



aptaTargets closes a second financing round of 5 million euros

Inveready and the CDTI invest in the biotechnology Company to complete a clinical trial for stroke patients

Madrid, 14th of October 2020. The company aptaTargets has closed the second round of financing, with the participation of Inveready and the CDTI, through its INNVIERTE program, which will allow it to mobilize up to 5 million euros between 2020 and 2022. With these funds, aptaTargets aims to complete a clinical trial involving acute ischemic stroke patients and close a licensing agreement.

Inveready and the CDTI contributed 2.3 million euros of capital and the financing round was completed with a total of more than 2.7 million euros through other instruments and public funding already obtained by the company.

This funding will enable continued research of the ApTOLL compound, a new and powerful immunomodulator and anti-inflammatory medicine used in the treatment of acute ischemic stroke, which is capable of significantly reducing brain damage.

In March 2020, Phase IA was completed at the Hospital Universitario de La Princesa (Madrid), studying the effect of various dose levels of the drug in 46 healthy volunteers, without any relevant adverse effect, confirming the excellent safety profile observed at the preclinical stages.

ApTOLL is the only drug under development for the treatment of stroke patients by blocking the activation of TLR4, a central receptor in the innate immune response that is expressed on the plasma membrane of cells of the immune system, such as microglia, neutrophils, macrophages, among others. The activation of TLR4 initiates a cascade of events that ultimately leads to the production and release of pro-inflammatory mediators, causing uncontrolled inflammation, increased cell damage, and subsequent worsening of brain injury. By acting as an antagonist to TLR4, ApTOLL modulates the immune response, preventing the first wave of the inflammatory cascade that occurs after the onset of stroke.

With positive results in the clinical trial, aptaTargets intends to negotiate agreements with pharmaceutical companies that continue clinical development in advanced phases, and accelerate its arrival on the market. "These can be license agreements, either regional or global," explains David Segarra, co-founder and CEO of aptaTargets.

“Most pharmaceutical companies prefer partnering at later stages, phase III or even in the NDA (New Drug Application) phase. However, others are willing to partner at early stages. In stroke, most pharmaceutical companies want to see preliminary data in patients. In this sense, it will be easier to negotiate a license agreement after completing the Phase II trial”, explains María Eugenia Zarabozo, co-founder and financial director of aptaTargets.

“We are doing well at aptaTargets, with a new stakeholder and a clear commitment to show that APTOLL improves the clinical outcome in 150 ischemic stroke patients”, comments Sara Secall, Partner at Inveready.

With the same molecule, promising results have been obtained in preclinical studies in other indications, such as hemorrhagic stroke, myocardial infarction and multiple sclerosis. The immunomodulatory and anti-inflammatory mechanism could also be applied in the treatment of patients in these other indications. "Recently, a study has been published in which by inhibiting the TLR4 receptor with ApTOLL after inducing coronary ischemia in pigs, a significant functional improvement was observed", comments Segarra.

About aptaTargets

Founded in 2014, aptaTargets span-out from Aptus Biotech, an aptamer technology platform. AptaTargets started a drug development program, in collaboration with the Complutense University and the Ramón y Cajal University Hospital. In 2017, Caixa Capital Risc and Inveready Asset Management, venture capital funds specialized in biotechnology, completed the first financing round for the company (2.7 million euros).

In June 2019, aptaTargets started clinical trials, a First-in-Human study in healthy volunteers, that was successfully completed in March 2020. ApTOLL is the first aptamer (single-stranded DNA molecule) to target TLR4, a receptor that triggers the immune response in human subjects in the first steps of the inflammatory pathway after stroke, and in other pathologies.

About Inveready

Inveready Asset Management is one of the leading venture capital management companies in Spain in the field of life sciences. Currently, it invests in start-up technology companies through four specialized verticals (information technology, life sciences, venture debt and hybrid financing - debt and equity - for listed companies). It has 136 active companies in its portfolio and more than 400 million euros of assets under its management. Over the past 11 years, it has completed successful divestitures in more than 36 companies, including AB Biotics, Palobiofarma and Avizorex. Other companies in the portfolio have been acquired by multinationals such as Intel, Symantec and Red Hat (IBM), and others have been listed on public markets such as Nasdaq or MAB.

About the CDTI

The [CDTI](#) is the body of the General State Administration that supports knowledge-based innovation, offering consultancy services and public funding for innovation through subsidies or

partially reimbursable funds. The CDTI also internationalizes the R&D and innovation business projects of Spanish companies and entities and manages Spanish participation in international R&D organizations, such as [Horizon2020](#) and [Eureka](#), as well as in the Science and Space industries. Additionally, through the Invierte Economía Sostenible initiative, it supports and facilitates the capitalization of technology companies.

For more information:

AptaTargets Communication Department

comunicacion@aptatargets.com

Tel: +34 670419322

<https://aptatargets.com/>

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/aptatargets/>