



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Two Swiss Chemical Companies Obtain a Government Research Grant of over USD 500'000 to Develop New Technologies to Drive Efficient Drive Drug Discovery**

*VIO Chemicals AG and SpiroChem AG have jointly obtained a research grant of over USD 500'000 from the Swiss government's Commission for Innovation and Technology (CTI) for a project to merge preparative chemistry and flow technology to develop new processes used in drug discovery and API (active pharmaceutical ingredients) manufacturing.*

(Zurich, Switzerland, 19 May, 2014) – In a project that has been awarded a research grant of over USD 500'000 from the Swiss government's Commission for Innovation and Technology (CTI), VIO Chemicals AG and SpiroChem AG, two Swiss SMEs, joined forces to develop cleaner, safer and cheaper chemical technologies. One of these technologies – flow chemistry - is a method to synthetically produce new classes of molecules more efficiently.

“Our pharmaceutical customers are always looking to speed up their drug discovery programs and development processes to maximize the period of commercial exclusivity of their drug on the market. We are using this research to transfer scientific findings into commercial excellence for them”, says Dr. Thomas Fessard, CEO of Zurich-based SpiroChem AG.

Together with SpiroChem AG, a team of post-doctoral fellows at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich (ETHZ) is working on the development of this new technology under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Erick M. Carreira, professor of Organic Chemistry at ETHZ and co-founder of SpiroChem AG.

The primary objective of the work is to develop novel and cost-effective proprietary routes to several classes of molecules, including the quinuclidines and other small compact modules. Some of these molecules are increasingly used in drug discovery and already incorporated in the synthesis of clinical-phase drug candidates. Some quinuclidine-containing drugs have been present on the market for over 20 years and are facing loss of exclusivity, which creates the need for more efficient and economical processes.

The second step for the project is to develop flow chemistry techniques in the production of intermediates for the use in pharmaceutical manufacturing on a commercial scale. “We aim to be able to start production of the molecules using the new technology on a commercial scale by spring 2015. We anticipate the new techniques to result in increased productivity, which we can pass on to our customers as a reduction in the cost of goods”, says Dr. Dimitrios Kalias, CEO of the Zurich-based VIO Chemicals AG, which brings the expertise and long-term experience of custom manufacturing of intermediates and APIs for the pharmaceutical industry to the project.

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## About VIO Chemicals AG

VIO Chemicals AG focuses on the development, custom manufacturing and sourcing of chemical specialties and active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs). Specializing in tailor-made solutions for chemical intermediates, VIO Chemicals offers a complete range of services from process research to production, quality control, and delivery of commercial lots. The procurement competence focuses on the strategic sourcing of intermediates and APIs and comprises GMP/EHS auditing and regulatory services. VIO Chemicals AG is headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland, and has offices and production facilities in Nanjing and Binhai (Jiangsu province), China.

To learn more, visit [www.viochem.com](http://www.viochem.com).

## About SpiroChem AG

SpiroChem AG is a fine chemicals company active in the field of high-value-added building blocks for the pharmaceuticals, agrochemicals and materials industries. SpiroChem designs, synthesizes and commercializes a large range of small molecule fragments used in drug discovery to improve the properties of drug candidates. SpiroChem also offers custom synthesis services to help its clients accelerate their R&D programs and develop better and safer medicines. SpiroChem is a Swiss company with headquarters and research facilities in Zurich, Switzerland.

Visit [www.spirochem.com](http://www.spirochem.com) for more details on our products and services.

## About the CTI (Commission for Technology and Innovation)

The Commission for Technology and Innovation (CTI) promotes science-based innovation in Switzerland by providing financial resources, professional advice and networks. The CTI operates on the principle of subsidiarity through a number of closely linked funding areas, helping when innovations cannot be launched or their market potential remains untapped. The CTI helps to improve the competitiveness of Swiss companies, especially of SMEs, and to increase the performance of organizations serving the Swiss public. Promoting sustainable values and a strong Swiss economy. To learn more, visit <http://www.kti.admin.ch/>

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