



Mauna Kea Technologies



Mauna Kea Technologies and EndoControl Receive 10.3 Million Dollars in Funding to Develop Robotic-Assisted, Flexible Microscope for Minimally Invasive Exploration of the Abdominal Cavity

Researchers aim to perfect technology and techniques to improve cancer patient management decisions

PARIS (April 16th, 2010) -- Mauna Kea Technologies, the global leader in endomicroscopy, and EndoControl, a developer of robotics to assist medical and surgical procedures, today announced a partnership with three leading medical and research institutes to develop a tiny, robotic-assisted, flexible endomicroscope that will allow physicians to explore the abdominal cavity in a minimally-invasive manner to determine if cancer patients are appropriate candidates for surgery or would be better suited to chemotherapy or radiation treatment.

Named the PERSEE project, the collaboration aims to help physicians make more informed choices about how to treat cancer patients to ultimately improve their outcomes. The project is backed with support from the Industrial Strategic Innovation program (ISI) of OSEO.

“Surgery is often the first line of offense when treating cancer patients because it offers the potential to cure more than 50% of solid tumors by itself” said Prof. Brice Gayet, head of the Digestive Diseases Department at Institut Mutualiste Montsouris in Paris. However, conditions that would normally preclude a patient from undergoing surgery – including peritoneal carcinomatosis or distal lymph node invasion – are often only discovered in the midst of the surgery. These already weak patients suffer two-fold because they will need to recover from the highly invasive, ultimately unnecessary procedure or inappropriate timing, while other treatments such as chemotherapy or radiation are delayed for weeks. With PERSEE, we hope to develop pre-operative minimally invasive techniques to provide decisive information that will help us plan the best, most efficient strategies, for instance including neoadjuvant therapeutics, to treat cancer patients.”

Mauna Kea Technologies and EndoControl will lead the project with input from teams at Institute of Intelligent Systems and Robotics (ISIR) of Pierre et Marie Curie University, and the department of digestive pathologies of Institut Mutualiste Montsouris (IMM), both in Paris; and the cancer center Institut Gustave Roussy (IGR), in Villejuif (Cell Imaging, Gastroenterology and Biopathology departments).

Mauna Kea Technologies' Cellvizio® probe-based Confocal Laser Endomicroscopy (pCLE) system, the world's smallest and most flexible microscope, is currently used by leading gastroenterologists and pulmonologists during endoscopy or bronchoscopy procedures to obtain relevant microscopic information in real time in order to help them detect early malignant lesions and decide whether they can be treated on the spot.

EndoControl's know-how in state-of-the-art surgical robotic technology has led to the development of the ViKY system, the world's most compact assistant robot for minimally invasive surgery currently used worldwide by leading surgical teams.

The PERSEE teams will work to combine Cellvizio imaging with robotic technology so the surgeon can navigate into the abdomen via a single incision to gain important insight in real time for exploratory purposes.

“We believe the PERSEE project has the potential to deeply impact cancer treatment in France and the rest of the world,” said Claude Pinault, OSEO's ISI program Manager. “The minimally invasive exploratory procedures that will be developed through this collaboration will help the right patients get the proper treatments in a timely manner. We also expect these innovations to help reduce the cost of cancer treatment since operating rooms and hospital teams will not be monopolized for unnecessary purposes.”

OSEO-ISI will provide up to US\$ 10.3 million to fund the project; the PERSEE partners will fund the remaining US\$ 11.8 million.

“We're very pleased to be leading this collaboration, which brings together the fields of endomicroscopy, robotics, histology and surgery and which is made possible by the OSEO-ISI program” said Sacha Loiseau, president, CEO and founder of Mauna Kea Technologies. “We believe endomicroscopy has significant potential in the surgical space, similar to what we've already seen in gastroenterology and pulmonology”

About Cellvizio

Cellvizio, the world's smallest and most flexible microscope, is the first system designed to provide live images of internal human tissues at the cellular level during endoscopic procedures. This new method, known as probe-based Confocal Laser Endomicroscopy (pCLE), allows physicians to pinpoint and remove diseased tissue with endoscopic tools on the spot, or, in more serious cases, send the patient directly to surgery. This new, advanced imaging technique helps physicians to detect cancer more effectively so patients can be treated earlier and undergo fewer biopsies. Physicians and thought leaders at almost one hundred top medical institutions around the world have completed over 4,000 of these procedures and have published more than 35 peer-reviewed papers on the technology in major medical journals. Cellvizio, which delivers up to 12 microscopic images per second and can be used with almost any endoscope, has 510(k) clearance from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the European CE-Mark for use in the gastrointestinal and pulmonary tracts.

