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Sanofi and C4X Discovery ink Ã¢â??Â¬414 M worldwide licensing deal

April 16, 2021 | News

Funding to be used for pre-clinical, potential development, regulatory, and commercialization of oral therapy for inflammatory diseases



Sanofi and drug discovery company C4X Discovery (C4XD) have entered an exclusive worldwide licensing agreement worth up to €414 million for C4XD's oral pre-clinical IL-17A inhibitor programme.

The deal will see Manchester University spinout C4XD receive an upfront payment of €7m, and up to a further €407m in potential development, regulatory, and commercialization milestones, of which €11m is in pre-clinical milestones.

Under the licence, Sanofi will develop and commercialize an oral therapy for the multi-billion-dollar inflammatory diseases market. If successful, the new treatment will add to Sanofi's pipeline of immuno-inflammation therapies.

The IL-17 family of cytokines are strong inducers of inflammation and are implicated in a variety of autoimmune diseases including psoriasis, psoriatic arthritis and ankylosing spondylitis. Current treatments targeting IL-17 are monoclonal antibodies administered via an injection. There is an urgent need for safe and effective oral small molecule therapies to increase the number of patients able to access IL-17 targeted drugs and expand availability into new inflammatory disease indications.

C4XD's small molecule IL-17A inhibitor programme can selectively block IL-17 activity *in vivo* while maintaining the molecular size of the molecule in the traditional "drug-like" range suitable for oral administration.

Sanofi will continue to work with the C4XD team to access its proprietary 4D Conformetrix technology as the programme advances towards clinical studies.

"We believe that our small molecule programme has the potential to create high-value, efficacious and convenient oral IL-17 therapeutics for this large market. The psoriasis market alone is estimated to be worth c.$24bn per annum by 2027, and when combined with Sanofi's development expertise our programme has the potential to address a number of indications. With Indivior progressing our molecule for opioid addiction through a Phase I clinical trial and now our partnership with Sanofi driving potential next-generation oral IL-17 therapies."