

February 17th 2014: BioRap Technologies Ltd. to collaborate with GlaxoSmithKline on the development of novel immunomodulator for therapy of Graft Vs host diseases (GVHD) and autoimmune diseases

Haifa, Israel

BioRap Technologies, the technology transfer company of the Rappaport Institute for Biomedical Research at the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology, has signed a collaboration agreement with GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) to develop and commercialize a new treatment for Graft versus Host Disease (GVHD) and a number of other major chronic autoimmune diseases.

The collaboration is based on a recent scientific breakthrough made by Prof Nathan Karin, Dr Barsheshet and Dr Wildbaum at the Rappaport Institute. With funding from the “Kamin” program sponsored by the Israeli Ministry of Economics, scientists at the Institute identified a novel mechanism for increasing the activity of regulatory T-cells, a cell type which plays an important role in controlling autoimmunity.

GVHD is a frequent and devastating complication that can arise following bone marrow transplantation. Other autoimmune diseases which may ultimately be amenable to treatment if this novel mechanism proves successful include Inflammatory Bowel Disease (Crohn’s Disease and Ulcerative Colitis) and Multiple Sclerosis.

This collaboration is part of GSK’s Discovery Partnerships with Academia (DPAC) initiative, designed to bring together the complementary skill sets of GSK and individual academic groups in the search for new medicines. Under the terms of the agreement, GSK will bring its expertise in drug discovery to develop drug candidates in collaboration with Professor Karin’s team at the Rappaport Institute.

Dr Orit Shaked, CEO of Biorap Technologies, said: “As an academic research institute, we are excited by this first opportunity to collaborate with GSK and jointly develop therapeutics based on this novel target. We believe that these therapeutics may have the potential to profoundly improve the treatment of major life and health-threatening autoimmune diseases, and thereby may provide relief to patients suffering from these debilitating, chronic diseases”.

Dr Pearl Huang, Vice President of DPAC said, “This collaboration will combine the world-class biological knowledge of Professor Karin and his team at the Rappaport Institute with GSK’s drug discovery expertise. It is our hope that this new integrated partnership will combine our relative strengths to help translate innovative research into new medicines for patients”.

Dr Iris Geffen Gloor, Biomed Manager at the UK Israel Tech Hub at the British Embassy in Israel commented on the initiative: “GSK’s Discovery Partnerships with Academia (DPAC) group is in a worldwide search for the most promising researchers and institutions to partner with on new drug discovery research. We were very proud to facilitate this connection and are delighted that GSK has recognized the potential of the Israeli life science scene and selected its first Israeli partner for one of only a limited number of such partnerships across the globe.”

About BioRap Technologies at the Technion's Rappaport Institute for Research in Biomedical Sciences

BioRap is the Rappaport Institute's technology transfer company and its liaison to industry, bringing promising scientific innovations generated at the Institute to collaboration with industry and commercialization. The company provides the legal and commercial frameworks for the inventions and innovations of RI researchers, protecting discoveries and innovations with patents, and working jointly with industry to bring scientific discovery to the market. For more information, visit www.bio-rap.com

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Notes to Editors:

Professor Nathan Karin is the Head of the Department of Immunology at the Rappaport Faculty of Medicine of the Technion, and a member of the Rappaport Research Institute at the Technion. Prof. Karin focuses on developing novel strategies to characterize and selectively amplify the activity of distinct subsets of regulatory immune cell and by so doing restrain autoimmunity and GVHD (Meiron et al Journal of Experimental Medicine, 2008).