About Mauna Kea Technologies

Mauna Kea Technologies is a medical device company based in Paris, France. With its flagship Cellvizio system, the company leads the growing endomicroscopy imaging market, enabling physicians to visualize, diagnose and treat directly inside the body pathologies that cannot be seen using other imaging techniques. Investors include Psilos Group, Seventure and Creadev. For more information about Mauna Kea Technologies visit www.maunakeatech.com

About EndoControl

EndoControl is an innovative company which specializes in the development of robotic surgical solutions for endoscopic surgery, where it markets a range of products including ViKY, a multi task, compact robotic assistant for laparoscopic, pelviscopic and thoracoscopic surgery which easily integrates in the operating room. Since it received CE marking in 2007 and FDA approval in 2008, over 1000 surgical procedures have been performed with ViKY. EndoControl has established an international distribution network that utilizes independent specialized distributor partners. EndoControl has installed over 35 systems worldwide, with installations in Austria, Germany, Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, Holland, the U.K, the US and Canada. EndoControl has also developed clinical relationships with many renowned clinicians and institutions in laparoscopic surgery (Institut Mutualiste Montsouris, Paris; Cleveland Clinic, USA; Fox Chase Cancer Center, Philadelphia, USA; Fundacion Puigvert, Barcelona, Spain). Through these relationships EndoControl has been able to transfer its unique expertise in surgical robotic systems technology from research laboratories directly into the operating room. Founded in 2006 by Clément VIDAL and Patrick HENRI, the company is based in La Tronche, near Grenoble, in the business incubator Biopolis and has 12 employees. For more information about EndoControl, visit www.endocontrol.fr

About IMM

Institut Mutualiste Montsouris is a private non profit hospital, located south of Paris, affiliated to University Paris Descartes. Organized into medico-surgical departments, its activities cover a wide range of medical and surgical diseases, with highly specialized teams. Since 1989, with a world premiere in laparoscopic cholecystectomy, IMM has played a leading role in the development and the adoption of modern surgical techniques. Laparoscopy is now routinely chosen at IMM for all digestive organs, including liver and pancreas, where an unequalled average of 94% of hepatectomies are performed under laparoscopy. For more information about IMM visit www.imm.fr

About ISIR

Within Univ. Pierre & Marie Curie - Paris 6, ranked 1st among French Universities and 5th in Europe in the Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities, ISIR is the largest academic laboratory solely dedicated to robotics and intelligent systems in France. For years, ISIR has been a leading institution in the development of robotics for surgery, particularly dexterous instruments and endoscopes for minimally invasive surgery, with specific expertise in microactuators, force feedback control, automatic guidance and manipulation of surgical instruments between a robot and a surgeon.

For more information about ISIR, visit www.isir.upmc.fr

About IGR

The Institute Gustave-Roussy (IGR) is a European anticancer center of worldwide stature that brings together on one site 2,500 men and women whose missions are to treat patients suffering from cancer, to conduct research and to develop new therapies. Located in the south of Paris, France, IGR relies on multidisciplinary expertises for providing patients with the latest innovations in cancer treatment. IGR combines health care with first-rate basic, clinical & translational research, in an international context, to speed up the development of new medical & surgical technologies and the management of complex patient cases. For more information about IGR, visit www.igr.fr

About OSEO's Strategic Industrial Innovation Programme

The Strategic Industrial Innovation Programme – or ISI, its French acronym – promotes the emergence of European champions. It supports innovative, ambitious, collaborative projects, which are industry-oriented and led by intermediate companies and SMEs, all advancing state-of-the-art technologies. When successful, these projects have a very promising outcome, as they aim at commercializing the innovations arising from technological breakthroughs, which would not be otherwise carried out without public funding. Funds are allocated in the form of grants and loans, ranging from 3 to 10 M€.

Media Contact:

Erich Sandoval of Lazar Partners

Phone: +1-917-497-2867

E-mail: esandoval@lazarpartners.com