problems obtaining any IL15 from our *E.coli* preparations even using harsh denaturing conditions, which would normally solubilise most proteins. But when we used Novexin’s refolding technology our yields increased dramatically, and because the reagents are non-detergent based the protein is active too. This means we can confidently use the Novexin refolding system in scale up, to develop a cost-effective manufacturing process for our IL15 protein,” Professor Mertens added.

Dr Daniel Jones, CSO of Novexin stated: “We are delighted to see a major biotechnology institute such as VIB, obtaining such astonishing levels of yield increase. The VIB study is a good example of the results you can obtain with our system, which is now available as a simple to use kit and shows researchers working with seemingly insoluble therapeutic proteins how Novexin’s refolding technology could significantly improve their protein-based research and manufacturing.”

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Note to Editors

About Novexin

Novexin, based in Cambridge, UK, is a biotechnology company that is developing and commercialising proprietary protein processing technology originating from the University of Cambridge. This technology, which is commercially available in either kit format or under licence, addresses the large untapped global need for robust, high-yielding and scalable protein refolding and purification techniques.

Novexin, a runner-up in the 2003 Cambridge University Entrepreneurs' Business Plan Competition has grown successfully since 2003, using an investment of less than £0.5 million. The company, which was initially funded by DTI Research and Development Awards (£35,000 and £200,000) and £400,000 from private investors in 2004 has filed a total of five patent applications. The Company has secured an additional £1 million in 2005 to commercialise its protein refolding technology and has to date sold over 100 kits to major companies and research institutes world-wide.

About VIB

VIB, the Flanders Interuniversity Institute for Biotechnology in Belgium, is a research institute where 850 scientists conduct life science research. Through a joint venture with four Flemish universities (Ghent University, the Catholic University of Leuven, the University of Antwerp, and the Free University of Brussels) and funding programme for basic research, VIB unites the strengths of nine university science departments into a single institute. Through its technology transfer activities, VIB strives to convert research results into products and the institute also works to inform the general public about all aspects of biotechnology.

FastScreen[®] is a registered brand of Biotechnol SA, a process development company based in Portugal.