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Singapore-based startup Albatroz secures $3 M to develop solid tumour therapy

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Funding is amplified by recognition as first Amgen Golden Ticket winner in Singapore



Albatroz Therapeutics, a Singapore-based biotechnology startup targeting tissue remodeling to stop cancer growth and treat arthritis, has secured $3 million in funding led by Outram Bio and SEEDS Capital to accelerate the development of therapeutic antibodies against a novel target that degrades the extracellular matrix, a key contributor to cancer and arthritis.

The company also received the first Golden Ticket prize from Amgen in Singapore, recognising the viability of its science and business plan.

While at the Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology (IMCB), Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR) in Singapore, Dr Fred Bard, CEO and Scientific Co-Founder of Albatroz, published prominently on a pathway that controls protein glycosylation and drives extracellular matrix degradation. The study of the GalNAc-T Activation (GALA) glycosylation pathway led to the discovery of a new target, which becomes exposed at the cell surface after glycosylation. Activation of the target occurs specifically in tumors and arthritic synovial membranes, connective tissue that lines the joint capsule. Albatroz's targeted antibodies have high specificity for this target selectively reducing extracellular matrix degradation while minimizing toxicity.

"Albatroz is building on careful, fundamental research comparing normal and cancer tissues, which led to the exciting discovery of a novel and broadly distributed target present on the surface of diverse solid tumours," said David Virshup, Director of the Programme in Cancer and Stem Cell Biology (CSCB) and Professor at Duke-NUS Medical School. "The therapeutic antibodies that Albatroz has developed may prevent the growth and metastasis of these cancers. These first-in-class agents have enormous potential to improve our ability to treat patients with cancer."