

EU Malaria Fund: Achilles Vaccines, Magnetrap, KELTIC Pharma and Sumaya receive a total of EUR 17.6 million to develop malaria vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics.

Berlin, September 3, 2021

This week, Achilles Vaccines S.r.l., Magnetrap SA, KELTIC Pharma Therapeutics Ltd and Sumaya Biotech GmbH & Co. KG. concluded contracts with the EU Malaria Fund (EUMF) to receive a total of €17.6 million for their innovative Malaria vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics research programmes.

Founded in 2017, **Achilles Vaccines S.r.l.** aims to set new standards in the vaccine and immunopharmaceutical industry against infectious diseases. Achilles is primarily a product development company but has the potential to evolve into a full-cycle biotech company and to become one of the main European players against infectious diseases. The company believes that the long-term solution to fight existing, emerging, and pandemic infectious diseases is a synergistic approach using both vaccines and monoclonal antibodies. After an initial loan in 2020, the EUMF will further support Achilles with additional €3.4 million (totalling €14.3 million funding) in supporting the development of Achilles mOMVs–based technology platform and, in particular, its Lab 4.0 and the universal meningococcal vaccine (menOMVax). Achilles has meanwhile successfully completed the industrial development phase of mAbCo19, a second-generation monoclonal antibody against SARS-CoV-2 co-developed with Toscana Life Sciences, now in advanced clinical phase II/III. **Riccardo Baccheschi, President & CEO of Achilles**, said: “2021 is certainly an exciting year for Achilles Vaccines! After the successful industrial development of mAbCo19, we are now in the process of completing our role as Project Manager supporting its clinical development with the aim of launching it in Italy this autumn. Thanks to the continuous support of EUMF, we are also approaching key milestones both on menOMVax and on Lab 4.0. After substantial investments, we are working hard to make 2022 the first year of fruit harvest for Achilles as well as a year of substantial company scale up”.

KELTIC Pharma Therapeutics Ltd will use the funding of the EUMF to establish operations in Glasgow and Dublin. The team around Elaine Sullivan, Prof Tobin, Prof Milligan and Dr Jamieson will aim to generate an optimized anti-malarial drug lead and validate the PEP-SMOL Discovery Platform against the malaria target Pf CLK3 as well as high value G protein-coupled receptor targets. KELTIC aims to advance the antimalarial candidate through pre-clinical development to IND filing. In addition, the company will pursue in-house programmes to identify molecules with the potential to create new medicines in severe asthma and neuropsychiatric disorders. **Andrew Tobin, Chief Scientific Officer of Keltic Pharma**, said: “We are all delighted to receive support from the EU Malaria Fund and kENUP Foundation that will transform our drug

discovery programme in malaria and unquestionably will accelerate our aim to deliver a clinical candidate to treat and stop the transmission of this devastating disease.”

Magnetrap SA was founded in 2017 with the aim to improve clinical outcomes by providing highly accurate, rapid and simple to use tests at affordable prices. The EUMF supports the development of a non-invasive diagnostic test for easy malaria detection (asymptomatic and symptomatic). The diagnostic tool is using Hemozoin as a marker and detects through its magnetic, electrical and optical properties. The results will be available on a tablet or smart phone. In addition to this immediate visibility, the data can be collected and transmitted to a data center. **Peter Vandeputte, Managing Director of Magnetrap**, said: “Magnetrap addresses some of the biggest diseases worldwide such as Malaria. This funding from the EU Malaria Fund will allow us to advance the development of an easy to use, non-invasive device for the detection of Malaria parasites in even the most remote areas of the world advancing our belief that access to high quality diagnostics should be a universal healthcare right rather than a privilege”.

The focus of **Sumaya Biotech GmbH & Co. KG** is on the clinical development of a novel, innovative malaria vaccine based on the full - length MSP - 1 protein. Sumaya plans to evaluate its candidate SumayaVac in challenge studies (CHMI) to assess the contribution to immunity and efficacy. The second project of Sumaya targets the development of SC83288, an anti - malarial compound. SC83288 is a fast-acting compound that could eliminate a *P. falciparum* infection in a humanized SCID mouse model. Sumaya is planning to clinically develop SC83288 as an intravenous treatment of severe malaria. Due to its novel mode of action, it can be combined with other established, slow - and fast - acting drugs as combination therapy. Based on its better side-effect profile than the “gold - standard” artesunate, Sumaya will develop SC83288 as first - or second - line treatment of severe malaria. **Dr. Ernst Böhnlein, Managing Director of Sumaya**, said: “This is a wonderful day for Sumaya being now in a position to advance our two anti-malaria product candidates. We are very grateful to the KENUP Foundation for its efforts to create this new financial instrument, and for the continuous support and confidence by the EUMF in our approaches to defeat this devastating disease.”

The EU Malaria Fund Berlin (EUMF) is a public-private partnership between the European Union, international organizations, corporations, and organized civic society, providing a novel funding instrument to address market failures in infectious diseases with significant relevance to public health globally. It is managed by EMM EU Malaria Fund Berlin Managementgesellschaft mbH, a subsidiary of Investitionsbank Berlin Gruppe (IBB Group) with public benefit financing provided, among others, through and by the European Investment Bank. The EUMF has been initiated by KENUP Foundation.

Torsten Harr, Co-Managing Director of EMM and Head of IBB Corporate Investments of IBB on behalf of IBB Group said: “As IBB Group, we are proud to be asked by the stakeholders of the EU Malaria Fund to support them in establishing the Fund and providing the relevant financial services. Together with our partner European Investment Bank (EIB) and with the support of our lawyers from Dentons Europe LLP we were able to build up an unique legal framework to ensure the professional administration of this venture loan business in favour of the companies. I am absolutely convinced that the EUMF was a further step forward to strengthen Berlin as a relevant hub for global life science business.”

Stefan Sonnenberg, Co-Managing Director of EMM said: “I’m grateful to have the chance to lead the EUMF Team as Managing Director. We really can be proud about the fact, that we found individual financing solutions for portfolio companies with an overall volume of about 42 Mio€. This is a relevant contribution in the fight against Malaria and other diseases und therefore an excellent example for real Social Impact Investment. I wish all our EUMF portfolio companies the greatest possible success! I’m sure, the mankind will be able to win all fights against diseases based on the technological progress like mRNA technology. There is lot of room for improvement, but fortunately some really great examples are on the horizon like the new initiative “eradicate malaria”.”

Holm Keller, Chairman of kENUP Foundation concluded: “We are very excited about these new investments and the support for another four portfolio projects of the EU Malaria Fund. These investments manifest our aim to broaden the global pipeline of promising candidates for novel malaria vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics.”

More information can be found at <https://www.controlmalaria.eu>

Press Contact

For EMM: Torsten Harr, harr@controlmalaria.eu, phone +49 30 2125 2990

For kENUP Foundation: Marcel Niklas Rückwald, rueckwald@kenup.eu , phone +356 79860108