

Covagen to collaborate with Mitsubishi for research

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Covagen to collaborate with Mitsubishi for research on FynomAbs



Singapore: Swiss company Covagen has entered into a strategic research collaboration and license agreement with Japanese company Mitsubishi Tanabe Pharma and its fully owned subsidiary Tanabe Research Laboratories USA of San Diego. Under the agreement, Covagen will use its proprietary Fynomeric-antibody platform to generate bispecific proteins (FynomAbs) against two target pairs selected by TRL and Mitsubishi Tanabe.

Fynomers are small binding proteins that can be engineered to bind to any antigen of interest. Because of their excellent biophysical properties, Fynomers can be readily fused to therapeutic proteins such as antibodies to create bispecific FynomAbs.

For the global, exclusive rights to bispecific FynomAbs against one target pair, Mitsubishi Tanabe will pay to Covagen \$5.1 million (EUR 4 million) upfront. Under the agreement, Mitsubishi Tanabe will fund all research activities and be solely responsible for the development, manufacturing and global commercialization activities. Upon achievement of certain research, development and regulatory milestones, Covagen will be entitled to receive payments of up to \$139.2 million (EUR 108.25 million) for FynomAbs against the first target pair as well as tiered royalties on worldwide net sales of products resulting from the collaboration. Financial terms are substantially similar for FynomAbs addressing the second target pair which TRL and Mitsubishi Tanabe have the option to select.

"This collaboration agreement is an important milestone for Covagen as we develop our unique Fynomeric technology and advance bispecific therapeutic FynomAbs in collaboration and in our own therapeutic pipeline," said Dr Julian Bertschinger, chief executive officer of Covagen. "Bispecific therapeutic compounds have enormous potential in the treatment of many types of diseases and this collaboration is an important validation of our pioneering work in this field."

Dr Dragan Grabulovski, chief scientific officer of Covagen, added: "This agreement underlines the value of our FynomAb platform as a source of innovative bispecific biologics with excellent biophysical properties and positions our company as a highly attractive partner for the development of next generation biotherapeutics."

Dr Roland Newman, chief scientific officer of TRL, said: "This collaboration with Covagen will allow TRL and Mitsubishi Tanabe to bring a new generation of biologics with novel mechanisms to physicians and their patients. We anticipate an exciting and fruitful relationship with Covagen utilizing their bispecific FynomAb technology and their extensive expertise in this area."