



## **MEDIA INFORMATION**

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### **SYNAIRGEN PLC**

#### **PROPOSED ADMISSION TO THE ALTERNATIVE INVESTMENT MARKET**

Synairgen plc, ("Synairgen"), a drug discovery company focused on identifying and out-licensing new pharmaceutical products which address the underlying causes of asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease ("COPD"), today announced its intention to float on AiM, a market operated by the London Stock Exchange.

#### **Background**

Synairgen was founded by Professor Stephen Holgate, Dr Donna Davies and Dr Ratko Djukanovic (the "Founders"), a world-renowned respiratory research team from the University of Southampton (the "University") and spun-out from the University in June 2003, supported by funding from IP2IPO Group plc.

Synairgen seeks to commercialise a number of drug discovery opportunities, carefully selected from the wider range of research projects led by the Founders in their academic roles and which offer out-licensing opportunities. The Group intends to out-license its IP at an early stage (pre-Phase II) rather than committing significant capital resources to late-stage clinical trials.

Since June 2003, the Company has made significant progress: two proprietary programmes in the field of asthma have been initiated and the Company has signed three agreements with pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, including Merck Frosst (affiliate of Merck & Co Inc) and Cambridge Antibody Technology. Synairgen is currently discussing further collaboration agreements.

Robert W. Baird Limited is acting as nominated adviser and broker to the Company.

Commenting on Synairgen's flotation plans, Simon Shaw, Non-Executive Chairman, said:

"Despite the success of currently marketed therapies, asthma and COPD are rapidly growing causes of morbidity and mortality worldwide.

"At Synairgen, we have one of the world's leading teams in respiratory disease, led by Professor Stephen Holgate, with a track record of at least 20 years of research and IP development to build on.

"We are pursuing an AIM flotation in order both to finance the development of our portfolio of collaborative and proprietary programmes, and to create an independent corporate platform from which to exploit it through out-licensing."

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*This press release has been approved by Robert W. Baird Limited ("Baird") for the purposes of s. 21 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000.*

*Baird is authorised and regulated in the United Kingdom by the Financial Services Authority. Baird is acting for Synairgen plc ("Synairgen") and no one else in connection with the matters set out in this announcement and will not be responsible to any other person for providing the protections afforded to clients of Baird or for providing advice in relation to such matters.*

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**Notes to Editors**

**1. Asthma**

According to the World Health Organisation, between 100 and 150 million people around the globe suffer from asthma and this number is rising. Asthma prevalence in the UK is now 3-4 times higher in adults and 6 times higher in children than it was 25 years ago, and currently it accounts for 1,400 deaths in the UK per year. In the United States, there are approximately 17-20 million sufferers and the cost is estimated to be about \$13 billion per annum. There are limited therapies available for severe asthma and the potential for treatments satisfying this largely unmet need is significant, as demonstrated by the projected sales of \$3.3 billion in 2012 for Xolair®.

**2. COPD**

COPD encompasses a number of diseases, including the smoking-related lung diseases, chronic bronchitis and emphysema. The prevalence of COPD is estimated at 16-17% in the US and Europe. Globally it is killing 2.7 million people per annum and is forecast to become the third largest cause of death in the world by 2020. COPD is underserved by current treatments.

Sales of pharmaceutical products used to treat asthma and COPD in major pharmaceutical markets in 2002 were estimated to be \$7.0 billion and \$2.7 billion respectively and are forecast to reach \$12.8 billion and \$5.8 billion in 2012.

**3. Directors**

Synairgen's Directors combine public company experience with specialism in the respiratory drugs sector:

- **Simon Shaw, Non-Executive Chairman (aged 39)**

Simon joined the Company in July 2003. He is currently Chief Financial Officer at Gyrus Group PLC. He was Chief Operating Office of Profile Therapeutics plc from 1998 to 2003, and prior to that, he was a corporate financier, latterly with Hambros Bank Limited.

- **Richard Marsden, Managing Director (aged 37)**

Richard joined Synairgen in a consulting role in November 2003, to drive the commercial development of the Company as well as support the operational management. He was appointed to the Board as Managing Director in June 2004. Between 1998 and 2002, he worked as Projects Manager and Cystic Fibrosis Business Development Manager at Profile Therapeutics plc. Prior to this, he worked at Zimmer (UK) Ltd, Genentech (UK) Ltd, and Roche Products Ltd.

- **John Ward, Finance Director (aged 43)**

John joined Synairgen in October 2004. He was previously Chief Financial Officer and Company Secretary of Profile Therapeutics plc from 1999 to 2004. Prior to this, he worked at Rapid Deployment Group Ltd and Price Waterhouse.

- **Professor Stephen Holgate, Founder and Non-Executive Director (aged 57)**

Stephen is a co-founder of Synairgen and was appointed as a Non-Executive Director in June 2003. He is MRC Professor of Immunopharmacology in the Division of Infection, Inflammation and Repair at the University of Southampton's School of Medicine. He was instrumental in the development of Anti-IgE on which the drug, Xolair<sup>®</sup> for asthma, is based. He has established industry collaborations with a number of pharmaceutical companies, including, GlaxoSmithKline plc, Novartis AG, Merck Research Laboratories, Cambridge Antibody Technology, Immunex/Amgen Inc and AstraZeneca PLC.

Other Non-Executive Directors include David Norwood, Chief Executive Officer of IP2IPO Group plc (aged 36), and Sue Sundstrom, Director, Life Science Enterprise at the University of Southampton's Centre of Enterprise and Innovation (aged 47).