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New unique ownership concept to distribute future profits to Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) and Uppsala University from newly started biotech company Atlas Antibodies AB

The ownership concept is the first of its kind and will enable universities to become stakeholders, together with private companies and scientists, in companies founded on the basis of academic research conducted at different seats of learning.

In connection with the establishment of a new Swedish biotechnology company, Atlas Antibodies, KTH and Uppsala University will receive part of future profits generated by biotechnology research in Sweden. Atlas Antibodies will further process and commercialize research results from the exploration and mapping of the Human Protein Atlas (HPA). KTH in Stockholm and Uppsala University will receive part of any future profits through a research foundation that is part-owner of Atlas Antibodies, whose surplus profit will be allocated for research projects in Sweden.

The research foundation has a 32-percent ownership stake in Atlas Antibodies. Scientists involved in the HPA project (a total of 54 people) own another 32 percent. Investor Growth Capital (IGC) and Scandinavian Life Science (SLS) Venture together own 30 percent. The remaining 6 percent is owned directly by the holding company for the universities.

Atlas Antibodies is currently in the start-up phase and will produce and sell antibodies that are used in research applications within academia and the industry. The company will also identify and validate new biomarkers used in medical diagnostics and therapy. The market for therapeutic and diagnostic antibodies is growing rapidly and is currently valued at approximately SEK 100 billion.

"The new ownership structure will pave the way for increased funding for research in Sweden and will also make it easier to capitalize on the commercial potential of various research projects, which should lead to the establishment of new companies and the creation of several more employment opportunities in Sweden," commented Anders Flodström, President of KTH, and Anders Hallberg, President of Uppsala University, in a joint statement.

"This model for joint ownership of a company by universities, scientists and the business community has gradually emerged out of my earlier experiences from converting research projects into companies. In my opinion, this unique ownership concept is exciting and I hope the universities will be able to benefit from any commercial successes of projects originating within their institutions," says Mathias Uhlén, professor at KTH who has the prime responsibility for the academic research project.

“With the new ownership concept, Atlas Antibodies will have a stable and secure foundation to stand on and we will be able to commercialize our results without jeopardizing ongoing research efforts,” commented Marianne Hansson, CEO. “With my background as a researcher, I am naturally very pleased that part of our potential profits will be returned for new research.”

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More information is available at www.atlasantibodies.com.

Atlas Antibodies was spun out of the Human Proteome Resource (HPR) research project at KTH and Uppsala University. The purpose of the HPR project is to systematically explore the human proteome. Generated data are made available to the scientific community through a public database. The first version of the Human Protein Atlas (HPA), released in August 2005, has generated a positive response among scientists. The research community in Sweden and internationally has expressed great interest in the novel antibodies developed through the HPR project. Atlas Antibodies was formed in Sweden to make the novel HPA antibodies available to researchers and scientists outside the HPR project and to protect clinically interested candidates.