

## **Rigontec GmbH raises €4.8m in a second closing of its Series A financing**

### **Brings Series A total to €14.25m to advance RNA-based immunotherapeutics for cancer and viral diseases**

**Bonn, Germany. 24<sup>th</sup> March 2015** – Rigontec GmbH, a privately held biopharmaceutical company developing RNA-based immunotherapeutics for the treatment of cancer and viral diseases, today announces it has raised €4.8 million in a second closing of its Series A financing round from Forbion Capital Partners, a Dutch life-sciences venture capital firm, and Sunstone Capital, a Copenhagen based venture capital investor. The new investment brings the total Series A to €14.25 million and adds two further highly experienced investors to Rigontec's investor base alongside Wellington Partners, Boehringer Ingelheim Venture Fund, NRW.BANK and High-Tech Gründerfonds (HTGF).

The proceeds of the Series A financing round will be used to progress Rigontec's lead drug candidate into clinical proof-of-concept studies, and to expand Rigontec's pipeline based on its proprietary RNA-sensing technology. Holger Reithinger from Forbion Capital Partners and Sten Verland from Sunstone Capital have joined Rigontec's Board of Directors.

Rigontec is developing synthetic ligands of a novel receptor of the innate immune system, Retinoic acid Inducible Gene I (RIG-I), which recognizes viral RNA. RNA motifs that activate RIG-I promote the destruction of diseased cells and the induction of a lasting immune memory thereby treating and preventing recurrence of disease.

Rigontec's lead compound RGT100, a proprietary first-in-class product targeting RIG-I, is currently being evaluated for development in several cancer types. Rigontec's technology also offers the opportunity to develop antiviral therapeutics and allows the design of pipeline candidates with additional gene silencing and inhibitory activities further broadening the applicability of this groundbreaking new class of drugs in the area of oncology and viral infections.

Rigontec was launched in January 2014 as a spin-out of the Institute for Clinical Chemistry and Clinical Pharmacology at the University Hospital of the University of Bonn, Germany. The Company's co-founders, Prof. Gunther Hartmann and Prof. Veit Hornung, are internationally highly renowned scientific leaders in the area of innate immune recognition of viral nucleic acids (RNA immunesensing) and discovered 3pRNA (5'triphosphate RNA) as the ligand for RIG-I.

**Dr. Christian Schetter, CEO of Rigontec**, said: "We are very excited by the tremendous interest we have seen in our proprietary RIG-I platform from investors and the pharmaceutical industry more widely. We believe we are able to induce a massive highly-specific attack on tumor cells by inducing immunogenic cell death, changing the tumor microenvironment to foster anti-cancer immunity and eventually leading to a long lasting systemic immune memory."

He continued: "We are very proud to welcome Forbion and Sunstone as investors and believe they will add significant know-how in the global immunotherapy field to Rigontec. Our substantial Series A will allow us to boost our development activities and bring this revolutionary technology closer to benefiting patients with life-threatening diseases."

**Holger Reithinger, General Partner of Forbion**, said: "Over the last years, I have closely followed the ground-breaking scientific work of Prof. Hartmann and Prof. Hornung. Their work has culminated in a

novel approach that mimics a viral infection and thereby actively induces anti-tumor immunity, both innate as well as adaptive. In effect, the tumor is turned into its own vaccine. The Rigontec approach thereby delivers in a broader sense on the promise of a personalized cancer treatment."

**Sten Verland, Partner of Sunstone Capital**, said: "The field of cancer immunotherapy has developed significantly over the past few years and so has the understanding of the importance of the tumor microenvironment. Rigontec's approach is novel and ground breaking offering the potential to break the immunosuppressive environment of the tumor and induce anti-tumor immunity. I am very pleased to join the Board and look forward to working with Rigontec's world class team to progress the lead compound into clinical development."

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#### **About Rigontec**

Rigontec GmbH is a privately held German biopharmaceutical company developing RNA-based immunotherapeutics for the treatment of cancer and viral diseases.

Rigontec is developing synthetic ligands of a novel receptor of the innate immune system, Retinoic acid Inducible Gene I (RIG-I), which recognizes viral RNA. RNA motifs that activate RIG-I promote the destruction of diseased cells and the induction of a lasting immune memory thereby treating and preventing recurrence of disease. Rigontec's lead compound, RGT100, a proprietary first-in-class product targeting RIG-I, is currently being evaluated for development in several cancer types.

Rigontec was launched in 2014 as a spin-out of the Institute for Clinical Chemistry and Clinical Pharmacology at the University Hospital of the University of Bonn, Germany. It is supported by a consortium of experienced life science investors including Wellington Partners, Boehringer Ingelheim

Venture Fund, Forbion Capital Partners, Sunstone Capital, NRW.BANK and High-Tech Gruenderfonds (HTGF).

For more information, please visit [www.rigontec.com](http://www.rigontec.com)

### **About Forbion Capital Partners**

Forbion Capital Partners is a dedicated Life Sciences venture capital firm with offices in Naarden, The Netherlands, Munich, Germany and representation in Boston, US. Forbion invests in life sciences companies in drug discovery & development as well as medical device companies addressing substantial unmet medical needs. Forbion's investment team of ten investment professionals has built an impressive performance track record since the late nineties with successful investments in Rhein Biotech, Crucell, Neutec, Glycart, Borean, Impella, Alantox, Acorda (ACOR), Fovea, Insmem (INSM), PanGenetics, Argenta Discovery, BioVex, Pathway Medical, CircuLite, bluebird bio (BLUE), uniQure (QURE), Argos (ARGS), arGEN-X (ARGX.BR), Santaris and PneumRx. Forbion also operates a joint venture with BioGeneration Ventures, who manages two separate seed and early stage funds focused on Benelux. Including the new fund FCF III, Forbion manages EUR 540M across 5 funds. Its investors include the EIF through its European Recovery Programme (ERP), LfA and Dutch Venture Initiative (DVI) facilities.

For more information, please visit [www.forbion.com](http://www.forbion.com)

### **About Sunstone Capital**

Sunstone Capital is an independent venture capital investor founded in 2007 by an international team of industry experts with combined entrepreneurial, operational and financial experience. Sunstone Capital focuses on developing and expanding early-stage Life Science and Technology companies with strong potential to achieve global success in their markets. Sunstone Capital has invested in more than 50 life science companies within drug development, diagnostics, and medical technology, and has completed several successful exits and IPOs including Zealand Pharma (ZEAL:Copenhagen), Santaris, Zymenex, Egalet (EGLT:Nasdaq), and Action Pharma. With total funds of 700 million Euro under management, Sunstone Capital is one of the largest Nordic-based venture capital investors.

For further information, please visit [www.sunstone.eu](http://www.sunstone.eu).