

## **Sera Prognostics Closes \$1.4 million Series A-1 Financing**

### **UpStart Ventures and Catalyst Health Ventures Lead Funding for Preterm Birth Diagnostic**

Salt Lake City, UT – January 4, 2011 – Sera Prognostics, Inc., a women’s health company developing diagnostic tests for early prediction of preterm birth and other pregnancy complications, today announced that it raised \$1.4 million in Series A-1 financing. Sera is currently developing a simple blood test that measures proprietary biomarkers that are highly predictive of preterm birth risk.

Sera has licensed a serum proteomics discovery technology and novel peptides that have been demonstrated to be highly predictive of preterm birth. These peptides, which are only detectable in pregnant women, have been tested in two blinded, case-controlled studies using blood samples and other clinical data collected during the NICHD Maternal-Fetal Medicine Units Network Preterm Prediction Study. Results of each of these studies show that Sera was able to identify greater than 90 percent of women that went on to have a preterm birth, when tested at 24 and 28 weeks of gestation.

UpStart Ventures founded Sera in 2008 and was the lead investor for the Series A-1 financing. UpStart was joined by investments from Catalyst Health Ventures and a number of individual investors. Dennis Farrar, a partner with UpStart Ventures, serves as Sera’s chairman and chief executive officer.

“The success of this early financing recognizes the significant accomplishments to date of the company,” said Mr. Farrar. “In addition to demonstrating the potential of the preterm birth biomarkers in two independent studies, Sera has assembled a management team and board of directors with significant clinical development and women’s healthcare diagnostics experience.”

“Catalyst believes that diagnostics will play an increasingly important role in the value of preventative healthcare,” said Josh Phillips, general partner with Catalyst Health Ventures. “Preterm birth is a significant health problem and there are no reliable means of early assessment. Catalyst is pleased to help develop a tool that can help physicians manage at-risk pregnancies and provide healthier deliveries.”

There are approximately 4.5 million births in the U.S. each year and approximately 12 percent, or 525,000, result in early deliveries. “These babies face a high risk of serious health complications and preterm birth can incur significant medical costs,” said M. Sean Esplin, M.D., co-founder of Sera and associate professor in the Division of Maternal Fetal Medicine at the University of Utah Health Sciences Center. “Doctors currently rely on a range of varied risk factors for predicting preterm birth, however, in most cases, no risk factors are present. We believe that Sera’s test will help physicians identify preterm birth risk early and guide treatments to manage

and extend at-risk pregnancies. This will improve the health of newborns and reduce the economic burden on the healthcare system and families.”

### **About Preterm Birth**

Of approximately 4.5 million births per year in the U.S., approximately 1.2 million are considered to be at high risk of preterm birth, and approximately one in eight babies, or 12 percent, are born premature each year. Preterm birth is the leading cause of illness and death associated with newborns, with a significantly increased risk of major long-term childhood medical complications such as learning disabilities, seizures, mental retardation, cerebral palsy, chronic respiration illness, and vision and hearing loss. According to a study by the March of Dimes, the annual public healthcare cost of caring for preterm infants in the U.S. is over \$26 billion. Additional lifetime costs for children with preterm birth-related medical complications is estimated at approximately \$500,000 per child.

### **About Sera Prognostics**

Sera Prognostics is a private biotechnology company developing diagnostic tests that use proprietary biomarkers that are predictive of preterm birth and other pregnancy complications. Sera was founded in 2008 and licensed its serum proteomics discovery technology and novel peptides from Brigham Young University and the University of Utah. The company has assembled a board of directors and management team with significant clinical development and women’s healthcare diagnostic experience for translating scientific innovation into commercial products that help patients and build significant corporate value. Sera is located in Salt Lake City, Utah. For more information, please visit the company's website at [www.seraprognostics.com](http://www.seraprognostics.com).

### **About UpStart Ventures**

UpStart Ventures forms and invests in start-up and early-stage healthcare companies. Most of the start-ups are based on breakthrough technologies from major research universities in Utah. The fund focuses on diagnostics, medical devices, drug delivery systems and biopharma.

### **About Catalyst Health Ventures**

Catalyst Health Ventures is an early-stage venture capital firm targeting technology solutions applied within the health care and life science industries. At the core of its strategy is a committed, hands-on approach to working with management and syndicate partners to build successful companies. Catalyst’s disciplined investment process leverages both intellectual and financial capital to originate deals, cultivate opportunities, and realize the full potential of emerging ventures in the health care and life science marketplace. For more information on Catalyst Health Ventures, visit: [www.catalysthealthventures.com](http://www.catalysthealthventures.com).

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