

## Boehringer Ingelheim Acquires All ViraTherapeutics Shares to Develop Next Generation Viral-Based Immuno-Oncology Therapies

- *Boehringer Ingelheim exercises its option to acquire all shares of oncolytic virus company ViraTherapeutics*
- *ViraTherapeutics will operate in Innsbruck, Austria as a distinct unit of Boehringer Ingelheim's Discovery Research organization, maintaining its innovative biotech heritage and close connections to the Medical University of Innsbruck and the regional scientific community*
- *Acquisition strengthens Boehringer Ingelheim's commitment to research and development of viral-based immuno-oncology treatment options aimed at transforming the lives of patients*

**Inngelheim, Germany – 13 September 2018** – Boehringer Ingelheim today announced that it has acquired all shares of ViraTherapeutics, a biopharmaceutical company specializing in the development of oncolytic viral therapies. ViraTherapeutics developed the lead candidate VSV-GP (Vesicular Stomatitis Virus (VSV) with modified glycoprotein (GP)), which is being investigated alone and in combination with other therapies. The total transaction value of EUR 210 million is based on an option and share purchase agreement signed between the companies in August 2016.

Oncolytic viral therapy is a cancer treatment approach with two modes of action. First, the virus specifically replicates in and kills cancer cells. Second, viral infection stimulates the immune system to recognize these same cancer cells, leading to immune-mediated killing of both infected and non-infected cancer cells, further enhancing tumor control. Boehringer Ingelheim and ViraTherapeutics are working to develop a next generation oncolytic viral therapy platform. The lead investigational candidate leveraging the platform, VSV-GP, has shown promising results in pre-clinical models, especially in combination with key immune modulatory principles Boehringer Ingelheim is developing.

"The acquisition of ViraTherapeutics with its exciting oncolytic virus platform is the conclusion of a trusting and close cooperation over two years," said Dr. Heinz Schwer, CEO of ViraTherapeutics. "We are highly optimistic that our VSV-based development programs and technology will complement Boehringer Ingelheim's immuno-oncology franchise and will serve as a source of innovative, new treatment options for patients living with cancer."

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“I want to thank the team around scientific founder Dorothee von Laer, CEO Heinz Schwer and COO Lisa Egerer for their dedication to research and scientific progress that led to a productive collaboration with Boehringer Ingelheim and ultimately to the early exercise of the purchase option,” said Dr. Klaus Schollmeier, Chairman of ViraTherapeutics’ advisory board. “I also want to thank the investors and my fellow board members for their hands-on commitment to this project. I am convinced that ViraTherapeutics’ research will become core to Boehringer Ingelheim’s oncology product pipeline.”

Using a dual approach for potential treatment options, specifically combining immuno-oncology approaches with tumor cell-directed treatments, is central to Boehringer Ingelheim’s cancer immunology research strategy. Oncolytic virus-based therapies are consistent with and complement that strategy.

“Our approach is rooted in transforming ‘cold’ tumors – or immunologically inactive tumors that are not responsive to the checkpoint blockers – to ‘hot’ tumors – those that are most susceptible to immune system attack,” said Dr. Michel Pairet, member of Boehringer Ingelheim’s Board of Managing Directors responsible for Boehringer Ingelheim’s Research and Development. “We are committed to investing in early research with promise and where our expertise best complements the strengths of our partners. Together, we aim to discover breakthrough medical treatments to transform the lives of patients and win the fight against cancer.”

ViraTherapeutics was a portfolio company of the two venture investors EMBL Ventures and the Boehringer Ingelheim Venture Fund (BIVF). BIVF is focused on strategic investment in highly innovative biotechnology and start-up companies to help drive innovation in medical science. The BIVF has EUR 250 million under management and currently supervises a portfolio of 22 active companies and is one of the most active investors in immuno-oncology world-wide.

