



APEIRON, the Medical University of Vienna and the Institute of Molecular Biotechnology Sign Licensing Agreement for a New Checkpoint Inhibitor

APEIRON strengthens its proprietary Cbl-b portfolio with cutting edge immunotherapy technology developed at IMBA

Vienna, Austria, June 28 2018: APEIRON Biologics AG, a company focused on cancer immunotherapy today announced the signing of an agreement with the Institute of Molecular Biotechnology GmbH (IMBA) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the Medical University of Vienna (MedUni Wien). The agreement grants APEIRON an exclusive worldwide license to a novel technology targeting casitas B cell lymphoma-b (Cbl-b).

Cbl-b is an intracellular checkpoint limiting the immune reactivity in various immune cells, such as T cells and NK cells, and was originally discovered by Dr. Josef Penninger, Scientific Director of IMBA (Nature 403; 211-6; 2000).

Inhibiting Cbl-b not only distinctly activates immune cells but offers the opportunity to deactivate other relevant checkpoints, including CTLA-4 and PD-L1/PD-1 and thus can be regarded as the “master checkpoint” in cancer immunotherapy. APEIRON is engaged in an innovative cellular immunotherapy project based on the knock-down of Cbl-b (APN401), which is currently in clinical development.

Scientists at IMBA, in cooperation with the Max F Perutz Laboratories of MedUni Vienna, recently discovered a further novel approach targeting Cbl-b by cell-permeable cbl-b inhibiting peptides, which was published in Nature Medicine (22: 915-923; 2016).

APEIRON has now licensed this promising new research technology from IMBA, to expand the Cbl-b based checkpoint blockade project portfolio. Under the terms of the agreement, APEIRON will be responsible for further preclinical and clinical development of this IMBA technology. IMBA and MedUni Vienna will receive an upfront payment and will be eligible to receive development, regulatory and commercialization milestone payments and royalties. Further financial terms were not disclosed.

Peter Llewellyn-Davies, CFO/CBO of APEIRON said: “The in-licensing of this innovative technology allows us to further enhance our presence in the promising area of immune-oncology and strengthens our position in the field of checkpoint inhibitors. The agreement expands our portfolio of immunotherapies targeting Cbl-b and is also an excellent example of an academic-industrial partnership maximizing the strengths of both parties.”

Michael Krebs, Managing Director of IMBA commented: "We at IMBA see ourselves as an important player in the value chain of biomedical innovations. The IMBA is developing completely new approaches for the treatment of human diseases and thereby enabling potentially alternative treatment options for patients. This collaboration with APEIRON, shows once again, that it is worthwhile for the Austrian Government to invest in science



and that the geographical proximity of excellent academic research and companies, as can be found at the Vienna BioCenter, represents a promising business model."

Cooperation partner **Karl Kuchler**, group leader at the **Max F Perutz Laboratories (MFPL)** of MedUni Vienna also emphasizes the promising use of a Cbl-b blockade for the therapy of life-threatening infectious diseases with pathogenic fungi in addition to cancer immunotherapy: "The joint license agreement between APEIRON, IMBA and MedUni Wien will also make the next important steps possible in the development of new therapeutic applications against highly inflammatory microbial infections."

About Cbl-b

Casitas B cell lymphoma-b (Cbl-b), an E3 ubiquitin ligase, is a major intracellular immune checkpoint controlling and limiting the activity of immune cells and thereby an integral part of important natural mechanisms to control the balance of the immune system. Blocking Cbl-b leads to a distinct activation of immune cells such as T cells and NK cells; in animal models a robust T cell and NK cell-mediated antitumor immunity can be shown. Cbl-b thus can serve as the basis of promising approaches in cancer immunotherapy.

About IMBA

IMBA - Institute of Molecular Biotechnology – is one of the leading biomedical research institutes in Europe. The major research fields are: Disease modeling, genetics, stem cell and RNA biology. IMBA is located at the Vienna BioCenter, a vibrant cluster of universities, research institutes, and biotech companies, and is the largest research unit of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, the leading organization promoting non-university academic basic research in Austria. www.imba.oeaw.ac.at

About MFPL and the Medical University of Vienna

Max F Perutz Laboratories has more than 450 employees in 50 research groups working on molecular mechanisms of infectious diseases. The MFPL are a joint venture of the University of Vienna and the Medical University of Vienna. The latter is one of the most traditional medical training and research facilities in Europe, and with around 8,000 students, it is today the largest medical training centre in the German-speaking world. <http://www.mfpl.ac.at> <http://www.meduniwien.ac.at>

About APEIRON Biologics AG

APEIRON is a private biotech company based in Vienna, Austria, engaged in innovative immuno-oncology projects. In 2017, APEIRON received marketing approval for immunotherapy of pediatric neuroblastoma in the EU. APEIRON is working on cancer immunotherapies, based on two different approaches, targeted, tumor-specific approaches and targeted activation of the immune system by novel "checkpoint-blockade mechanisms".

For additional information please go to www.apeiron-biologics.com and follow us on Twitter [@apeironbio](https://twitter.com/apeironbio).



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