

Argobio and GeneCode Partner on Parkinson's Disease in Argobio's First Announced Research Agreement

- A collaboration to develop a new class of small molecule mimetics for the treatment of Parkinson's disease and other indications.
- Argobio will fund the development of this innovative project up to €3 million and incorporate a new specialized biotechnology company.
- With €50M in capital, Argobio and its team of experienced entrepreneurs-in-residence intend to fund and develop highly innovative projects, currently in early-stage development, for the creation of leading-edge biotech companies in areas of high medical need.

Paris (France) and Tallinn (Estonia), December 16th, 2021 -- Argobio and GeneCode have announced their collaboration to develop small molecule Glial cell line - Derived Neurotrophic Factor (GDNF) mimetics for the treatment of Parkinson's Disease and other indications.

In the venture studio model developed by Argobio, breakthrough technologies are embraced by a team of scientific experts with an entrepreneurial and industrial experience. Over the course of incubation, Argobio will fund the project development up to 3 ME and incorporate the start-up. After incubation, further venture funding will be provided by specialized VC investors.

"The launch of our first collaboration is a great achievement for Argobio. Argobio intends to incubate until series A at least five projects in the fields of rare diseases, neurosciences, and oncology over the next three years. With a committed capital of €50 million, and a team of pharma industry experts, Argobio expects to deliver strong projects, well-prepared for Series A funding," **Thierry Laugel Argobio Chairman said.**

GeneCode, a discovery-stage biotech company developing small molecule GDNF mimetics, in collaboration with the laboratory of Mart Saarma, Professor and Research Director of the Institute of Biotechnology, HI-LIFE, University of Helsinki, Finland, has identified and patented a series of small molecules activating the GDNF signalling receptor RET tyrosine kinase. Professor Saarma's team has discovered GDNF receptors, clarified the GDNF-receptor structure and investigated the therapeutic potential of GDNF family members.

Professor Mart Saarma commented *"Argobio's investment and participation in the development of effective GDNF mimetics is extremely encouraging news. GDNF mimetics can overcome the limitations of the GDNF protein and can open up a completely new page in the treatment of Parkinson's disease."*

GeneCode CEO Paavo Pilv added, *"Our combined expertise will catapult this technology beyond what we would have been able to achieve alone. Considering the pivotal role of GDNF family ligands and RET signalling pathways for other groups of cells, applications of compounds developed by GeneCode are not limited only to Parkinson's Disease but can be applied to treat other medical conditions."*

"We have ambitious goals for the next two years," Argobio Entrepreneur in Residence Yves Ribeill, PhD said. "The whole is greater than the sum of the parts with the combined, diverse expertise of GeneCode, Argobio and Professor Saarma. I am confident that we will be able to demonstrate that the unique business model of funded partnerships initiated by Argobio in Europe will give new therapeutics a boost to succeed."

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 (or lead) 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. The internal team is led by Yves Ribeill, Neill Mackenzie and Rémi Soula. Thierry Laugel, Managing Partner at Kurma Partners is the President of Argobio.

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About GeneCode: www.GeneCode.com

GeneCode is a private pharmaceutical development company focused on the development of disease-modifying therapeutics to combat neurodegeneration. The GDNF Mimetics platform leverages the disease-modifying properties of GDNF to small molecules with drug-like properties.

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