



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Saniona awarded three grants for research programs totaling SEK 5.3 million**

**Saniona, a leading biotech company in the field of ion channels, today announces that it has received grants for three of its basic drug discovery programs. The Australian Research Council's Linkage Projects and two of the programs under the Danish Innovation Fund have granted a total of up to SEK 5.3 million in research grants for three research programs relating to neuropathic pain, cancer, and urinary incontinence.**

"Earlier this year we announced that the Michael J Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research has awarded Saniona a research grant of up to USD 590,700 (approximately SEK 5.1 million) in support of Saniona's program for Parkinson's disease. With the three new grants we have received about SEK 10.4 million in research grants this year. It is of utmost importance for Saniona's long-term business strategy that early drug discovery projects can be funded by grants and public money, and I am very pleased that the efforts of our world class ion channel drug discovery team is recognized in this way," says Jørgen Drejer, CEO of Saniona.

#### **Cancer research grant of DKK 712,000 (approximately SEK 890,000) from the Danish Innovation Fund's PhD program (<http://innovationsfonden.dk/en/application/erhvervsphd>)**

The Cancer research grant co-finances a PhD student for three years in collaboration with cancer scientists from University of Copenhagen. The aim of the research is to follow up on preliminary data showing that ion channel modulators from Saniona's compound collection can inhibit the growth of cancer cells and even increase the effect of traditional cancer medicines. Development of resistance towards normal chemotherapy is a major challenge for the treatment of cancer, and the role of ion channels in the process of inducing and maintaining drug resistance is an unexplored field. Initial results from the research collaboration have been published at the American cancer society meeting in Chicago in June 2016 (<http://meetinglibrary.asco.org/content/170439-176>).

#### **Urinary incontinence grant of DKK 990,000 (approximately SEK 1,240,000) from the Danish Innovation Fund's Innobooster program (<http://innovationsfonden.dk/en/investment/innobooster>)**

The urinary incontinence grant covers a one-year post doc position. The aim of the program is to obtain proof-of-principle for a new concept for treatment of overactive bladder via modulation of a certain ion channel subtype. Irritable or overactive bladder can lead to urine incontinence, a peeing disorder which represents an increasing burden to society due to aging populations. The current incontinence drugs are ineffective and have a number of unpleasant side effects leading to an unacceptably high dropout rate from treatment.

#### **The neuropathic pain grant of AUD 525,000 (approximately SEK 3,200,000) from the Australian Research Council's Linkage Projects (<http://www.arc.gov.au/linkage-projects>)**

The neuropathic pain grant supports a three-year collaboration between Saniona, University of Sydney, and the Australian biotech company Synthesis Research. It is estimated that about 7-8% of the population has



chronic pain with neuropathic characteristics and that 40-60% of the treated patients do not respond to existing drugs. This project intends to identify drugs that can alleviate pain via interaction with specific subunits of GABA-A receptors, which represent attractive and novel targets for developing non-opioid analgesics. A joint publication dealing with pharmacology of delta containing receptors by University of Sydney and Saniona researchers was recently published (<http://130.14.29.110/pubmed/27178730>).

“Cancer, urinary incontinence, and neuropathic pain are all widespread and frequent diseases with poor treatment options thereby causing a very significant and increasing burden to the societies worldwide. The above efforts may lead to important novel therapies to the benefit of patients, the society and Saniona’s shareholders,” says Jørgen Drejer, CEO of Saniona.

**For more information, please contact**

Thomas Feldthus, EVP and CFO, Saniona, Mobile: +45 2210 9957, E-mail: [tf@saniona.com](mailto:tf@saniona.com)

**About Saniona**

*Saniona is a research and development company focused on drugs for diseases of the central nervous system, autoimmune diseases, metabolic diseases and treatment of pain. The company has a significant portfolio of potential drug candidates at pre-clinical and clinical stage. The research is focused on ion channels, which makes up a unique protein class that enables and controls the passage of charged ions across cell membranes. Saniona has ongoing collaboration agreements with Upsher-Smith Laboratories, Inc., Productos Medix, S.A de S.V and Saniona’s Boston based spinout Ataxion Inc., which is financed by Atlas Venture Inc. and Biogen Inc. Saniona is based in Copenhagen, Denmark, where it has a research center of high international standard. Saniona is listed at Nasdaq First North Premier and has about 4,400 shareholders. Pareto Securities is Certified Advisor for Saniona. The company’s share is traded under the ticker SANION. Read more at [www.saniona.com](http://www.saniona.com).*