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## Xention Limited Receives Wellcome Trust Award For Atrial Fibrillation Programme

**CAMBRIDGE, UK** – XENTION LTD, the Cambridge-based biopharmaceutical company specialising in the discovery and development of ion channel-modulating drugs, announced today that it had received a substantial award from the Wellcome Trust (“Wellcome”) to support pioneering work on an exciting target for atrial fibrillation.

The award, made under Wellcome’s Seeding Drug Discovery initiative, will provide up to £3 million to fund Xention’s IKACH programme over a period of three years. IKACH is the acetylcholine-activated potassium current encoded by the Kir3.1/3.4 ion channel genes and is an emerging ion channel target for the development of new therapeutics for atrial fibrillation, an area in which Xention has already broad expertise. IKACH is expressed only in the atria, and inhibition of IKACH is expected to maintain sinus rhythm in patients who have experienced episodes of atrial fibrillation. Using the funding provided by Wellcome, Xention will develop small molecule, orally active inhibitors of IKACH for assessment in *in vivo* models and subsequent progression into clinical development. This approach is of great interest to clinicians in a therapeutic area that is currently underserved with clinically effective, well-tolerated, medicines. Xention’s IKACH programme will complement its existing Kv1.5 programme, the most advanced compound from which is currently in clinical development.

Atrial fibrillation is the most common sustained cardiac arrhythmia encountered in clinical practice and is gaining in clinical importance as the population ages. It currently accounts for a very significant segment of healthcare expenditure mainly as a consequence of the increased risk of stroke that results from the disease. Although a number of drugs and therapeutic approaches are used for the management of AF, each has significant side effects and few are suitable for the prevention of the disease. There is a substantial and timely opportunity to fill this treatment gap with a safe and effective

therapeutic, and IKACH represents a novel and innovative approach in the search for a solution to this serious medical problem.

“We are very pleased to have received this prestigious award,” commented Tim Brears, Xention’s Chief Executive. “We look forward to working with the Wellcome Trust over the coming years to develop new therapeutics in this area of substantial unmet medical need.”

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**Notes to Editors:**

Xention Ltd is a leader in the discovery and development of ion channel-modulating drugs. The Company’s potential breakthrough drugs in clinical development include XEN-D0101, a new atrial selective potassium channel blocker for atrial fibrillation, and XEN-D0501, a novel ion channel modulator for the treatment of overactive bladder. Xention also has preclinical research programmes in atrial fibrillation, pain and autoimmune disease. The Company uses proprietary ion channel expertise and technologies to accelerate the discovery of potent and selective ion channel drugs. In particular, Xention is a leader in the use of true electrophysiological data, ion channel chemoinformatics and experienced medicinal chemistry to identify potent new small molecule drugs in this rapidly evolving field of medicine. For further information, please see their website <http://www.xention.com>.

The Wellcome Trust is the largest charity in the UK. It funds innovative biomedical research, in the UK and internationally, spending around £600 million each year to support the brightest scientists with the best ideas. The Wellcome Trust supports public debate about biomedical research and its impact on health and wellbeing. <http://www.wellcome.ac.uk>.