

MEDIA RELEASE *IMBcom Pty Ltd*

Australian gene technology launched in US

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A new gene expression analysis platform invented by Australian scientists to help other researchers understand fundamental aspects of human development has been launched in the US market overnight.

[IMBcom Pty Ltd](#) and [Invitrogen Corporation](#) have partnered to take the technology, developed by researchers at the [Institute for Molecular Bioscience](#) (IMB) at The University of Queensland, to the American market.

Professor John Mattick and Dr Marcel Dinger from the IMB developed the first high-density microarray chip, the NCode™ Human and Mouse non-coding RNA microarray, which can be used by researchers to profile both messenger and non-coding RNAs.

Standard microarray chips interrogate messenger RNAs to determine which genes are active in a cell at any particular moment in time. Non-coding RNAs are not traditional genes, as they do not produce proteins, but they appear to comprise a vast hidden layer of genetic programming implicated in development and disease pathways in mammals.

"Non-coding RNA transcripts play a variety of roles in a cell, ranging from simple housekeeping to complex regulatory functions, and evidence is mounting that their expression is perturbed in many cancers," Professor Mattick said.

"Because their function remains largely unknown, these transcripts represent a new frontier of molecular genetic, molecular biological, physiological and cell biological research."

IMBcom, UQ's company for the commercialisation of intellectual property arising from research conducted at the IMB, licensed the technology to Invitrogen, who will market and distribute the product.

"When we talked to scientists about their interest in studying non-coding RNA, many told us they wanted a microarray that consisted of both mRNA and non-coding RNA content, which would help them elucidate the function of specific non-coding RNAs in relation to known pathways of gene expression," Amy Butler, Vice President of Gene Expression Profiling for Invitrogen, said.

The NCode™ microarray answers this need, with thousands of coding and non-coding sequences that could answer multiple scientific questions in a single experiment.

Media:

Professor John Mattick 07 3346 2079 or 0412 547 827

Dr Marcel Dinger 07 3346 2080

Dr Peter Isdale (CEO of IMBcom) 07 3346 2180

Bronwyn Adams (IMB Communications) 07 3346 2134 or 0418 575 247

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