



## **Curetis Group Company Ares Genetics and BGI Group Collaborate to Offer Next-Generation Sequencing and PCR-based Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Testing in Europe**

- *BGI Group responds to coronavirus crisis by providing reagent kits for molecular 2019-nCoV testing by next-generation sequencing and RT-PCR*
- *Ares Genetics to launch next-generation sequencing testing service for infection control and monitoring of 2019-nCoV evolution using BGI Group reagents*
- *Ares Genetics, Curetis Group and BGI Group to collaborate in the distribution of next-generation sequencing and PCR testing kits for 2019-nCoV*

**Vienna, Austria, Holzgerlingen, Germany, and Shenzhen, China, January 30, 2020, 08:00 am CET** - Ares Genetics GmbH, a Curetis Group company, and the Chinese genomics company BGI Group today announced that the companies will collaborate in making molecular testing for the new coronavirus 2019-nCoV available in Europe.

2019-nCoV is a new coronavirus variant that has not been previously identified in humans but is responsible for the outbreak originating in the Chinese city of Wuhan and currently rapidly spreading globally with first cases identified and confirmed in Europe already. In response to this situation, and immediately after the occurrence of unexplained pneumonia in Wuhan, BGI sequenced the genome of the new 2019-nCoV virus and successfully developed a Real-Time (RT) Fluorescent PCR (polymerase chain reaction) kit for detecting 2019-nCoV, which can provide results in a few hours and has already obtained approval by the Chinese National Medical Products Administration.

In addition to the rapid detection kit based on RT-PCR technology, the DNBSEQ-T7 sequencing platform developed by the BGI Group company MGI passed the emergency approval procedure of the National Medical Products Administration, becoming the first officially approved testing products in China for surveillance, discovery and identification of unknown infectious diseases.

In Europe, BGI and MGI will work with their long-term strategic partner Ares Genetics to make its 2019-nCoV testing portfolio available to public health institutions and hospitals for outbreak monitoring, infection control, and epidemiology. Ares Genetics expects to provide next-generation sequencing services for 2019-nCoV out of its NGS laboratory in Vienna Austria for infection control and tracking of pathogen evolution from February 2020 onwards based on MGI's DNBSEQ sequencing platform. Further, Ares Genetics and the Curetis Group will support BGI Group in the distribution of its PCR and NGS reagent kits to molecular testing laboratories in

Europe that have the capability for 2019-nCoV testing with reagent kits initially being marketed for research use only prior to regulatory approval in Europe.

Ares Genetics is a digital diagnostics company utilizing artificial intelligence-powered molecular diagnostics to advance the field of infectious disease testing. Ares Genetics recently launched ARESupa – Universal Pathogenome Assay for the broad identification of bacterial pathogens and the accurate prediction of antibiotic susceptibility. The ARESupa test is based on the sequencing of bacterial DNA, combined with data analysis and interpretation powered by ARESdb, Ares Genetics' unique, proprietary reference database on genetic antimicrobial resistance markers. The first generation of ARESupa is currently offered for non-diagnostic applications in epidemiology, infection control, and outbreak analysis for customers in the public health sector and the pharmaceutical industry. A laboratory-developed test (LDT) for human diagnostic use is under development.

“The ability to rapidly test for 2019-nCoV with PCR as well as track its evolution by next-generation sequencing is key to contain this global outbreak. While Ares Genetics specializes in molecular detection of bacterial pathogens and antibiotic susceptibility prediction, we are responding to the global coronavirus health threat via our specialized molecular service laboratory and making 2019-nCoV testing broadly available in Europe under our strategic partnership with BGI.” commented Dr. Andreas Posch, Managing Director and CEO of Ares Genetics, “Longer-term, we anticipate that adding viruses to the scope for ARESupa will also significantly augment its utility as an aid in the differential diagnosis of viral and bacterial infections.”

