

Clearbridge BioMedics wins Asian Entrepreneurship Award in Japan

16 May 2012, Singapore – Clearbridge BioMedics has won the 2012 Asian Entrepreneurship Awards, which was held from 9-11 May 2012 in Kashiwanoha, Chiba Prefecture in Japan. A total of 18 start-up companies, from 12 Asian countries presented their business plans at this inaugural business competition. Clearbridge BioMedics impressed the judges with its ClearCell™ System. This is a cell-based in-vitro diagnostic device that can isolate and retrieve intact and viable circulating tumour cells from blood. Clearbridge BioMedics, which was the only Singaporean company to participate, took home the 3 million yen (approximately SGD 47,000) prize money along with three years of free tenancy at the Tokatsu Techno Plaza in Chiba Prefecture. Clearbridge BioMedics is a spin-off company from the Faculty of Engineering, National University of Singapore.

“We are delighted and honoured to win the inaugural Asian Entrepreneurship Awards. Participating in this event was a great experience for us. We were able to network and present to an audience, including venture capitalists, entrepreneurs and potential partners. Japan is a very important market for us, winning this award will be a launch pad for us to bring the technology there.” said Dr Andrew Wu, Project Director Clearbridge BioMedics.

A total of 18 technology start-up companies were nominated to take part in the Asian Entrepreneurship Awards from countries throughout Asia. The majority of these companies came from business incubators or consisted of University spin-offs. The judging panel, which included Chairman of the Judging Committee Mr Masaru Murai, President of TX Entrepreneur Partners, looked for the start-up companies’ innovativeness and the businesses’ economic and social impact, as well as the companies’ ability to implement their business strategies. Professor Wong Poh Kam, from the NUS Entrepreneurship Centre was the Singapore representative on the Nominating Committee, which also had representatives from China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

“Despite the large number of cutting edge technologies and patents, held primarily by universities and research institute, the ratio of business start-ups in Japan is still low. Through the Asian Entrepreneurship Awards, we hope to provide an opportunity to bring together entrepreneurs from across Asia to Japan, to introduce their innovative technologies to the world. My heartiest congratulations to Clearbridge

BioMedics. I believe that their ClearCell System has the potential to make a tremendous impact on the way cancer is diagnosed and treated in the future,” said Professor Shigeo Kagami, Chairman of the Nominating Committee for the Asian Entrepreneurship Awards 2012, who is also from the Office of Science Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Development, Division of University Corporate Relations at The University of Tokyo.

Moving forward, Clearbridge BioMedics plan to use the prize money from this award competition to further accelerate the development of its next-generation microfluidics biochips. They also plan to be exploring a wider number of applications in the life sciences and medical diagnostic fields.

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Dr Andrew Wu and Prof Wong Poh Kam (third and second from left respectively) at the Asian Entrepreneurship Award presentation ceremony

About Clearbridge BioMedics Clearbridge BioMedics specializes in novel platforms with applications in oncology research and diagnostics. It is a National University of Singapore (NUS) spinoff company that is committed to developing medical devices, which will impact the world and revolutionize cancer diagnostics and patient care, by leveraging on ground-breaking technology from research partners.

The ClearCell™ System comprises patent-pending CTChips®, which are microfluidic biochips able to effectively detect and isolate wholly-intact CTCs (Circulating Tumor Cells) from small quantities of patient blood samples. The isolated CTCs can then be stained directly on the CTChips® for identification and enumeration, or retrieved for further molecular analysis. The ClearCell™ System aims to be the next generation of non-invasive “liquid biopsy” approach for cancer screening, diagnosis, staging, personalised medication, and treatment monitoring. Headquartered in Singapore, Clearbridge BioMedics currently has customers spanning Asia, Europe and North America. (www.clearbridgebiomedics.com)

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