Merus and the Vall d'Hebron Institute of Oncology Announce Research Collaboration to Develop Innovative Bispecific Antibodies for Therapeutic Applications in the Treatment of Cancer

March 20, 2018

UTRECHT, The Netherlands, March 20, 2018 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Merus N.V. (Nasdaq:MRUS), a clinical-stage immuno-oncology company developing innovative bispecific antibody therapeutics (Biclonics®), and the Vall d'Hebron Institute of Oncology (VHIO), a leading comprehensive cancer center of excellence located in Barcelona, Spain, today announced a strategic research collaboration to develop novel agents for therapeutic applications.

The collaboration will combine Merus' proprietary Biclonics® technology platform and VHIO's expertise in clinical, translational and preclinical research. Josep Tabernero, M.D., Ph.D., M.Sc., Director of VHIO, has served as a scientific advisor to Merus for the past six years.

"VHIO is an internationally renowned leader in cancer research. This new collaboration builds on the successful working relationship established in the Phase 1/2 study for MCLA-128, a Biclonics® targeting HER3 signaling, and in the preclinical evaluation of MCLA-158, a Biclonics® targeting the Wnt and EGFR pathways," said Ton Logtenberg, Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer of Merus. "Professor Tabernero and his team have already provided Merus with invaluable scientific input. This relationship will now be extended and strengthened, applying the outstanding translational and clinical research capabilities of VHIO to the development of Biclonics® candidates already in the Merus pipeline and providing new translational and biological insights to support the development of the next generation of Biclonics® candidates."

"We are excited to further expand our relationship with Merus," said Dr. Tabernero. "VHIO's capacity to advance cancer discovery through our seamless integration of translational science and clinical research is the perfect pairing with Merus' differentiated oncology pipeline which will allow us to jointly accelerate the development of promising, innovative cancer therapies for our patients."

About Vall d´Hebron Institute of Oncology

Established in 2006, the Vall d´Hebron Institute of Oncology (VHIO) is a leading comprehensive cancer center of excellence located in Barcelona, Spain, where its team of 27 renowned Principal Investigators manage and run VHIO´s major research themes and programs. Undertaking one of Spain´s most dynamic cancer research programs, VHIO is dedicated to delivering on the promise of precision medicine in oncology – turning cancer discovery into more effective treatments and better practice for the care of our patients. **To discover more about VHIO please visit: www.vhio.net.**

About Merus N.V.

Merus is a clinical-stage immuno-oncology company developing innovative full-length human bispecific antibody therapeutics, referred to as Biclonics®. Biclonics®, which are based on the full-length IgG format, are manufactured using industry standard processes and have been observed in preclinical and clinical studies to have several of the same features of conventional human monoclonal antibodies, such as long half-life and low immunogenicity. Merus' most advanced bispecific antibody candidate, MCLA-128, is being evaluated in a Phase 2 combination trial in two metastatic breast cancer populations. MCLA-128 is also being evaluated in a Phase 1/2 clinical trial in gastric, ovarian, endometrial and non-small cell lung cancers. Merus' second most advanced bispecific antibody candidate, MCLA-117, is being developed in a Phase 1 clinical trial in patients with acute myeloid leukemia. The Company also has a pipeline of proprietary bispecific antibody candidates in preclinical development, including MCLA-158, which is designed to bind to cancer stem cells and is being developed as a potential treatment for colorectal cancer and other solid tumors, as well as MCLA-145, which is designed to bind to PD-L1 and a non-disclosed second immunomodulatory target, which is being developed in collaboration with Incyte Corporation. For additional information, please visit Merus' website, www.merus.nl.

Forward Looking Statement

This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. All statements contained in this press release that do not relate to matters of historical fact should be considered forward-looking statements, including without limitation statements regarding the potential or promise of Merus' platform for generating bispecific antibodies and their development, the design, treatment potential, clinical development and clinical development plans for Merus' bispecific antibody therapeutic candidates, VHIO's expertise in clinical, pre-clinical and translational research and its ability to apply its research capabilities to develop Biclonics® to Merus' pipeline and provide insights to support development of the next generation of Biclonics ® candidates, the ability of the collaboration to advance the treatment of cancer and accelerate the development of promising, innovative cancer therapies.

These forward-looking statements are based on management's current expectations. These statements are neither promises nor guarantees, but involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other important factors that may cause our actual results, performance or achievements to be materially different from any future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements, including, but not limited to, the following: our need for additional funding, which may not be available and which may require us to restrict our operations or require us to relinquish rights to our technologies or Biclonics® and bispecific antibody candidates; potential delays in regulatory approval, which would impact our ability to commercialize our product candidates and affect our ability to generate revenue; the lengthy and expensive process of clinical drug development, which has an uncertain outcome; the unpredictable nature of our early stage development efforts for marketable drugs; potential delays in enrollment of patients, which could affect the receipt of necessary regulatory approvals; our reliance on third parties to conduct our clinical trials and the potential for those third parties to not perform satisfactorily; we may not identify suitable Biclonics® or bispecific antibody candidates under our collaboration with Incyte or Incyte may fail to perform adequately under our collaboration; our reliance on third parties to manufacture our product candidates, which may delay, prevent or impair our development and commercialization efforts; protection of our proprietary technology; our patents may be found invalid, unenforceable, circumvented by competitors and our patent applications may be found not to comply with the rules and regulations of patentability; we may fail to

prevail in existing and potential lawsuits for infringement of third-party intellectual property; and our registered or unregistered trademarks or trade names may be challenged, infringed, circumvented or declared generic or determined to be infringing on other marks.

These and other important factors discussed under the caption “Risk Factors” in our Annual Report on Form 20-F filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or SEC, on April 28, 2017, and our other reports filed with the SEC, could cause actual results to differ materially from those indicated by the forward-looking statements made in this press release. Any such forward-looking statements represent management’s estimates as of the date of this press release. While we may elect to update such forward-looking statements at some point in the future, we disclaim any obligation to do so, even if subsequent events cause our views to change, except as required under applicable law. These forward-looking statements should not be relied upon as representing our views as of any date subsequent to the date of this press release.

Contacts:

Investors:
Kimberly Minarovich
+1 646 368 8014
kimberly@argotpartners.com

Media:
David Rosen
+1 212-600-1902
david.rosen@argotpartners.com

Source: Merus N.V.