

PerioTrap Pharmaceuticals raises €3M seed round to develop selective anti-infectives to tackle periodontitis

Halle (Saale), 21.10.2020 – Although periodontitis is a widespread infectious disease affecting around 30% of the global population, there are currently no effective treatments available — yet. PerioTrap Pharmaceuticals, a Fraunhofer IZI spin-off, has developed a novel treatment strategy that works to specifically eradicate the major bacterial pathogens of periodontitis, thereby tackling the root cause of the disease. With the help of bmp Ventures AG (through the IBG-Fonds), i&i Prague, Fraunhofer Venture and a strategic partner, PerioTrap now plans to advance its drug development programs.

A world without effective antibiotics is becoming an increasingly realistic scenario. Every year, 700,000 people worldwide die of multi-resistant strains which cannot be treated with any of the existing antibiotics. The number of new developments is limited, and many of the major pharmaceutical companies have completely abandoned the field of anti-infectives. High development costs and the prospect of a drug that can be used only in restricted applications contribute to the unattractive reputation of the antibiotics business model. In turn, the valuable reserves that are still available are being used even more sparingly. The global viral pandemic has made it clear that we cannot continue to prioritize developments driven solely by commercial interests.

With its new drug and innovative application procedure, PerioTrap Pharmaceuticals GmbH could not only drastically reduce the need for antibiotics. The selective mechanism that targets the major pathogens directly at the site of infection – the oral cavity – means that chronic conditions can be overcome while reducing systemic side effects at the same time. The key element of this strategy is an enzyme called glutamyl cyclase (QC) type II, which is exclusively present within pathogenic bacteria of the oral biofilm where *Porphyromonas gingivalis* is the main catalyst of the disease. The seed investment will be used to optimize PerioTrap's lead compound and progress its new prolonged-release pharmaceutical composition through clinical testing in order to apply for subsequent market approval.

"We are looking forward to working with this experienced team of drug developers and to particularly make a contribution to such a socially relevant technology area in this financing round".

Andreas van Bon, responsible managing partner at bmp Ventures AG

"Despite the medical demand for a solution, we have not seen any innovation in the treatment of periodontitis for over a decade. Consequently, this investment will not only fuel the long-neglected therapeutic market segment within the dental realm, but most importantly it will restore patient confidence."

Pierre Tangermann, Managing Director at PerioTrap Pharmaceuticals

As a result of a pan-European project under the FP7 umbrella, PerioTrap is based on an excellent international science network including the Institute of Microbiology at the Faculty of Biochemistry, Biophysics and Biotechnology at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland (Prof. Jan Potempa), the Institute of Periodontology at the Faculty of Dentistry at the University of Bern, Switzerland (Prof. Sigrun Eick) and the Pharmaceutical Technology Research Group at the Institute of Pharmacy at the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany (Prof. Karsten Mäder). This leading scientific network will now be expanded further.

About the IBG Funds

Based in Magdeburg, the IBG Funds are the venture capital funds of the State of Saxony-Anhalt. The IBG funds provide equity capital to innovative companies with sustainable and above-average growth potential and a domicile/operation in Saxony-Anhalt. At the beginning of 2017, IBG launched the new risk capital fund RKF III with a volume of EUR 84 million. The fund is financed by funds from the state and the European Union and invests in innovative companies in Saxony-Anhalt in the business phases of seed, start-up and growth. The IBG funds are managed by bmp Ventures AG.

www.ibg-vc.de

About bmp Ventures

With an experienced background of over 250 investments from almost all technology segments, most of which are in the early stages, bmp is one of the most experienced venture capital investors in Germany. In addition to direct investments, bmp has also managed venture capital funds for KfW Bankengruppe and DEG - Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft. bmp currently manages the IBG funds in Saxony-Anhalt and the Frühphasenfonds Brandenburg. bmp has around 20 employees in Berlin and Magdeburg.

www.bmp.com

About i&i Prague

i&i Prague accelerates the proof-of-concept stage of projects in the fields of MedTech, diagnostics and drug discovery. The company focuses on projects in the discovery, pre-seed or seed phase - projects with excellent innovative potential which will benefit from the project-launching experience and networking skills developed by IOCB Tech over the last decade. Furthermore, financial support provided by i&i Prague should significantly increase the appeal and value of a project for further licensees and/or investors.

www.iniprague.com

About Fraunhofer Venture

Fraunhofer Venture is the central department for spin-offs and investment management of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft and offers founders, start-ups, Fraunhofer Institutes, industry, and investors access to the cutting-edge technologies of the 74 Fraunhofer Institutes, the Fraunhofer infrastructure and Fraunhofer know-how with over 7,000 patent families. The range of services includes complete support and consulting from the idea to the founding of a company, active participation management of Fraunhofer participations, support with finding investors up to a possible sale of the company and is flanked by the AHEAD company builder as well as other offerings.

www.fraunhoferventure.de

About PerioTrap Pharmaceuticals

PerioTrap is developing an innovative anti-infective drug which will not only treat but also contribute to the eradication of periodontitis, an inflammatory gum disease caused by bacteria. To date, the most relevant therapy option is a painful procedure consisting of the manual removal of plaque within the dental pockets followed by cleansing using either antiseptic solutions or the administration of broad-spectrum antibiotics. PerioTrap's approach uses its newly developed, selective, small-molecule drugs to target only the disease-causing bacteria without affecting the commensal bacteria. Protecting the commensal bacteria should encourage a shift towards a natural microbiome, thus preventing the reoccurrence of the disease.