### **Boehringer Ingelheim in Oncology**

Cancer takes. Takes away loved ones, time and untapped potential. At Boehringer Ingelheim we are providing new hope for patients by taking cancer on. We are collaborating with the oncology community to deliver scientific breakthroughs to transform the lives of patients. Our primary focus is in lung and gastrointestinal cancers, with the goal of delivering breakthrough, first-in-class treatments that can help win the fight against cancer. Our commitment to innovation has resulted in pioneering treatments for lung cancer and we are advancing a unique pipeline of

cancer cell directed agents, immuno-oncology therapies and intelligent combination approaches to help combat many cancers.

### **Boehringer Ingelheim**

Improving the health and quality of life of patients is the goal of the research-driven pharmaceutical company Boehringer Ingelheim. The focus in doing so is on diseases for which no satisfactory treatment option exists to date. The company therefore concentrates on developing innovative therapies that can extend patients' lives. In animal health, Boehringer Ingelheim stands for advanced prevention.

Family-owned since it was established in 1885, Boehringer Ingelheim is one of the pharmaceutical industry's top 20 companies. Some 50,000 employees create value through innovation daily for the three business areas human pharmaceuticals, animal health and biopharmaceuticals. In 2017, Boehringer Ingelheim achieved net sales of nearly 18.1 billion euros. R&D expenditure, exceeding three billion euros, corresponded to 17.0 per cent of net sales.

As a family-owned company, Boehringer Ingelheim plans in generations and focuses on long-term success. The company therefore aims at organic growth from its own resources with simultaneous openness to partnerships and strategic alliances in research. In everything it does, Boehringer Ingelheim naturally adopts responsibility towards mankind and the environment.

More information about Boehringer Ingelheim can be found on [www.boehringer-ingelheim.com](http://www.boehringer-ingelheim.com) or in our annual report: <http://annualreport.boehringer-ingelheim.com>.

### **About ViraTherapeutics**

Austrian based ViraTherapeutics GmbH (ViraT) was a privately held biopharmaceutical company developing promising innovative virus-based immunotherapeutics for the treatment of cancer. ViraT was founded in 2013 as a spin-out of the Medical University of Innsbruck by Prof. Dr. Dorothee von Laer, Head of the Division of Virology at the University. ViraT develops oncolytic cancer vaccines based on a chimeric virus derived from the Vesicular Stomatitis Virus (VSV), so called VSV-GP.

Initially, ViraT received Pre-Seed financing funds from STARTUP.TIROL (previously CAST, Center for Academic Spin-offs Tyrol), Tyrol, and from the Austria Wirtschaftsservice GmbH (aws – the Austrian Government Promotional Bank). ViraT was funded by the Boehringer Ingelheim Venture

Fund (BIVF), EMBL Ventures and the Empl foundation, as well as by the aws through its Venture-Capital-Initiative and Seedfinancing program and by the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) through several programs.

The company currently has 19 employees. ViraT won the international life science business plan competition Best of Biotech 2012 and was awarded the second prize in the Science4Life venture cup 2013. ViraT has a collaboration with the Medical University of Innsbruck, which includes a team of scientists from the laboratory of Prof. von Laer and scientists of the Christian Doppler Laboratory for Viral Immunotherapy of Cancer at the university headed by Dr. Guido Wollmann.

More information about ViraTherapeutics can be found on [www.viratherapeutics.com](http://www.viratherapeutics.com).

### **Boehringer Ingelheim Venture Fund**

Created in 2010, the Boehringer Ingelheim Venture Fund GmbH (BIVF) invests in groundbreaking therapeutics-focused biotechnology companies to drive innovation in biomedical research. BIVF is searching for significant enhancements in patient care through pioneering science and its clinical translation by building long-term relationships with scientists and entrepreneurs. BIVF's focus is to target unprecedented therapeutic concepts addressing high medical needs in immuno-oncology, regenerative medicine, infectious diseases and digital health. These may include novel platform technologies to address so far undruggable targets, new generation vaccines and/or new biological entities, such as oncolytic virotherapy.

BIVF takes an active role with its portfolio companies – delivering significant added value through its own extensive drug discovery, scientific and managerial expertise. BIVF has €250 million under management and currently supervises a portfolio of more than 20 companies.

For more information, please visit [www.boehringer-ingelheim-venture.com](http://www.boehringer-ingelheim-venture.com).

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