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Fluidigm Announces Participation in Life Science/Pharma and Academic Consortium to Study T Cell-Driven Immune-Mediated Inflammatory Diseases

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Gaining insights into inflammatory bowel disease through mass cytometry and Imaging Mass Cytometry analysis of the human mucosal immune system

Research aimed at more precise treatments for IMIDs using existing therapies and identification of new targets for drug development

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., Feb. 07, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Fluidigm Corporation (NASDAQ: FLDM) today announced it is one of 11 partners in the TIMID Consortium, a unique effort of six academic institutions and five life science and pharma companies that utilizes both mass cytometry and Imaging Mass Cytometry™ along with other technologies to explore the common cellular basis of T cell-driven immune-mediated inflammatory diseases (IMIDs). The research will potentially empower more precise treatments using existing drugs and identify new targets for future drug development.

IMIDs affect tens of millions of people worldwide, including 5–8 percent of the populations of North America and Europe. Current first-line treatments for IMIDs are typically medications to suppress inflammatory immune responses. These therapies often have side effects and may not effectively suppress inflammation. Consortium partners will characterize the common cellular basis for seven IMIDs: type 1 diabetes, spondylosing arthritis, juvenile idiopathic arthritis, celiac disease, inflammatory bowel disease, graft versus host disease and colon cancer.

The consortium's hypothesis is that an immune response to intestinal bacteria is an important driver of these diseases. A central focus of the research is an analysis of the deregulated antimicrobial immune response and classification of these seven IMIDs based on this response. As part of the consortium's work, Professor of Immunology Frits Koning, Ph.D., of Leiden University Medical Center in the Netherlands, is leading mass cytometry and Imaging Mass Cytometry analysis of the human mucosal immune system in patients with inflammatory bowel disease.

"We think that in this very serious disease the response of the immune system turns against the bacteria in the intestine, which can lead to continuous inflammation," said Koning. "Gaining a clearer understanding through mass cytometry and Imaging Mass Cytometry analysis of how this comes about could provide a major advantage in treatment."

Mass cytometry deeply profiles immune cell phenotypes and functions and is the basis of hundreds of peer-reviewed publications documenting research on the frontiers of immunology, immuno-oncology and other realms of health and disease. The Hyperion™ Imaging System extends the use of mass cytometry technology to imaging applications, revolutionizing high-plex tissue analysis by surpassing the inherent limitations of fluorescence detection. There are approximately 250 commercially enabled mass cytometry systems worldwide.

"Our mass cytometry and Imaging Mass Cytometry technology is playing a crucial role in this important research," said Chris Linthwaite, President and CEO of Fluidigm. "The power of these technologies to deeply interrogate tissue samples enables researchers to answer difficult questions about the nature of the human immune system, potentially informing development of precision medicine approaches to therapies."

"Inflammatory bowel disease, the focus of Dr. Koning's research, includes Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis, and affects millions. Our employees are proud to be associated with research that may lead to new therapies."

The work of the consortium is expected to extend through 2022.

About Fluidigm

Fluidigm (NASDAQ:FLDM) is an industry-leading biotechnology tools provider with a vision to improve life through comprehensive health insight. We focus on the most pressing needs in translational and clinical research, including cancer, immunology, and immunotherapy. Using proprietary CyTOF® and microfluidics technologies, we develop, manufacture, and market multi-omic solutions to drive meaningful insights in health and disease, identify biomarkers to inform decisions, and accelerate the development of more effective therapies. Our customers are leading academic, government, pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and plant and animal research laboratories worldwide. Together with them, we strive to increase the quality of life for all. For more information, visit fluidigm.com.

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Forward-Looking Statement for Fluidigm

This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, including, among others, statements regarding potential advancements in research through Fluidigm mass cytometry products and expectations for participation in a research consortium. Forward-looking statements are subject to numerous risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from currently anticipated results, including but not limited to risks relating to product performance and quality issues; intellectual property risks; and competition. Information on these and additional risks and uncertainties and other information affecting Fluidigm business and operating results is contained in Fluidigm's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2017, and in its other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, including the Fluidigm Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2018. These forward-looking statements speak only as of the date hereof. Fluidigm disclaims any obligation to update these forward-looking statements except as may be required by law.

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