

Oncode Institute and ArgoBio launch Laigo Bio, a targeted protein degradation biotech with programs in oncology and neurological disorders

- A collaboration for the creation of a company specialized in the development of a new biological approach for the treatment of cancer and neurological disorders.
- ArgoBio and the Oncode Institute will support the company's development to Series A financing.

Utrecht (Netherlands), and Paris (France), February 08th 2022 -- ArgoBio and [Oncode Institute](#) have teamed up with Oncode Investigator [Madelon Maurice](#), researcher and group leader at UMC Utrecht, to launch Laigo Bio, a new company in the emerging field of target protein degradation. The company has additionally secured funding from [Oncode Bridge Fund](#) and ArgoBio to further develop its proprietary pipeline of targeted immunotherapies SureTACs^R. The SureTACs^R technology platform is a novel approach in membrane protein degradation, applicable to a broad scope of disease applications. The primary focus lies in the area of oncology, but with parallel programs in neuro-inflammation and neuro degenerative diseases. In contrast to other small molecule approaches, this results in an efficient and sustained degradation of target receptors, potentially resulting in superior efficacy in the clinic than modalities currently being employed by other emerging protein degradation technologies.

Initially driven by Madelon Maurice, who will join as the Principal Investigator, Laigo Bio is gearing up for preclinical lead development in the coming months, generating proprietary biologics for a selection of targets to showcase its potential. Laigo Bio receives strong support from seasoned entrepreneurs Neill Moray Mackenzie at ArgoBio and Emil Pot at Oncode, who will prepare the company for a Series A investment round as it aims to initiate its first clinical studies in 2025. Dr. [Neill Moray Mackenzie](#) at ArgoBio is a veteran of the IO field and Mr [Emil Pot](#) is an IP & business development expert at Oncode with 25 years of experience in life sciences.

Chris De Jonghe, Valorization Director of Oncode Institute, said: *"SureTACs^R is building on the innovative ideas that Dr. Maurice has initially validated with the support of Oncode's Technology Development Fund. With the foundation of Laigo Bio, another exciting step forward is made towards the translation of Dr. Maurice's innovations into effective, and tailored therapies for cancer patients. We are thrilled to join forces with ArgoBio in this initial seed round and consider it as a token of great confidence in the potential of this platform technology."*

Madelon Maurice of the UMC Utrecht, said: *“We are extremely happy that ArgoBio is supporting my long-standing research here at the UMC Utrecht on how to interfere with signalling alterations that drive oncogenesis and bringing a team of experienced scientists and entrepreneurs to help with its translation to the clinic.”*

Dr. Neill Moray Mackenzie of ArgoBio, said: *“This is exactly why we put ArgoBio together last year – to fund these early-stage opportunities. I am especially pleased that Madelon Maurice, a renowned KOL in the field, is leading this novel approach to protein degradation which has great potential to open up a completely new biology in the field of cancer therapy.”*

Shobhit Dhawan of Oncode Bridge Fund, said: *“Targeted protein degradation is an exciting space and has gained validation in clinical studies with many players now entering the field. One key differentiator here is sustained degradation of cell membrane bound proteins with a biologic, which is a very novel approach, and we believe holds a lot of promise in oncology and many neurological indications. We look forward to supporting Madelon, Neill and Emil in their journey at Laigo Bio.”*

About Argobio: www.argobiostudio.com

Argobio is a start-up studio based in Paris, France, dedicated to turning cutting-edge innovations into breakthrough biotech companies. Argobio sources innovative early-stage projects on therapeutics from renowned European academic research institutions with a focus on rare diseases, neurological disorders, oncology, and immunology. Argobio selects and incubates these projects with the goal to create biotech companies and develop them up to a significant Series A financing. Argobio provides broad expertise in the discovery and development of novel drugs with a team of highly experienced Biotech entrepreneurs.

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About Oncode Institute: <https://www.oncode.nl/>

Oncode Institute unites more than 900 excellent fundamental cancer researchers in the Netherlands. Our mission is to stimulate innovations in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer. The ultimate goal is to help patients survive, improve the quality of life for those affected and contribute to a more affordable healthcare system. Oncode Institute translates fundamental insights into the biology of cancer into new diagnostics, new drugs and innovative treatments. Oncode’s three strategic pillars to improve patient outcomes are Excellent Science, Collaboration and Valorization. Oncode is funded by The Dutch Cancer Society, together with the Ministries of Economic Affairs & Climate, Education Culture & Science and Health, Welfare & Sport, and Health~Holland, with a total amount of €120 million until 2022.

About Oncode Bridge Fund:

The Oncode Oncology Bridge Fund provides early-stage financing to help the creation and growth of new enterprises based on the science of Oncode Investigators. The Bridge Fund aims to accelerate the translation of innovative cancer research of the Oncode labs into treatment options, diagnostic methods and research tools that benefit patients and society as a whole.

About UMC Utrecht: <https://www.umcutrecht.nl/en>

UMC Utrecht is one of the top-ranked academic medical centers in Europe with the core tasks of care, research and education. With more than 12,000 employees, UMC Utrecht, of which the Wilhelmina Children's Hospital is a part, is one of the largest public healthcare institutions in the Netherlands and the largest employer in the Utrecht region. Our mission: together we improve the health of people and create the care of tomorrow. Together we create more value, because we believe that every person counts.

About Laigo Bio:

Laigo Bio is based on the research from the laboratory of Professor Madelon Maurice, known internationally for her contributions to the understanding of Wnt signaling, a key pathway for stem cell maintenance and tissue renewal. A main focus of her work is to uncover the mode-of-action of membrane-bound E3 ligases that control Wnt receptor turnover and are frequently mutated in cancer.

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