

Cristal Therapeutics raises €12.8 million in new financing round to advance novel medicines against cancer using its CriPec® nanotech platform

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Cristal Therapeutics raises €12.8 million in new financing round to advance novel medicines against cancer using its CriPec® nanotech platform. Round led by Aglaia BioMedical Ventures and DROIA Oncology Ventures. Funding used to execute clinical phase Ib and phase IIa trials with CriPec® docetaxel, and to further leverage the CriPec® platform for oligonucleotides programs from proof of concept towards investigational new drug applications

Maastricht, The Netherlands, January 19, 2017 – Cristal Therapeutics, a privately-held life sciences company developing novel nanomedicines against cancer and other diseases, today announced the closing of a €12.8 million financing round. The financing comes from a consortium headed by Dutch oncology investor Aglaia BioMedical Ventures and Belgian DROIA Oncology Ventures and was complemented by BOM, LIOF and LBDF. Existing shareholders (founders, Chemelot Ventures, BioGeneration Ventures, Utrecht University Holding, Nedermaas Hightech Ventures) also participated in the round. The new funding will be used to continue and accelerate the clinical development of Cristal Therapeutics' lead candidate CriPec® docetaxel, by executing a clinical phase Ib trial, building the momentum for a clinical phase II trial starting later this year. Funds also allow for intensified development of Cristal's nanotech platform for its innovative CriPec® DUO and CriPec® oligonucleotides programs.

Lead candidate

CriPec® docetaxel is Cristal Therapeutics' lead candidate in development and represents a novel treatment approach of solid tumours. CriPec® nanoparticles with the anti-cancer drug docetaxel entrapped accumulate in tumour tissue and yield a significantly higher exposure within the tumour, thereby overcoming drawbacks of conventional docetaxel therapies. CriPec® docetaxel successfully passed various preclinical studies, demonstrating a significantly enhanced efficacy and an improved safety and tolerability profile. The candidate also successfully passed a clinical phase Ia trial in patients suffering from solid tumours where human tolerability and pharmacokinetics were assessed. Further safety and signs of efficacy will be evaluated in a clinical phase Ib study aiming to confirm the recommended phase II dose level and regimen. CriPec® docetaxel is expected to have substantial medical and commercial advantages particularly in combination therapies.

CriPec® DUO and CriPec® oligonucleotides

Cristal Therapeutics is continuously searching to broaden the application of its nanomedicine platform. The CriPec® DUO concept aims to achieve a synergistic therapeutic response of two anti-cancer drugs entrapped in one nanoparticle.

Cristal Therapeutics also applies its CriPec® platform for the delivery of oligonucleotides to intracellular targets. CriPec®'s underlying proprietary polymer and linker technology offers exciting perspectives to overcome some of the major hurdles in the oligonucleotide field.

Dr. Joost Holthuis, CEO of Cristal Therapeutics, comments on the new financing round:

'We are thrilled to welcome high quality investors Aglaia and DROIA to Cristal Therapeutics, but also BOM, LIOF and LBDF complementing our group of investors. This clearly represents a growing commitment to nanomedicines and reflects the potential of our drug programs on the basis of the CriPec® technology.'

'This funding comes at a time when we are taking meaningful steps forward with our clinical lead candidate CriPec® docetaxel towards achieving a better treatment for patients with advanced solid tumours. Today's financing allows us to cover both the upcoming clinical phase Ib and IIa trial with CriPec® docetaxel and the preclinical studies for CriPec® DUO and CriPec® oligonucleotides for the period until 2019'.

Mark Krul, partner at Aglaia BioMedical Ventures, says:

'Many cancer drugs could become more effective as a result of improved delivery of the compounds to the right cell type and cell compartment. We believe that Cristal Therapeutics' state-of-art and highly versatile drug delivery platform has breakthrough potential in fields where drug delivery remains a key-problem, such as for nucleic acid based compounds and immuno-oncology complexes.'

Janwillem Naesens, partner at DROIA Oncology Ventures comments on their investment:

'We were impressed by the highly customizable pharmacological properties of Cristal Therapeutics' CriPec® nanoparticles, which should enable a broad array of therapeutic applications. The delivery platform clearly stands out amongst other next-generation nanoparticles under development. With the backing of this solid investor base, the seasoned team will be able to explore the full potential of its technology.'

About Aglaia BioMedical Ventures

The Dutch venture capital firm Aglaia – through its Oncology Funds I and II – invests in ground-breaking technologies that have the potential to translate into solutions for the prevention and treatment of cancer. Aglaia is actively involved in the companies it invests in and works closely with scientists and management teams in the early stages of technological development. By translating high-potential research into commercially and clinically successful products Aglaia gives meaning to the concept of impact investing; combining financial and social returns. www.aglaia-biomedical.com

About DROIA Oncology Ventures

DROIA is a venture capital investor focusing exclusively on oncology therapeutics. Operating from Luxembourg and Belgium, DROIA invests worldwide in early-stage drug development companies that apply novel science and innovative approaches to bring highly promising drug candidates to patients. Through its experienced team of in-house scientists and drug developers, DROIA also supports young companies on scientific and development matters. Funded by private investors, DROIA is dedicated to making a difference in the fight against cancer.

www.droia.be

About Cristal Therapeutics

Cristal Therapeutics, based in Maastricht, the Netherlands focuses on the development of nanomedicines with improved therapeutic efficacy against cancer and other diseases, such as chronic inflammatory disorders, by using its patented CriPec® technology. This technology entraps existing and new drugs in polymer nanoparticles of less than 0.0001 mm diameter. These nanoparticles provide better distribution throughout the body and a more selective release of the drugs at the desired site, such as anti-cancer drugs which are preferentially targeted to tumours. Therefore, products based on CriPec® may provide enhanced efficacy and fewer side effects, thus offering improved disease treatment. cristaltherapeutics.com

CriPec® docetaxel

CriPec® docetaxel is Cristal Therapeutics' lead candidate in development and represents a novel treatment approach of solid tumours. CriPec® docetaxel successfully passed various pre-clinical studies, demonstrating a significantly enhanced efficacy and an improved safety and tolerability profile. The candidate also successfully passed a clinical phase Ia trial in patients suffering from solid tumours where human tolerability and pharmacokinetics were assessed. In a clinical phase Ib study further safety and signs of efficacy will be evaluated aiming to confirm the recommended phase II dose level and regimen. Later this year, Cristal Therapeutics will start a large clinical phase II study.

CriPec® DUO

CriPec® allows for the entrapment of multiple compounds (e.g. two compounds attacking the tumour through different pathways and with different toxicity) in a single nanoparticle, in a well-defined ratio and each with its individual release kinetics, with the aim to generate synergistic efficacy at an acceptable tolerability profile. To boost the selectivity, these CriPec® nanoparticles may be actively targeted to the tissue of interest.

CriPec® oligonucleotides

The use of oligonucleotides as drugs is receiving a growing interest of pharmaceutical and biotech companies. Worldwide about 150 companies are working on the development of oligonucleotides but they are all encountering similar delivery problems.

CriPec®'s underlying proprietary polymer and linker technology offers exciting perspectives to overcome some of the major hurdles in the oligonucleotide field.

Partnership

In December 2016, Cristal announced a partnership with Belgian biotech iTeos Therapeutics for the development of immuno-oncology therapeutic candidates by combining CriPec® nanoparticles with

iTeos small molecule immuno-modulators with the aim of optimizing the delivery of those drug candidates into the tumour microenvironment.

For more information

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