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Press release

### **University of Waikato and Synthase Biotech form research partnership**

The University of Waikato and Synthase Biotech have signed a binding Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that provides a foundation to work collaboratively on important scientific and technological research with clear commercial targets.

The MoU, signed by University of Waikato Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research Professor Bruce Clarkson and Synthase Executive Chairman Mark Backhaus, will strengthen a long-standing collaboration between the University and Synthase, underpinning joint research in industrial enzymology.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research Professor Bruce Clarkson says the MoU formalises an ongoing relationship with Synthase, which will benefit Waikato students, staff and the wider community.

“The MoU will provide an excellent platform to strengthen our partnership with Synthase, enhancing our ability to work together on a long-term programme of research in the future,” says Professor Clarkson.

The research will initially focus on enhancing Synthase’s Aloxsyn™ proprietary enzyme technology, with a plan to develop fast, efficient and stable enzymes for a range of commercial applications. The University will contribute leading research expertise in this area while Synthase will provide insights into industry needs and a channel to market for commercial enzyme technology, and co-invest in research and intellectual property protection.

“We hold the University of Waikato in great esteem,” says Mr Backhaus. “Professor Arcus and his team are a veritable scientific powerhouse and a remarkable IP-generating engine. This relationship will endure for decades and is going to be absolutely remarkable.”

“It has genuine potential to generate significant wealth,” says Synthase Executive Director Dr Andrew West.

In past collaborations, Synthase has worked with Professor Arcus in the University’s enzyme engineering laboratory, investing in projects and students, some who have gone on to join Synthase as employees.

Synthase is a New Zealand company established in 2015 to commercialise technologies to control oxidative damage to lipids in biological systems. Synthase is currently commercialising an enzyme that has strong specificity and high rates of reaction against toxic lipid peroxides, which result from oxidative stress in cells. This addresses a major pathway by which degenerative processes and cell death occur. Synthase’s proprietary bioactive Aloxsyn™ is a unique solution to address those degenerative processes.

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