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### **About ARESupa Universal Pathogenome Assay**

Information on antibiotic susceptibility of pathogens is of utmost importance for clinical practice, epidemiology and public health purposes as well as for the development of pharmaceutical products in the infectious disease sector. Ares Genetics therefore has developed a molecular Antibiotic Susceptibility Test (AST) that is marketed under the brand name ARESupa – Universal Pathogenome Assay and is capable of accurately identifying microbial pathogens as well as predicting antibiotic susceptibility via artificial intelligence-powered interpretation of high-throughput DNA sequencing data obtained by next-generation sequencing technologies.

ARESupa is based on whole-genome sequencing of bacterial strains isolated from clinical specimens, combined with data analysis and interpretation powered by ARESdb, Ares Genetics' unique, proprietary reference database on genetic antimicrobial resistance markers. ARESdb covers genomes of about 40,000 bacterial strains and associated susceptibility data for more than 100 different antibiotics.

ARESupa already today accurately detects antibiotic susceptibility broadly across drug/pathogen combinations with prediction algorithms for further drug/pathogen combinations in development.

The test is initially offered for non-diagnostic applications in epidemiology, infection control, and outbreak analysis for customers in the public health sector and the pharmaceutical industry. A

laboratory-developed test (LDT) on native patient samples for human diagnostic use in indications in which current culture-based diagnostic practice is inherently challenging is planned. Furthermore, Ares Genetics has recently entered into a multi-phase strategic partnership with an undisclosed leading global in vitro diagnostics corporation to jointly develop diagnostic solutions for infectious disease testing based on the ARESupa.

For further information and quotes, please register on the Ares Genetics cloud platform:

<https://ares-genetics.cloud/>

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### **About Curetis and Ares Genetics**

Curetis N.V.'s (Euronext: CURE) goal is to become a leading provider of innovative solutions for molecular microbiology diagnostics designed to address the global challenge of detecting severe infectious diseases and identifying antibiotic resistances in hospitalized patients.

Curetis' Unyvero System is a versatile, fast and highly automated molecular diagnostic platform for easy-to-use, cartridge-based solutions for the comprehensive and rapid detection of pathogens and antimicrobial resistance markers in a range of severe infectious disease indications. Results are available within hours, a process that can take days or even weeks if performed with standard diagnostic procedures, thereby facilitating improved patient outcomes, stringent antibiotic stewardship and health-economic benefits. Unyvero in vitro diagnostic (IVD) products are marketed in Europe, the Middle East, Asia and the U.S.

Curetis' wholly owned subsidiary Ares Genetics GmbH is developing next-generation solutions for infectious disease diagnostics and therapeutics. The ARES Technology Platform combines the presumably most comprehensive database worldwide on the genetics of antimicrobial resistances, ARESdb, with advanced bioinformatics and artificial intelligence.

**For further information, please visit [www.curetis.com](http://www.curetis.com) and [www.ares-genetics.com](http://www.ares-genetics.com).**

### **About BGI Group**

Founded in 1999, BGI is one of the world's leading life science and genomics organizations. BGI's mission is to use genomics to benefit mankind and to be a leader in the era of life sciences. BGI follows a genomics development model of "research, production and application". With businesses in more than 100 countries and regions around the world, BGI has established cooperation and partnerships with thousands of different organizations across multi-disciplinary

research areas including medical health, resource conservation and judicial services. At the same time, BGI provides equipment, technical support and solutions for the needs of national economies and people's livelihoods, such as precision medicine and precision health. BGI is committed to applying its genetic and technological achievements to real world settings in order to realize the dream of trans-omics for a better life.

## **About MGI**

MGI Tech Co., Ltd. (referred to as MGI) is committed to building core tools and technology to lead life science through intelligent innovation. MGI focuses on R&D, production and sales of DNA sequencing instruments, reagents, and related products to support life science research, agriculture, precision medicine and healthcare. MGI is a leading producer of clinical high-throughput gene sequencers, and its multi-omics platforms include genetic sequencing, mass spectrometry, medical imaging, and laboratory automation.

Founded in 2016, MGI has more than 1,000 employees, nearly half of whom are R&D personnel. MGI operates in 26 countries and regions and has established multiple research and production bases around the world. Providing real-time, comprehensive, life-long solutions, its vision is to enable effective and affordable healthcare solutions for all.

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