

## **BCI Pharma receives €3.9M (\$4.7M) in public and private funding; sets up laboratory**

### **Funds obtained from Meusinvest, private investors and the Walloon region, coupled with new facilities at the University Hospital of Liège, helped BCI to create new biology platform and launch proof-of-concept and preclinical studies**

**Liège, Belgium, March 12, 2018** – BCI Pharma, a biotechnology company developing innovative kinase inhibitor libraries, announces today that it has received €1.9M (\$2.2M) in public funding from the Walloon region (DG06). The company also received €2M (\$2.5M) from public-private investors.

The funds will be used to accelerate and finalize BCI Pharma's research projects in the fields of cancer, neuropathic pain, inflammation and neuro-inflammation. As a first step, the company created a Belgian holding company and in September 2017 opened a laboratory at the University Hospital of Liège.

The public subsidy was awarded as part of the funding program of the Operational General Directorate for the Economy, Employment and Research (DG06). BCI Pharma succeeded in attracting a total of five Belgian investors.

The investment and the subsidy will also enable BCI Pharma to initiate proof-of-concept studies and to work towards licensing first in-class or best-in-class pre-clinical candidates for new therapeutic approaches, including neuropathic pain, inflammation, neuro-inflammation and immuno-oncology.

BCI Pharma's technology identifies highly active and highly selective kinase inhibitors that target major pathologies and have the potential to improve current therapies as well as provide therapeutic solutions for conditions with high unmet medical need. BCI Pharma's Bikin kinase libraries offer both innovative inhibitors with a new chemical structure and selective kinase inhibitors.

Protein kinase inhibitors are a type of enzyme inhibitor that can block the action of protein kinases in order to inhibit the phosphorylation of a specific amino acid. Phosphorylation is believed to contribute to the growth of certain cancers and inflammatory disorders; kinase inhibitors can therefore provide a new approach for treatment.

"We are delighted with this public funding and the investment we have received, proving that our kinase libraries have great potential," said Dominique Surleraux, CEO of BCI Pharma. "We were able to attract investors from both the Flemish and Walloon parts of Belgium. We believe that our research can contribute to significant improvements in the treatment of neuropathic pain, inflammation and neuro-inflammation as well as certain cancer types. In addition to this, our new lab is located at the center of the Liège' hospital where it can benefit from the expertise of well-known scientists and clinicians and a number of technology platforms in the field of genomics, imaging."

"Meusinvest is delighted to include BCI Pharma in its portfolio. With its great science, located in the hospital's center, everything is in place to boost BCI Pharma's science, clinical outcomes and business revenues," said Benoit Fellin, Meusinvest member.

“The private investors, brought together by and co-investing with TheClubDeal, are very positive about supporting BCI’s goals in finding innovative and improved treatment for major diseases,” said Jean-Marc Legrand, CEO of TheClubDeal.

The markets for neuropathic pain, inflammation and neuro-inflammation are enormous, with the global market for neuropathic pain expected to reach \$8.3 billion (€6.8bn) by 2024<sup>1</sup>.

### **About BCI Pharma**

BCI Pharma is a biotech company with extensive expertise in medicinal chemistry, with a special focus on an innovative chemical library. The company designs and validates innovative kinase inhibitors libraries (Bikin 1-3). The company’s kinase platform is based on a new chemotype with excellent physical and chemical properties. This is promising for treating CNS, inflammation, cancer and metabolic diseases.

BCI Pharma also provides screening technology in the discovery of selective, potent kinase inhibitors. This technology enables experts to select the binding pocket, which is key to selectivity.

So far, the company has received close to €4M (\$4.9M) in public funding and public/private investment from Meusinvest, private investors and the Walloon Region, as part of the development of its chemical library. The funds will also allow the company to initiate a proof-of-concept in 2018.

BCI is based at two sites: Liège (Belgium, biology) and Grabels (France, medicinal chemistry). It has seven employees.

[www.bci-pharma.com](http://www.bci-pharma.com)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.persistencemarketresearch.com/mediarelease/neuropathic-pain-market.asp>