



NEWS RELEASE

# Merck and Ridgeback Bio Announce Closing of Collaboration and Licensing Transaction

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KENILWORTH, N.J. & MIAMI--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Merck (NYSE:MRK), known as MSD outside the United States and Canada, and Ridgeback Biotherapeutics LP, a biotechnology company experienced in anti-viral drug development, today announced that the U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) granted early termination of the waiting period under the Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act. All closing requirements have been completed for the previously announced partnership transaction to advance the development of EIDD-2801, an investigational orally-available antiviral agent currently in early clinical development for the treatment of patients with COVID-19.

Under the agreement, announced on May 26, 2020, Merck, through a subsidiary, has acquired exclusive worldwide rights to develop EIDD-2801 and related molecules in collaboration with Ridgeback. Ridgeback will continue to fund and conduct multiple Ridgeback-sponsored Phase 1 and 2 trials and fund manufacturing campaigns for clinical supply. Going forward, the parties will collaborate on clinical development for COVID-19 and manufacturing, to be led by Merck. Consistent with the shared history and commitment to addressing global unmet needs in grievous illness, Merck and Ridgeback also plan to explore the potential for EIDD-2801 in other severe acute viral diseases, such as Ebola.

Merck and Ridgeback are committed to ensure that any medicines developed for SARS-CoV-2 will be accessible and affordable globally.

## About EIDD-2801

EIDD-2801 is an investigational, orally-bioavailable form of a potent ribonucleoside analog that inhibits the



replication of multiple RNA viruses including SARS-CoV-2, the causative agent of COVID-19. In animal studies of two distinct coronaviruses (SARS-CoV-1 and MERS), EIDD-2801 has been shown to improve pulmonary function, decrease body-weight loss and reduce the amount of virus in the lung. EIDD-2801 was invented at Drug Innovations at Emory (DRIVE), LLC, a not-for-profit biotechnology company wholly owned by Emory University.

## About Ridgeback Biotherapeutics LP

Headquartered in Miami, Florida, Ridgeback Biotherapeutics is a privately-held, majority woman-owned biotechnology company focused on orphan and emerging infectious diseases. Initial funding for Ridgeback Biotherapeutics originated from Wayne and Wendy Holman; two individuals committed to investing in and supporting technologies that will make the world a better place. The team at Ridgeback is dedicated to working toward finding life-saving and life-changing solutions for patients and diseases that need champions.

## Merck's response to coronavirus (COVID-19)

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Merck is focused on protecting the safety of its employees and their families, ensuring that our supply of medicines and vaccines reaches our patients and customers, contributing our scientific expertise to the development of antiviral and vaccine approaches, and supporting health care providers and our communities. To learn more, please visit [www.merck.com/COVID-19](http://www.merck.com/COVID-19).

## About Merck

For more than 125 years, Merck, known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada, has been inventing for life, bringing forward medicines and vaccines for many of the world's most challenging diseases in pursuit of our mission to save and improve lives. We demonstrate our commitment to patients and population health by increasing access to health care through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships. Today, Merck continues to be at the forefront of research to prevent and treat diseases that threaten people and animals – including cancer, infectious diseases such as HIV and Ebola, and emerging animal diseases – as we aspire to be the premier research-intensive biopharmaceutical company in the world. For more information, visit [www.merck.com](http://www.merck.com) and connect with us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

## Forward-Looking Statement of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., USA

This news release of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., USA (the "company") includes "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the safe harbor provisions of the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements are based upon the current beliefs and expectations of the company's management and are subject to significant risks and uncertainties. There can be no guarantees with respect to pipeline products that the products

will receive the necessary regulatory approvals or that they will prove to be commercially successful. If underlying assumptions prove inaccurate or risks or uncertainties materialize, actual results may differ materially from those set forth in the forward-looking statements.

Risks and uncertainties include but are not limited to, general industry conditions and competition; general economic factors, including interest rate and currency exchange rate fluctuations; the impact of the recent global outbreak of novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19); the impact of pharmaceutical industry regulation and health care legislation in the United States and internationally; global trends toward health care cost containment; technological advances, new products and patents attained by competitors; challenges inherent in new product development, including obtaining regulatory approval; the company's ability to accurately predict future market conditions; manufacturing difficulties or delays; financial instability of international economies and sovereign risk; dependence on the effectiveness of the company's patents and other protections for innovative products; and the exposure to litigation, including patent litigation, and/or regulatory actions.

The company undertakes no obligation to publicly update any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. Additional factors that could cause results to differ materially from those described in the forward-looking statements can be found in the company's 2019 Annual Report on Form 10-K and the company's other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) available at the SEC's Internet site ([www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov)).

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Merck Media:

Patrick Ryan  
(201) 452-2409

Ian McConnell  
(973) 901-5722

Merck Investors:  
Peter Dannenbaum  
(908) 740-1037

Michael DeCarbo  
(908) 740-1807

Ridgeback Bio Media

Chrissy Carvalho  
(646) 660-8641

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