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## News Release

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### EMD Serono and Fast Forward Commit \$3 Million for Multiple Sclerosis

- **Organizations Support Funding in 2012 Focused on Early Stage Drug Development for MS**

Rockland, MA/New York, NY, October 19, 2011 – EMD Serono, Inc., an affiliate of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, and Fast Forward LLC, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, today announced a commitment of up to \$3 million in 2012 to support innovative early-stage projects directed towards the development of therapies to prevent, treat or reverse nervous system damage in multiple sclerosis (MS). This is the fourth ‘Request for Proposals’ (RFP) issued through the multi-year collaboration between Fast Forward and Merck KGaA to accelerate innovation and commercial development of MS therapies.

“The potential of MS research currently in progress around the globe holds great promise for improving the quality of life for people living with MS,” said Dr. Timothy Coetzee, Chief Research Officer at the National MS Society and Fast Forward. “We are pleased to have the opportunity to advance that promise through the continued collaboration between Fast Forward and EMD Serono. We are looking forward to reviewing and funding the latest of our RFP submissions as we continue to enhance our commitment to research that will move us closer to a world free of multiple sclerosis.”

This RFP will complement Fast Forward’s ongoing research funding programs focused on early-stage drug discovery for MS. Fast Forward will continue to provide critical resources for

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underfunded academic institutions and seed-to-early-stage companies engaged in innovative research in support of its commitment to end multiple sclerosis.

“EMD Serono is proud of our successful collaboration with Fast Forward, and with the exciting research the RFP process has generated over the past few years,” said Steve Arkinstall, PhD, Vice President, US Research, EMD Serono, Inc. “Together, we anticipate broadening our knowledge and understanding of MS, and ultimately, making new treatment options a reality for people living with this disease.”

Fast Forward is seeking proposals for funding through its *Accelerating Innovation* and *Accelerating Commercial Development* programs. The *Accelerating Innovation* program is open to academic institutions, non-profit research organizations, and seed-stage for-profit commercial organizations. The *Accelerating Commercial Development* program is open to early-stage for-profit commercial organizations that have achieved Series A or comparable investment funding.

Priority research areas for this RFP include:

- Development of therapeutics that target specific B cell lineages involved in MS pathology
- Identification of surrogate or endogenous ligands for Orphan G Protein-Coupled Receptors (GPCRs) expressed exclusively or primarily in the central nervous system (CNS)

The \$3 million commitment is comprised of up to \$250,000 in funding available for one year to each awardee selected through the *Accelerating Innovation* program and up to \$500,000 in funding available for one year to each awardee selected through the *Accelerating Commercial Development* program.

The overall selection of program awardees will be made exclusively by Fast Forward, with participation by EMD Serono under Fast Forward’s standard assessment process. The full RFPs

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are available on Fast Forward's website, [www.fastforward.org](http://www.fastforward.org) along with eligibility criteria for both programs and instructions for submission of a proposal.

Proposals are required of all applicants and must be submitted online by May 1, 2012. Proposals will be reviewed by Fast Forward's staff and a panel of experts drawn from Fast Forward's Scientific and Business Advisory Committee. Funding is anticipated by December 2012. All funding disbursements will be managed and approved by the Fast Forward Board of Managers.

EMD Serono and Fast Forward entered into an initial two-year, worldwide agreement in March 2009, and recently extended the collaboration. As part of the up to \$19 million collaborative agreement with Fast Forward, EMD Serono provides the majority of funding for the research awards, with Fast Forward contributing 10 percent of the total financing of the awards disseminated from each of the two funds.

### **About multiple sclerosis**

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic, inflammatory condition of the central nervous system and is the most common, non-traumatic, disabling neurological disease in young adults. It is estimated that approximately two million people have MS worldwide. While symptoms can vary, the most common symptoms of MS include blurred vision, numbness or tingling in the limbs and problems with strength and coordination. The relapsing forms of MS are the most common.

### **About Fast Forward, LLC**

Fast Forward, LLC, established by the National Multiple Sclerosis Society as part of a comprehensive approach to MS research and treatment, focuses on speeding promising research discoveries towards commercial drug development. Fast Forward accelerates the development of treatments for MS by connecting university-based MS research with private-sector drug development and by funding small biotechnology/pharmaceutical companies to develop innovative new MS therapies and repurpose FDA-approved drugs as new treatments for MS. For more information, please visit [www.fastforward.org](http://www.fastforward.org).

### **About MS and the National Multiple Sclerosis Society**

MS is a chronic, unpredictable neurological disease that affects the central nervous system. It is thought to be an autoimmune disorder, meaning the immune system incorrectly attacks healthy tissue. Symptoms may be mild, such as numbness in the limbs, or severe, such as paralysis or loss of vision. These problems may be permanent or may come and go. The National MS Society addresses the challenges of each person affected by MS by funding cutting-edge research, driving change through advocacy, facilitating professional education, collaborating with MS organizations around the world, and providing programs and services designed to help people with MS and their families move their lives forward. The Society is dedicated to achieving a world free of MS. Join the movement at [www.nationalMSSociety.org](http://www.nationalMSSociety.org).

### **About EMD Serono, Inc.**

EMD Serono, Inc., an affiliate of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, is a leader in the US biopharmaceutical arena, integrating cutting-edge science with unparalleled patient support systems to improve people's lives. The company has strong market positions in neurodegenerative diseases, with Rebif® (interferon beta-1a), as well as in endocrinology, with Saizen® (somatotropin (rDNA origin) for injection), Serostim® (somatotropin (rDNA origin) for injection) and *EGRIFTA*® (tesamorelin for injection). EMD Serono is a leader in reproductive health, with Gonal-f® (follitropin alfa for injection), Luveris® (lutropin alfa for injection) and Ovidrel® Prefilled Syringe (choriogonadotropin alfa injection). In addition, EMD Serono is growing its expertise and presence in the area of oncology, with more

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than 10 projects currently in development. With a clear focus on the patient and a leadership presence in the biopharmaceutical industry, EMD Serono's US footprint continues to grow, with more than 1100 employees around the country and fully integrated commercial, clinical and research operations in the company's home state of Massachusetts.

For more information, please visit [www.emdserono.com](http://www.emdserono.com)

## **About Merck KGaA**

Merck is a global pharmaceutical and chemical company with total revenues of € 9.3 billion in 2010, a history that began in 1668, and a future shaped by more than 40,000 employees in 67 countries. Its success is characterized by innovations from entrepreneurial employees. Merck's operating activities come under the umbrella of Merck KGaA, in which the Merck family holds an approximately 70% interest and shareholders own the remaining approximately 30%. In 1917 the U.S. subsidiary Merck & Co. was expropriated and has been an independent company ever since.

For more information, please visit [www.merckserono.com](http://www.merckserono.com) or [www.merckgroup.com](http://www.merckgroup.com)

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