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Merck and Transcenta to advance continuous biomanufacturing

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Companies to co-develop a first-of-its-kind, single-use flow-through polishing system for GMP operation in protein therapeutics



Merck has announced a strategic technology collaboration with Transcenta, a global biotherapeutics company headquartered in China, to implement continuous manufacturing for protein therapeutics.

"Merck's commitment and extensive expertise in next-generation manufacturing uniquely positions us to help transform Transcenta's vision for a fully continuous manufacturing process into a reality," said Ian Carmichael, vice president and general manager of Bioprocessing, Life Science, at Merck in China. "Our joint effort reflects a shared commitment to advance BioProcessing 4.0 and continuous bioprocessing to accelerate access to health for patients in China and across the world."

This unique model of collaboration between supplier and customer brings the teams together in real time to converge single-use, continuous and digital bioprocessing technologies for the further development of Transcenta's integrated continuous bioprocessing (ICB) platform. As part of the initiative, Merck and Transcenta will co-develop a first-of-its-kind, single-use flow-through polishing system, one of the key elements of Transcenta's ICB Platform.

The first phase of this multi-year partnership will focus on developing and designing the process technologies, single-use system and automation, while the second phase will focus on an expanded scope of process and digital technologies to optimize a continuous manufacturing process. This highly collaborative relationship leverages Merck's BioContinuum™ Platform and extensive expertise in continuous processing to help realize Transcenta's vision to implement fully continuous bioprocessing in GMP manufacturing in China.

"To fulfill our mission to deliver high quality and affordable innovative biologics to patients around the world, Transcenta is advancing our highly productive ICB platform for the manufacturing of any protein biologics through process intensification, automation and power of continuous bioprocessing," said Chris Hwang, chief technology officer at Transcenta. "Merck's BioContinuum™ Platform and broad portfolio make them an ideal collaborative partner to help us accelerate and realize the

potential of ICB."

Merck has been a key driver of the evolution toward continuous processing through its expanding BioContinuum™ Platform, which combines intensified, connected and continuous processing with software, automation and analytical technologies to help manufacturers reach their Bioprocessing 4.0 goals. Bioprocessing 4.0 refers to driving manufacturing forward by increasing digitilization and the interconnection of products, supply chains and business models. It is defined as a totally end-to-end connected bioprocess, in which all systems and equipment in the process are digitally connected. Merck was the first supplier to combine advanced process technologies with software, automation and analytics into a single environment with its Bio4C™ Software Suite.