Acesion Pharma receives 5M DKK from Innovation Fund Denmark to support human Proof-of-Concept study in Atrial Fibrillation (AF)

**COPENHAGEN, Denmark — 12 March 2019:** Acesion Pharma (“Acesion” or the Company), a Danish biotech company developing novel treatments for atrial fibrillation (AF), the most common cardiac arrhythmia, announces that Innovation Fund Denmark has granted the Company 4,965,000 DKK from the Fund’s ‘Innobooster’ program. The Grant will support the conduction of Acesion’s first study in patients with AF. Following a successful Phase I study in healthy volunteers in 2018, Acesion will initiate a Phase II study in the second quarter of 2019 to obtain clinical proof-of-concept for its drug for IV cardioversion of AF to normal sinus rhythm.

Atrial fibrillation (AF) is the most common cardiac arrhythmia, affecting an estimated 10 million people in the US and the EU (30 million people worldwide). The incidence of AF increases with age and it is estimated that 5-10% of the population above the age of 70 have AF.

AF is characterised by an irregular and abnormally high frequency in the upper chambers of the heart, the atria, and is associated with impaired quality of life, increased rate of hospitalisation, and increased risk of stroke and death. Existing drug therapies have only limited effect and/or are associated with risk of serious adverse effects. There exists therefore a high unmet need for developing more efficacious and safe drugs for the medical treatment of AF.

Acesion’s novel approach is based on inhibition of SK channels - ion channels present in the heart where they play a role in regulating the cardiac rhythm. Selectively blocking SK channels leads to an anti-arrhythmic and atrial selective effect that may prevent deleterious effects on the ventricles. Targeting the SK channels thereby constitutes a novel and promising approach for an effective treatment of AF with an expected higher cardiac safety profile.

Ulrik Sørensen, co-Founder and COO of Acesion comments: “We are excited about this significant grant from Innovation Fund Denmark which will support our plans to conduct Acesion’s first study in patients, a study that is planned to also include Danish hospitals and AF patients. We are very pleased to have the continued support from Innovation Fund Denmark, who have in the earlier days of our company supported the preclinical validation of this novel concept for treating AF.”

**ENDS**

For more information, please contact:

**Acesion Pharma**
Frans Wuite, CEO                Ulrik Sørensen, co-Founder and COO
Email: fgw@acesionpharma.com       E-mail: uls@acesionpharma.com

**Optimum Strategic Communications**
Supriya Mathur, Mary Clark
Notes to Editors

About Acesion Pharma
Acesion Pharma ApS is a privately held Danish biotech company developing novel treatments for atrial fibrillation (AF), the most common cardiac arrhythmia. Founded in 2011 and based in Copenhagen, Acesion's compounds are based on a novel target giving a potentially unique efficacy and safety profile for the treatment of AF. Existing drug therapies generally have a limited effect or are associated with risk of serious cardiac adverse events, and there is therefore a considerable patient need for developing better and safer drugs. Acesion aims to develop first-in-class SK channel inhibitors as a more efficacious, safe and tolerable treatment of AF. Inhibition of SK channels with relevance for regulating the heart rhythm constitutes a new and promising approach for the treatment of AF. Acesion is developing a portfolio for both intervention and prevention of AF in hospitals and by patients themselves.
Acesion Pharma has an experienced Management Team and Board as well as world leading scientific advisors. It is backed by blue chip investors including Novo Holdings, Wellcome Trust and Broadview Ventures. For more information, please visit http://www.acesionpharma.com/

About Innovation Fund Denmark
Innovation Fund Denmark invests in the development of new knowledge and technology creating growth and employment in Denmark. The Fund focuses on societal challenges, strengthens research and increases innovation commitment within private companies.
For more information, please visit http://www.innovationsfonden.dk

About Atrial fibrillation
Atrial fibrillation is the most common cardiac arrhythmia, affecting an estimated 10 million people in the US and the EU (30 million people worldwide). Estimates indicate that the number of AF patients in Europe will increase by 120,000–215,000 new cases per year. The incidence of AF increases with age and it is estimated that 5-10% of the population above the age of 70 have AF. The lifetime risk for developing AF is 25% for individuals over 40 years of age.

Awareness of AF is low, with patients often under-diagnosed and/or referred too late. AF is associated with a variety of symptoms that cause an impaired quality of life, increased rate of hospitalisation, and increased risk of stroke and death. AF-related strokes are estimated to account for up to 20% of all strokes, and the expected dramatic rise in the numbers of AF patients predict a major increase in the economic burden of AF. Patients with atrial fibrillation also face an increased risk of cognitive dysfunction and dementia. In a recent study, 41% patients with AF, but without a history of stroke, had at least one type of previously unknown brain damage as verified by magnetic resonance imaging.

To improve awareness and detection, the FDA has approved the Apple Watch Series 4 along with Apple apps to monitor for atrial fibrillation and record the data for a medical professional.