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VLST Corporation and Novo Nordisk announce collaboration agreement to develop therapeutics for autoimmune and inflammatory disorders

Seattle, WA (December 17, 2008) – Novo Nordisk and VLST Corporation, a Seattle-based biotechnology company focused on the development of therapeutics for autoimmune and inflammatory disorders, today announced that the companies have entered into an exclusive, worldwide collaboration agreement to develop therapeutic targets utilizing VLST’s technology platform in the fields of autoimmune and inflammatory disorders.

Under terms of the agreement, Novo Nordisk and VLST will jointly undertake a research program to identify collaboration targets and develop product candidates within the field of autoimmune and inflammatory disorders. In exchange for Novo Nordisk’s rights to pursue the targets generated, VLST will receive an upfront payment and equity investment totaling 12 million US dollars as well as milestone payments which are dependent upon clinical and regulatory milestones across multiple disease indications worldwide. In addition, Novo Nordisk will support the research programs through the committed funding of VLST personnel working on the collaboration targets over the next three years. Novo Nordisk will provide resources to move programs through preclinical development, clinical development and commercialization for each product candidate resulting from the collaboration. The collaboration structure will allow Novo Nordisk to build programs in autoimmunity and inflammation while providing VLST with the ability to develop its own programs that are not part of this collaboration either on its own or with other partners. The research collaboration will run for three years with an option to extend.

“We are pleased to collaborate with industry leader Novo Nordisk to develop innovative therapeutic candidates from the VLST technology platform,” said Martin Simonetti, president and chief executive officer of VLST. “Novo Nordisk has a long history of successful collaborations in Seattle. We look forward to building on this success to advance VLST’s programs with Novo Nordisk. We believe this significant collaboration reflects the promise of VLST’s platform technology to deliver novel therapeutic targets to a range of therapeutic indications and look forward to expanding this potential with other partners.”

“VLST’s platform technology provides a promising avenue for Novo Nordisk to continue expanding and enhancing its research and development in the field of autoimmune and inflammatory disorders,” said Terje Kalland, senior vice president and head of Biopharmaceuticals Research Unit at Novo Nordisk. “As Novo Nordisk continues to build its presence in Seattle, the collaboration with VLST marks an important step in our overall strategy to develop therapeutics for autoimmune and inflammatory disorders.”

About VLST

VLST Corporation is a privately held biotechnology company dedicated to the streamlined discovery and development of novel therapeutics for the treatment of inflammatory and autoimmune disorders. The VLST approach combines novel bioinformatics and cutting-edge proteomics to provide a rapid and rational approach to identifying new targets for the development of novel biologic therapies. The VLST discovery platform has primary applications for the treatment of inflammatory and autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn’s disease, multiple sclerosis, lupus and diabetes. For more information, please visit www.vlstcorp.com

About Novo Nordisk

Novo Nordisk is a healthcare company and a world leader in diabetes care. In addition, Novo Nordisk has a leading position within areas such as haemostasis management, growth hormone therapy and hormone replacement therapy. Novo Nordisk manufactures and markets pharmaceutical products and services that make a significant difference to patients, the medical profession and society. With headquarters in Denmark, Novo Nordisk employs approximately 26,550 employees in 80 countries, and markets its products in 179 countries. Novo Nordisk’s B shares are listed on the stock exchanges in Copenhagen and London. Its ADRs are listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol ‘NVO’. For more information, visit novonordisk.com.

For broadcast standard video supporting this press release please visit Novo Nordisk’s Broadcast room on novonordisk.com – Media.

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