

# MASSACHUSETTS LIFE SCIENCES CENTER



Investing in the State of Innovation

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## **Massachusetts Life Sciences Center Announces Three New Universal Partnership (UP) Program Grants**

**Waltham, MA** –The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC) today announced three new grants through the agency’s Universal Partnerships (UP) Program. The grants were awarded to Barrett Technology for a collaboration with Sensegraphics in Sweden, CamMed for a collaboration with Dongguan Xindingyuan Jidian Equipment Company in China and Felicitex Therapeutics for a collaboration with Selvita S.A. in Poland.

“As the global leader in life sciences, Massachusetts has a unique ability to collaborate with companies in other parts of the world to improve health care through innovation,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “I’m excited to see the results and the impact of these international partnerships.”

Barrett Technology of Newton (grant amount: \$200,000) is developing an interactive rehabilitation robot for use with survivors of stroke and other neurological disorders. The device will allow both non-tiring exercise to aid in the intensive physiotherapy required for recovery, as well as the capture and recording of performance data to access ongoing treatment. The collaboration is with Sensegraphics of Sweden, a company that will develop haptic simulation software for use with the robotic hardware.

CamMed is a company from West Newton (grant amount: \$175,000) that is creating a patch-like device that incorporates a micro pump as a means to deliver drugs, with the initial focus on delivering insulin to diabetic patients. The collaborator is Dongguan Xindingyuan Jidian Equipment Company, a small manufacturing company in China. The company is located in a region that has special expertise in microfluidic manufacturing.

Felicitex Therapeutics, also of Newton (grant amount: \$200,000), is developing anti-cancer drugs with the target being a newly recognized category of cell, the quiescent cancer cell. These cells are resistant to conventional anti-cancer therapies and are believed to be the source of

surviving tumor material, particularly in pancreatic, ovarian and breast cancers. The company seeks to specifically target these cells using a novel tyrosine kinase inhibitor, for which they have an initial candidate. The collaboration is with Selvita S.A., a company from Poland that will synthesize a number of variants that will then be tested for optimal activity.

“Massachusetts companies lead in solving R & D challenges and seeking solutions wherever they exist,” said Pamela Norton, MLSC Vice President for Industry Relations and Programs. “With ever increasing technological challenges to overcome in order to develop breakthrough cures and interventions and lower healthcare costs, companies seek collaboration to achieve solutions. The Center's Universal Partnership Program (UP) enables Massachusetts companies to partner with colleagues around the world to collaboratively address health challenges. The partnerships between Massachusetts-based Barrett Technology and Sensegraphics of Sweden, Cam Med (in Massachusetts) and Dongguan Xindingyuan Jidian Equipment Company of China and FeliciteX (in Massachusetts) with Selvita S.A. of Poland are great examples of the type of partnerships that UP has enabled to solve significant problems and yield better treatments for patients.”

“It is wonderful that an organization such as CamMed, which is located in my district of Newton, is at the forefront of medical technology and is able to utilize international partnerships to thrive in the life sciences sector,” said Representative Kay Khan (D-Newton).

“These grants will further strengthen Massachusetts leadership position in the life sciences field,” said Representative John J. Lawn, (D-Watertown). “The international partnerships will not only have a tremendous impact on health care but economic development in the Commonwealth as well.”

Avaxia, a previously awarded UP grant recipient for its research collaboration with Delphi Genetics SA from the Wallonia region of Belgium, has been working to create an improved manufacturing process for Avaxia's lead product candidate, AVX-470, which is in clinical development for the treatment of ulcerative colitis.

“Thanks to the UP grant that Avaxia received in February 2015, we have made tremendous progress in our effort to increase the productivity of our drug manufacturing process,” said Barbara S. Fox, PhD, Chief Executive Officer of Avaxia Biologics. “Our clinical candidate, AVX-470, is an orally administered antibody that is isolated from the milk of dairy cows that have been immunized with human tumor necrosis factor. The goal of the UP grant is to increase the amount of AVX-470 produced by each cow. In collaboration with our partner, Delphi Genetics, we have generated novel immunization constructs that we are now testing in mice and will soon test in cows. This grant and other MLSC support have been instrumental in enabling Avaxia to advance development of AVX-470 for patients suffering from inflammatory bowel disease.”

Last summer, at the 2014 BIO Convention, the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC) announced the launch of the UP Program, a new innovative collaboration model to provide grant funding to support Massachusetts companies who are forming R&D collaborations with life science organizations throughout the world. The creation of the UP Program furthers the MLSC's efforts to enable scientific and commercial breakthroughs and to fuel economic development in the Commonwealth. The UP program enhances the MLSC's portfolio by offering Massachusetts companies more collaboration opportunities.

For more information about the Universal Partnership Program, visit [www.masslifesciences.com/programs/up](http://www.masslifesciences.com/programs/up).

### ***About the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center***

The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC) is an investment agency that supports life sciences innovation, research, development and commercialization. The MLSC is charged with implementing a 10-year, \$1-billion, state-funded investment initiative. These investments create jobs and support advances that improve health and well-being. The MLSC offers the nation's most comprehensive set of incentives and collaborative programs targeted to the life sciences ecosystem. These programs propel the growth that has made Massachusetts the global leader in life sciences. The MLSC creates new models for collaboration and partners with organizations, both public and private, around the world to promote innovation in the life sciences. For more information, visit [www.masslifesciences.com](http://www.masslifesciences.com).

### ***About Barrett Technology***

Barrett designs and builds human-centric robot systems, such as robotic arms and hands for emerging applications requiring superior versatility. The company has created advanced motor controls, including its Puck(R), to enable quality force-controlled performance, and gearless transmissions.

### ***About Sensegraphics***

SenseGraphics develops medical simulator software for a wide range of surgical procedures. It is used in simulators for training surgeons in various fields such as robotic surgery, eye surgery, dentistry, ultrasound interpretation and anesthesia. The simulators combine the latest technologies in real-time to allow the surgeons to have a realistic experience.

### ***About Cam Med***

Cam Med LLC is a development stage company applying microfluidics to medical devices that enable substantial improvements in the daily lives of patients. Its product, Evopump is a bandage-like patch pump for subcutaneous delivery of one or more medications.

### ***About Dongguan Xindingyuan Jidian Equipment Company***

Dongguan Xindingyuan Jidian Equipment Company in Dongguan, China specializes in research and development, design, manufacture, sales and service in the CNC spring machine equipment industry. Its products have been sold in China and all over the world, such as Korea, Turkey, Iran, Vietnam, Peru and Australia.

### ***About FeliciteX Therapeutics***

FeliciteX Therapeutics is a privately-owned drug discovery company that focuses on quiescent (sleeping) cancer cells. FeliciteX develops treatments and diagnostic assays to improve the effectiveness and long-term outcomes of treatments for the deadliest and most resistant to therapy cancers: pancreatic, colorectal, non-small cell lung, and ovarian.

### ***About Selvita S.A.***

Selvita is a drug discovery company engaged in the research and development of breakthrough therapies in the area of oncology, as well as provision of integrated drug discovery services.

The company was established in 2007 and currently employs over 230 scientists, including 80 PhDs.

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