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## News Release

July 1, 2014

### **Merck Serono Commits €2 million to the Grant for Fertility Innovation (GFI) for 2014 / 15**

- **Investment reflects company's ongoing commitment to innovation in Fertility research**
- **Globally, nine projects receive funding from this grant cycle**

Darmstadt, Germany, July 1, 2014 – Merck Serono, the biopharmaceutical division of Merck, Germany, today announced its strong support of the Grant for Fertility Innovation (GFI) fund with grants totaling up to € 2 million for the years 2014 / 2015. The announcement was made during the 30<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology (ESHRE) currently taking place in Munich.

Launched in 2009, the GFI is dedicated to transforming innovative translational fertility research projects into concrete health solutions to improve the outcomes of assisted reproductive technologies (ART). In the last five years, approximately 640 applications to GFI were received from over 50 countries around the world; of these applications, nine projects from eight countries were awarded a grant for a total of € 2 million.

“The Grant for Fertility Innovation is reflective of our broad, ongoing commitment to advancing scientific knowledge that can be translated into meaningful solutions for patients in need,” said Dr. Steven Hildemann, Global Chief Medical Officer and Head of Global Medical and Safety at Merck Serono. “The GFI enables the novel ideas that exist among forward-thinking fertility researchers from around the world, accelerating our collective ability to positively impact the final outcome of patients undergoing assisted reproductive technology treatments.”

Merck KGaA

[www.merckserono.com](http://www.merckserono.com)

Merck Serono is a division of Merck.

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Every year, the GFI awardees are announced during a ceremony at ESHRE's annual meeting. This year, nine winning projects were announced during the ceremony:

- **Marcos Meseguer - Instituto Valenciano de Infertilidad, Valencia** (Spain): *Embryo viability measurement combining Oxidative stress and time-lapse technology*
- **Kazuhiro Kawamura - Reproduction Center, St. Marianna University School of Medicine, Kanagawa** (Japan): *Infertility treatment of patients with diminished ovarian reserve using in vitro activation of follicles*
- **Andrea Borini - Tecnobios Procreazione, Bologna** (Italy): *IR Microspectroscopy on GCs: a new non-invasive oocyte assesment*
- **Semra Kahraman- Istanbul Memorial Hospital, ART and Genetics Center, Istanbul** (Turkey): *Identifying markers of oocyte competence through a maturation analysis*
- **Douglas Carrell - University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT** (USA): *Micro-Electrophoresis: To select mature and genetically fit sperm*
- **Nathan Treff - Reproductive Medicine Associates of NJ, Basking Ridge, NJ** (USA): *Predicting Reproductive Potential from the Maternal Exome*
- **Marc-André Sirard- Laval Universit, Quebec City** (Canada): *COST2: Control Ovarian Stimulation Timing Test*
- **José Gonçalves Franco Junior- Centro de Reprodução Humana Prof. Franco Junior, Ribeirão Preto** (Brazil): *Genetic biomarkers to predict ovarian response and pregnancy outcomes*
- **Tracey Edgell- Prince Henry's Institute, Clayton** (Australia): *Cytokines profile to predict Uterine Receptivity in women undergoing ART*

### Notes to editors

Photos of the award ceremony are available on the GFI website:  
[www.grantforfertilityinnovation.com](http://www.grantforfertilityinnovation.com).

### About the Grant for Fertility Innovation (GFI)

Merck Serono announced the initiation of the GFI program in 2009 to support the advancement of science and innovative technologies in the fertility field. This grant is awarded every year to translational research projects that can potentially improve baby birth rate for the benefit of the patients. Each project is blinded and evaluated by a jury of experts according to five criteria: support to increase baby birth rate; innovative research; scientific rationale; feasibility and practical utility.

For further information about the GFI and how to apply for next year's grants, please visit:

[www.grantforfertilityinnovation.com](http://www.grantforfertilityinnovation.com)

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### **About Merck Serono**

Merck Serono is the biopharmaceutical division of Merck. With headquarters in Darmstadt, Germany, Merck Serono offers leading brands in 150 countries to help patients with cancer, multiple sclerosis, infertility, endocrine and metabolic disorders as well as cardiovascular diseases. In the United States and Canada, EMD Serono operates as a separately incorporated subsidiary of Merck Serono.

Merck Serono discovers, develops, manufactures and markets prescription medicines of both chemical and biological origin in specialist indications. We have an enduring commitment to deliver novel therapies in our core focus areas of neurology, oncology, immuno-oncology and immunology.

For more information, please visit [www.merckserono.com](http://www.merckserono.com).

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Merck is a leading company for innovative and top-quality high-tech products in the pharmaceutical and chemical sectors. With its four divisions Merck Serono, Consumer Health, Performance Materials and Merck Millipore, Merck generated total revenues of € 11.1 billion in 2013. Around 38,000 Merck employees work in 66 countries to improve the quality of life for patients, to further the success of customers and to help meet global challenges. Merck is the world's oldest pharmaceutical and chemical company – since 1668, the company has stood for innovation, business success and responsible entrepreneurship. Holding an approximately 70 percent interest, the founding family remains the majority owner of the company to this day. Merck, Darmstadt, Germany is holding the global rights to the Merck name and brand. The only exceptions are Canada and the United States, where the company is known as EMD.