

MATWIN selection highlights six promising cancer research projects

Three projects chosen by MATWIN's 13 partner laboratories, three by a panel of European investors

Bordeaux, France, October 16 , 2020 – MATWIN, a French open-innovation platform dedicated to promoting innovation in oncology, today announces the latest six projects to receive its backing. In virtual discussions, held on October 13 and 14, two panels selected the projects they believe offer the most promising opportunities for patients in the fight against cancer.

The [MATWIN board](#) is the only committee of its kind in Europe. It brings together around 20 members including 13 leading global industrial decision makers in oncology R&D from MATWIN's partners and key academic opinion leaders from major cancer research centers across Europe. The board members shortlisted ten projects based on their promising medical findings and potential for industrial development. Three projects were singled out for special awards by the MATWIN board, based on

- [HEPHAISTOS-Pharma](#): the project elected 'Best-in-class therapeutic innovation' is an immune system booster product (ONCO-Boost) to be used as a single agent in cancers with no therapeutic solution, such as osteosarcoma, or in combination with chemotherapies or immunotherapies in various cancer types
- [DIVINCELL](#): the project elected 'Best innovative therapeutic approach' is an anticancer therapeutic strategy allowing targeted correction of KRAS oncogene mutations (DIV-TREX), leading to tumor growth arrest and tumor reduction. This strategy paves the way for targeted and personalized therapies in many cancer types
- [FASTBASE Solutions](#): the project elected 'Best predictive test' is an innovative test based on efficient and reliable detection of the PD-1 / PD-L1 interaction for an appropriate selection and stratification of patients eligible for immunotherapies in numerous cancers types

Applicants were invited to pitch their projects over the course of two days of remote presentations and discussions, during which members of MATWIN's international board had the opportunity to share their expert advice and recommendations. This is the 11th year that MATWIN has organized this selection process. Previous winners including PDC*Line, H Immune and Invectys have seen their work fast tracked and have attracted genuine international interest.

"MATWIN has been really beneficial for a biotech like us; it has boosted our image and increased our industry contacts. It has also enabled us to get feedback from real experts – similar to a due diligence role - for our PDC*lung project," said Eric Halioua, CEO of PDC*line Pharma.

"The candidates pitching their projects have a unique opportunity to present their innovation to a panel of renowned international experts; the panel's valuable recommendations help move projects forward and promote collaboration opportunities," said Lucia Robert, CEO of MATWIN. "Everybody wins – the applicants, the industry players and, ultimately, the patients themselves. More in-depth discussions are already ongoing to establish potential partnerships."

Alongside its board meeting, MATWIN has also organized its second OUI (**O**ncology **U**pward **I**nvestment) investor event, designed to help secure financial backing for promising innovations. Eleven cancer research companies looking for investment were invited to pitch their project to a panel of 15 major European investors interested in supporting their businesses in the future.

Having reviewed all the projects, the panel decided to award three startups:

- [Step Pharma](#), a start-up developing a new class of oral nucleotide synthesis inhibitors to provide better treatment for hematological malignancies
- [GamaMabs](#), a spin-off of the LFB pharmaceutical group specialized in the development of first-in-class therapeutic monoclonal antibodies in the field of immuno-oncology
- [Mablink Bioscience](#), a start-up focusing on immunoconjugates (ADCs) and offering a new platform for optimizing the design of new ADC drug candidates

The 2020 winners will be offered support by Nile, an agency dedicated to public affairs & market access in the health area, and MATWIN.

The ten companies selected for the OUI pitch last year have already raised a total funding amount of \$12M (€10.3M) at least.

The OUI investors are: Advent France Biotechnology, Aglaia Oncology Funds, Angels Santé, Auriga Partners, Bpifrance, Fondation Fournier-Majoie, Fund+, Go Capital, i2020 Accelerator, Jeito Capital, Kurma Partners, LSP, OMNES Capital, Seventure and Sofinnova Partners.

If you are interested in receiving support from MATWIN, [the call for applications is open until October 31, 2020](#) to European academic teams and entrepreneurs.

About MATWIN

MATWIN is a French open-innovation platform dedicated to promoting innovation in oncology. For over ten years, the platform has offered a six-month support program to help fast-track innovative projects – from both academic laboratories and startup companies across Europe – and promote partnerships with industrial partners and investors. The program is supported by 13 international laboratories (Amgen, AstraZeneca, BMS, Boehringer Ingelheim, Exact Sciences, Gilead, GSK, Nanostring Technologies, Novartis, Pierre Fabre, Pfizer, Roche and Sanofi) as well as many other organizations working to promote innovation in cancer research (e.g. oncology clusters, technology transfer offices, incubators ...).

Since 2015, MATWIN has been a subsidiary of Unicancer, the French federation that brings together the 18 Comprehensive Cancer Centers in France.

www.matwin.fr

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