



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:
Dan Budwick
Pure Communications
(973) 271-6085

Third Rock Ventures and Sanofi Announce Launch of Warp Drive Bio; Broad Strategic Partnership Builds Innovative Genomics Search Engine to Reveal Nature's Drugs

Breakthrough Business Model Provides Initial Financing of \$125 Million, Fosters Collaboration and Creates Independent, Innovative Biotech Company

Boston, Mass. and Cambridge, Mass. - January 10, 2012 - [Third Rock Ventures](#) and [Warp Drive Bio](#) today announced the launch of the new company and its broad strategic partnership with [Sanofi](#) (EURONEXT: SAN and NYSE: SNY), which positions the companies to transform the discovery and development of natural product drugs using Warp Drive Bio's proprietary genomic technology and Sanofi's natural products expertise. Warp Drive Bio was founded by Third Rock Ventures and world-leading scientist Gregory Verdine, Ph.D., and was incubated at Third Rock Ventures for two years. Joining Dr. Verdine as co-founders are two additional leading scientists/entrepreneurs, Harvard Medical School professor of genetics and genomics expert George Church, Ph.D., and University of California, San Francisco professor of pharmaceutical chemistry and protein-protein interaction expert James Wells, Ph.D. [Greylock Partners](#) is also participating alongside Third Rock Ventures and Sanofi in financing the company. The launch and strategic partnership provide Warp Drive Bio with full funding to aggressively advance its core research and development strategy over at least the next five years.

This groundbreaking and innovative business model launches Warp Drive Bio, fully defines the collaboration deal structure - including a possible future acquisition of Warp Drive by Sanofi if certain milestones are achieved - and provides up to \$125 million in initial funding, including up to \$75 million in equity investment, to accelerate the development of Warp Drive Bio's platform and establish proof of concept. Importantly, Warp Drive Bio is founded as a fully independent company and retains strategic direction, operational management and full rights to select assets. This approach enables Warp Drive Bio to advance its programs in collaboration with Sanofi, while also maintaining the ability to secure additional future partnerships to advance its programs.

"This innovative collaboration between Sanofi and Third Rock Ventures provides the opportunity to build significant value and the potential for venture capital levels of return," said Alexis Borisy, partner at Third Rock Ventures and interim chief executive officer of Warp Drive Bio. "Importantly, it also enables us to advance and accelerate the development of our proprietary genomics platform, unlock 'nature's drugs' and, ultimately, create breakthrough therapies for patients."

Warp Drive Bio is leading the reemergence of natural products in the era of genomics to create breakthrough therapies targeting critical biological pathways, particularly those that are currently considered “undruggable.” Built upon the belief that nature is the world’s most powerful medicinal chemist, Warp Drive Bio is deploying a battery of state-of-the-art technologies to access powerful drugs that are now hidden within microbes. Key to the Warp Drive Bio approach is the company’s proprietary “genomic search engine” that enables hidden natural products to be revealed on the basis of their distinctive genomic signature. Warp Drive Bio is developing additional breakthrough technologies to induce the production of these novel drug candidates and to determine their mode of action, ultimately enabling Warp Drive Bio to convert genomes into drugs.

“Revolutionary advances in microbial genomics have provided the blueprints for nature’s factories that assemble natural products and have revealed vast treasure troves of novel natural product drugs hidden within microbes,” said Dr. Verdine, professor of chemistry in Harvard University’s department of stem cell and regenerative biology, venture partner at Third Rock Ventures and co-founder of Warp Drive Bio. “Prior to Warp Drive Bio, no one had created a comprehensive discovery engine that selectively mines from nature those products with transformative pharmaceutical potential. Warp Drive Bio has developed that capability and is using it to discover powerful next-generation drugs that target the central circuitry of human cells in completely new ways. We are thrilled to be working closely with Sanofi and our other partners as we aggressively move forward to bring these desperately needed medications to patients suffering from life-threatening and debilitating diseases.”

“We are very excited about this investment and collaborative partnership in a start-up biotechnology company based on outstanding science” declared Elias Zerhouni, president, global research & development, Sanofi. “By combining Warp Drive Bio’s unique proprietary technology and Sanofi’s extensive drug development capabilities, we are convinced that this open and creative model of pharma-biotech partnership will boost innovation for the benefit of patients.”

About Warp Drive Bio

Warp Drive Bio is driving the reemergence of natural products in the era of genomics to create breakthrough treatments that make an important difference in the lives of patients. Built upon the belief that nature is the world’s most powerful medicinal chemist, Warp Drive Bio is deploying a battery of state-of-the-art technologies to access powerful drugs that are now hidden within microbes. Key to the Warp Drive Bio approach is the company’s proprietary “genomic search engine” and customized search queries that enable hidden natural products to be revealed on the basis of their distinctive genomic signature. Launched in 2011 through a groundbreaking strategic partnership with Sanofi and with financing from Third Rock Ventures and Greylock Partners, the company was founded by renowned scientist Dr. Gregory Verdine, along with Dr. George Church and Dr. James Wells. For more information, please visit www.warpdrivebio.com.

About Third Rock Ventures

Third Rock Ventures is a venture capital firm founded in 2007 with the mission to launch transformative life sciences companies. With more than \$800 million and two funds under management, the firm is focused on working with passionate entrepreneurs to build exceptional companies working in areas of disruptive science that will make a difference in the lives of patients. The firm has assembled a team with deep expertise and a proven track record of building respected and successful life sciences companies. With decades of complementary, cross-functional operational and leadership experience, the Third Rock team actively engages with its portfolio companies to provide hands-on strategy and experience to successfully launch companies with the best vision, science, operations, people and culture. With offices in Boston, MA and San Francisco, CA, Third Rock is well positioned geographically to closely collaborate with its portfolio companies to achieve their goals. To learn more about Third Rock and its portfolio companies, please visit www.thirdrockventures.com.

###