



## Avantium appoints Gunnar Staaf as CEO Pharma

### *Strengthening of leadership team to prepare Pharma business for spin-out*

December 16, 2009, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Today, Avantium announced the appointment of Gunnar Staaf as Chief Executive Officer of its pharmaceutical business. Gunnar Staaf previously worked at Serentis Ltd, Astellas Pharma, Novartis and Eli Lilly & Company, in a range of commercial and executive positions. The appointment is an important step in Avantium's plan to spin-out its pharmaceutical business. The company intends to create a stand-alone pharmaceutical company based on its offering of proprietary crystallization services and systems to customers in the pharmaceutical and biotechnology sector as well as the development of improved forms of existing drugs. After the spin-out of its pharmaceutical business, Avantium will focus on its cleantech and chemicals activities, including its Furanics bioplastics and biofuels program and offering of high-throughput catalysis services & systems.

Tom van Aken, CEO of Avantium, commented: "With his background in the pharmaceutical industry and wealth of commercial experience, Gunnar is a tremendous addition to our company. The appointment of Gunnar is an important step towards a focused pharmaceutical company. Under Gunnar's leadership we believe that our Pharma business will accelerate the development of improved drug forms, and will further strengthen our position as a leading solid-state research services & systems provider."

Upon his appointment Gunnar Staaf commented: "I am pleased to join Avantium at this exciting stage. The company has an excellent technological position and expertise in crystallization research and is a leading provider of services & systems in this area. The technology forms a strong basis for the development of novel forms and formulations of existing drugs. I am convinced that we have all the ingredients to become a dedicated and successful pharmaceutical company."

#### **About Avantium**

Avantium is a leading technology company in the area of advanced high-throughput R&D operating in the energy, chemicals and pharmaceutical industries. The company develops products and processes in the area of biofuels, bio-based chemicals and novel crystal forms of existing drugs by applying its proprietary, high-throughput R&D technology.

Avantium has demonstrated the potential of this technology by providing R&D services and tools to more than 70 companies worldwide. Avantium's customer base includes many of the world's largest energy, chemicals and pharmaceutical companies, such as BP, Shell, Sasol, Pfizer and GSK. Avantium has more than 100 employees; its offices and head quarters are based in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

#### **For more information**

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