



Aglaia Therapeutics becomes Ribonexus and signs exclusive license agreement with Pierre Fabre on small molecules targeting eIF4A, an innovative target in oncology

Villejuif and Castres, France, November 18, 2021 – Ribonexus (previously Aglaia Therapeutics), a biotechnology startup developing promising new therapies that can overcome resistance to current targeted therapies in cancer patients, and French pharmaceutical group Pierre Fabre today announce the signing of an exclusive license agreement on a series of Pierre Fabre patented small molecules targeting the Eukaryotic translation initiation factor 4A (eIF4A). This target is highly expressed in a variety of solid and hematologic cancers, including melanoma, and associated with resistance to many current therapies. Inhibiting eIF4A appears therefore to be a promising therapeutic approach.

In return for the license rights granted to Ribonexus, Pierre Fabre will receive development and sales milestones payments and royalties on future sales. Financial details are not disclosed.

To foster its pre-clinical development program, Ribonexus will benefit from Pierre Fabre's knowledge and support on the pharmacology and chemistry of the licensed molecules.

Scientific co-founders of Ribonexus, Pr Caroline Robert, Head of the Dermatology Unit at Gustave Roussy Cancer Campus and Dr Stéphane Vagner, Research Director at Institut Curie, said: "While targeted therapies have dramatically improved cancer patient outcomes, global efficacy of these treatments decreases over time, with patients rapidly developing resistance to therapies. We aim to deliver best- and first- in class drugs that can restore sensitivity to current targeted therapies in those cancer patients."

"We are very pleased to enable a license agreement with a young French biotech company, whose strategic direction is based on the solid and recognized oncology expertise of its founders. This cooperation was an obvious choice for Pierre Fabre as we share with Ribonexus the same ambition to bring the best innovative treatments to cancer patients. We look forward to providing Ribonexus with our compounds directed against eIF4A, an emerging target to fight cancer and resistance to targeted therapies", **added Francesco Hofmann, Head of R&D at Pierre Fabre Medical Care.**

The startup changed its name to Ribonexus, effective since November 2021, to reflect the central role of eIF4A in the translation of specific mRNAs (messenger ribonucleic acids), cancer development and resistance to targeted therapies.

About the eIF4A target

EIF4A, an RNA helicase, is one of the three proteins composing the eIF4F complex, essential for the cap-dependent translation initiation of many oncogenic proteins.

The abnormal activity of this complex, observed in many cancers, leads to the synthesis of proteins involved in tumor growth and metastasis. In addition, the selective translation of cellular mRNAs, controlled by this eIF4F complex, also contributes to the resistance to cancer treatments such as targeted therapies and checkpoint inhibitors.

About Ribonexus

Ribonexus (previously Aglaia Therapeutics) is a biotechnology startup developing promising new oncology therapies. The company aims at delivering best- and first- in class drugs that restore sensitivity to current targeted therapies in cancer patients that have become resistant to these treatments. Ribonexus has established a pipeline of small molecules, targeting the initiation of mRNA translation, which the company acquired and developed through Pierre Fabre.

Based in Villejuif, near Paris, France, Ribonexus was co-founded in 2021 by Advent France Biotechnology (AFB). The company raised €4M (\$4.7M) in seed funding from AFB, Credit Mutuel Innovation and Pierre Fabre to start its preclinical activities.

About Pierre Fabre

Pierre Fabre is a French health and beauty care company with 35-years of experience in innovation, development, manufacturing and commercialization in oncology, and the 2nd largest dermo-cosmetics laboratory in the world, the 2nd largest private French pharmaceutical group and the market leader in France for products sold over the counter in pharmacies.

Its portfolio includes several medical franchises and international brands including Pierre Fabre Oncology, Pierre Fabre Dermatology, Eau Thermale Avène, Klorane, Ducray, René Furterer, A-Derma, Naturactive, Pierre Fabre Oral Care.

The company has recently reaffirmed oncology as one of its main R&D and commercial priorities, focusing on targeted therapies, biotherapies and immuno-oncology. Its therapeutic areas include high unmet medical needs, and cover colorectal, breast, lung cancers, melanoma and pre-cancerous conditions like actinic keratosis.

In 2020, Pierre Fabre generated €2.3 billion in revenues, 65% of which came from international sales.

Established in the South-West of France since its creation, the Group manufactures over 95% of its products in France and employs some 10,000 people worldwide. Its products are distributed in about 130 countries.

Pierre Fabre is 86%-owned by the Pierre Fabre Foundation, a government-recognised public-interest foundation, and secondarily by its own employees through an international employee stock ownership plan.

In 2020, Ecocert Environnement assessed the Group's corporate social and environmental responsibility approach in accordance with the ISO 26000 sustainable development standard for the 2nd consecutive year and confirmed its 'Excellence' level.

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