



## **Domain Therapeutics wins EUR 933,000 grant for schizophrenia project**

### **GPCR specialist will lead EUR 5.1 million ATHOS Project to develop new therapies**

**Strasbourg, France, March 13, 2012** - Domain Therapeutics, a biopharmaceutical company focussed on the discovery and early development of small molecules targeting G-Protein Coupled Receptors (GPCRs), one of the most important classes of drug targets, today announced that ATHOS project has been selected for French government funding. ATHOS aims to develop new drug candidates and identify therapeutic targets for schizophrenia.

Total funding will amount to EUR 5.1 million over three years. Some 45 per cent of the ATHOS budget will be provided by central and regional government organizations, including the grant of EUR 933,000 to Domain Therapeutics.

Schizophrenia is a disease of the central nervous system generally starting in adolescence and becoming a chronic condition. It typically exhibits a dissociation of the personality, giving rise to auditory hallucinations, paranoid delirium and attention disorders. These problems affect not only the patient's mental health but also life expectancy, which is 12 years shorter than that of the general population. Schizophrenia and related conditions affect 2-3 per cent of the world population but existing treatments do not improve the cognitive disturbances resulting from the disease and some patients remain completely resistant to available treatments.

The ATHOS project will focus on a single class of therapeutic targets, orphan GPCRs. GPCRs are the target for 40 per cent of drugs currently on the market and hence represent the largest class of therapeutic targets. Orphan GPCRs however have been less explored due to the lack of an identified endogenous ligand. This means these orphan GPCRs, of which some 150 have been described to date, offer a huge therapeutic potential.

Led by Domain Therapeutics, the ATHOS consortium includes Prestwick Chemical, a medicinal chemistry specialist and the Brigitte Kieffer Laboratory at the Institute of Genetics and Molecular and Cellular Biology, which also specializes in GPCRs. The Brigitte Kieffer laboratory will be in charge of mapping orphan GPCRs in the brain and obtaining appropriate animal models to validate targets for neuropsychiatric disorders. Prestwick Chemical will apply its expertise in optimizing active compounds.

"Domain Therapeutics know-how in the field of GPCRs combined with our proprietary technology, DTect-All (TM), and the excellence of our two partners will enable us to bring a solution to this challenge of identifying candidate drugs targeting orphan GPCRs linked to schizophrenia," said Pascal Neuville, CEO of Domain Therapeutics. "The ATHOS project allows us to extend our franchise in neuropsychiatric disorders and in challenging and innovative therapeutic targets."

The substantial funding being made available comes from a French government fund (Fonds Unique Interministériel), the Alsace Region and OSEO, an agency active in funding innovative projects.

#### **About Domain Therapeutics S.A.**

Domain Therapeutics is a biopharmaceutical company located in Strasbourg, France, dedicated to the discovery and early development of small molecules targeting G-Protein Coupled Receptors (GPCRs), one of the most important classes of drug targets. Domain Therapeutics identifies and develops drug candidates using its DTect-All (TM) innovative proprietary technology. The company's portfolio is composed of new chemical entities ranging from hits to optimized leads for leading indications such as schizophrenia, Parkinson's disease, and diabetes. For further information, please visit [www.domaintherapeutics.com](http://www.domaintherapeutics.com)

#### **About Prestwick Chemical S.A.S.**

Founded in 1999, Prestwick Chemical serves its clients in the life science industry by providing high quality chemical services, mainly focused around hit to lead and lead optimization. Its track record exemplifies the knowledge and experience of Prestwick scientists: Six compounds in clinical development with the most advanced in Phase III. Prestwick headquarters are in Illkirch, near Strasbourg in eastern France. For further information: [www.prestwickchemical.com](http://www.prestwickchemical.com)

#### **About the Institute of Genetics and Molecular and Cellular Biology (IGBMC - Institut de Génétique et de Biologie Moléculaire et Cellulaire)**

The IGBMC is one of the premier centers of European research in biomedicine. The institute focuses on the study of the upper eukaryotes and the control of genetic expression and the analysis of gene and protein function. Brigitte Kieffer's lab is a world-class team highly interested in GPCRs and their role in psychiatric and neurological pathologies. This team has also acquired expertise in identification of new GPCR ligands and ex vivo and in vivo characterization with a close interest in cognitive and emotional processes in schizophrenia For further information: [www.igbmc.fr/research/4/team/46](http://www.igbmc.fr/research/4/team/46)

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