
VECT-HORUS announces the signing of a scientific collaboration agreement with SANOFI in the field of neurodegenerative diseases

Marseille, January 19th, 2015, VECT-HORUS, a biotechnology company that designs and develops peptide-vectors that facilitate the delivery of drugs or imaging agents into organs, notably into the brain, and tumors, announced today the signing of a scientific collaboration agreement with SANOFI. The goal of this collaboration is to use VECT-HORUS' proprietary technology to transport therapeutic antibodies into the brain for the treatment of a neurodegenerative disease.

"This agreement with a global leader in the biopharmaceutical industry reflects the growing interest in our drug delivery platform based on peptide-vectors, and more widely the potential of our approach to facilitate the addressing of diagnostic and therapeutic molecules to different organs and particularly to the brain", says Alexandre TOKAY, co-founder and CEO of VECT-HORUS. "We are very pleased with the signing of this agreement and convinced that this research collaboration will be fruitful for both parties and will open new avenues in the treatment of neurodegenerative diseases".

The blood-brain barrier (BBB) restricts very effectively the passage of imaging or therapeutic agents from blood to brain. Effectiveness of this barrier increases with the size of the molecules and as a consequence, the vast majority of the innovative biomolecules developed by the pharmaceutical industry, including peptides, proteins, therapeutic antibodies, with promising potential in the field of brain disorders, do not cross the BBB. CNS diseases represent a high unmet medical need and already the second largest therapeutic market, in spite of the fact that there is still no cure or efficient treatments to tackle neurodegenerative diseases.

Transporting drugs across the BBB is thus a technological barrier that VECT-HORUS intends to lift, allowing thereby the treatment of neurodegenerative diseases, particularly with therapeutic antibodies. The scientific approach of the company is based on the principle that the BBB is not only a physical barrier that must be crossed, but also a functional barrier whose natural transport mechanisms may be advantageously used to deliver drugs into the brain. The peptide-vectors developed by VECT-HORUS use endogenous transport mechanisms to facilitate the passage of drugs or imaging agents across the BBB, into the pathological brain.

The agreement with SANOFI is part of VECT-HORUS' framework strategy, which is to use its proprietary technology to enter into R&D agreements with biopharmaceutical companies to generate patentable new chemical entities, based on the vectorization of their drug candidates.

About VECT-HORUS

VECT-HORUS is a French biotechnology company that designs and develops peptide-vectors that facilitate the delivery of drugs or imaging agents into organs, notably into the brain, and tumors. By combining these molecules of interest to peptide-vectors targeting specific membrane receptors, VECT-HORUS allows them to cross natural barriers (the first of which, the BBB) that restrict access to their target territory: organ, tissue, brain, tumor, etc.

The highly specific and stable peptide-vectors designed, developed and validated by VECT HORUS are protected by several families of patents and patent applications. The company has already demonstrated proof of concept of its technology in animal models by vectorizing notably an endogenous neuropeptide thus generating a first drug-candidate with neuroprotective properties. This drug-candidate is about to enter regulatory preclinical trial in early 2015.

Founded in 2005, VECT-HORUS is a spin-off from the CNRS and Aix-Marseille Université NICN-UMR7529 neurobiology laboratory directed by Dr. Michel KHRESTCHATISKY. Its founders are Alexandre TOKAY, CEO, and Michel KHRESTCHATISKY, Scientific Advisor. VECT-HORUS has 17 employees, mostly in R&D.

VECT-HORUS was recently identified by the CNRS as one of the 15 success stories among 1,000 spin-offs from its laboratories (*cf. press release*).

More about VECT-HORUS at www.vect-horus.com

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