

July 5, 2017

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Merck Awards €1.25 Million to Research Projects Through its 2017 Grant for Fertility Innovation (GFI)

- **Two projects are awarded funds to advance the fertility field**
- **Professor Lunenfeld honored with Merck Lifetime Achievement Award**
- **The company is committed to driving innovation through evolving the product portfolio and investing in potential breakthrough research**

Darmstadt, Germany, July 5, 2017 – Merck, a leading science and technology company, today announced its commitment to award €1.25 million to research projects in the field of fertility, supporting the advancement of medical science through the Grant for Fertility Innovation (GFI) in 2017. Launched as the first of the Merck Grants for Innovation in 2009, Merck's GFI is providing encouragement for innovation and support for scientists to realize projects that could potentially lead to the next breakthrough in the fertility treatment area. This year, the GFI Award Ceremony included the announcement of the Merck Lifetime Achievement Award in Fertility Innovation.

To recognize Merck's belief in progress through innovation, the GFI awardees were revealed in a ceremony at the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology (ESHRE), currently taking place in Geneva, Switzerland. The winning projects truly reflect the global nature of the program, ranging from research in Italy to Brazil.

Professor Bruno Lunenfeld, a speaker at the GFI 2017 ceremony, was honored with the Merck Lifetime Achievement Award for his revolutionary work within the fertility



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field since 1954. At the ceremony he provided an overview on the discovery of human gonadotropins from postmenopausal urine.

“Professor Lunenfeld’s pioneering achievements in the field of fertility are a huge inspiration to us at Merck. It is highly motivating to consider the breadth of his contributions. For more than 60 years now, his expertise and experience have greatly contributed to our efforts to improve the quality of patient care,” said Belén Garijo, member of the Executive Board of Merck and CEO Healthcare, when presenting Professor Lunenfeld with the Merck Lifetime Achievement Award.

The research investments through the GFI is core to the innovation strategy of the biopharma business of Merck, and in the quest for increased success rates within fertility treatment. In this year’s GFI, two winning projects were selected from 46 global proposals with the common goal of advancing the fertility field. The GFI was launched in 2009, and is dedicated to transforming innovative translational fertility research projects into actual solutions with the aim to improve fertility treatment outcomes. Merck proudly announced the 2017 GFI awardees during the ceremony:

- Endometrial Notch pathway as a novel target for improving implantation efficiency; Luisa Campagnolo, PhD
- Pharmacogenetic algorithm for individualized controlled ovarian stimulation (iCOS) in assisted reproductive technology cycles; Caio Parente Barbosa, MD, PhD, MS and Matheus Roque, MD

About the Grant for Fertility Innovation (GFI)

Merck 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



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About Merck

Merck is a leading science and technology company in healthcare, life science and performance materials. Around 50,000 employees work to further develop technologies that improve and enhance life – from biopharmaceutical therapies to treat cancer or multiple sclerosis, cutting-edge systems for scientific research and production, to liquid crystals for smartphones and LCD televisions. In 2016, Merck generated sales of € 15.0 billion in 66 countries.

Founded in 1668, Merck is the world's oldest pharmaceutical and chemical company. The founding family remains the majority owner of the publicly listed corporate group. The company holds the global rights to the Merck name and brand. The only exceptions are the United States and Canada, where the company operates as EMD Serono, MilliporeSigma and EMD Performance Materials.