Maciej Parys wins the 2017 ABCD & Merial Young Scientist Award

The 2017 ABCD & Merial Young Scientist Award (AMYSA) will go to Dr Maciej Parys (32), originally from Poland and currently working at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies of the University of Edinburgh, UK, for his work on the immunomodulatory properties of feline mesenchymal stem cells (MSC).

“Our studies have shown that feline MSC use a similar set of genes as human cells. This makes inflammatory disorders in cats a reliable model for studying MSC therapy”, Dr Parys explained. “We have also proven that feline MSC are able to block the proliferation of stimulated peripheral mononuclear blood cells, which further supports their use in the treatment of immune-mediated diseases.”

“Dr Parys’s work may be of importance for a wide field of inflammatory and immune-mediated diseases, and not only in cats”, commented Dr Karin Moestl, chair of the European Advisory Board on Cat Diseases (ABCD), adding that this year’s applications were of particularly high quality. “Dr Parys provided excellent work and this award recognizes a scientist with very promising career”, added Dr Jean-Christophe Thibault, Merial’s Global Technical Director for Companion Animal vaccines.

The award (1000€) is funded by Merial and will be presented by the ABCD at the congress of the International Society of Feline Medicine, to be held from 28 June to 2 July 2017 in Brighton, UK. The recipients of the Clinical and Research AMYSA 2016 were Vito Colella (University of Bari) and Mirja Nolff (University of Munich).

The ABCD and Merial Young Scientist Award, created in 2008, is funded by Merial and is presented to young scientists in veterinary or biomedical sciences, who have made an original contribution in the field of feline infectious diseases and/or immunology.

Applicants should have published their findings in a journal listed in PubMed or Web of Science or have had them accepted by another recognised assessing body. Candidates should be based in Europe, have completed a veterinary or biomedical curriculum, and be under 35 years of age at the time of application. Applications in the fields of both basic and applied sciences are welcome.

For further information, please contact Karin de Lange, ABCD secretary, karin.delange@abcd-vets.org

Notes to Editors:

■ The European Advisory Board on Cat Diseases (ABCD) is an independent panel of 15 leading veterinarians from eleven European countries, with an expertise in immunology, vaccinology and/or feline medicine. The ABCD was set up to compile guidelines for the prevention and management of major feline infectious diseases in Europe, based on current scientific knowledge. For more information, please visit www.abcdcatsvets.org

■ Merial is a world-leading, innovation-driven animal health company, providing a comprehensive range of products to enhance the health, wellbeing and performance of a wide range of animals. Merial employs 6,900 people and operates in more than 150 countries worldwide, with $2.5 billion of sales in 2015. Merial is now part of Boehringer Ingelheim. For more information, please see http://www.merial.com.