

Friday 20 January, 2017

THE CRT PIONEER FUND AND CANCER RESEARCH UK'S MANCHESTER INSTITUTE NOMINATE CANCER DRUG CANDIDATE

The Cancer Research Technology Pioneer Fund LP (CPF) today (Friday) has announced it will further develop a promising class of cancer drugs called RET inhibitors, through a collaboration with the Cancer Research UK Manchester Institute Drug Discovery Unit*, at The University of Manchester.

A potential drug candidate identified through the collaboration has entered preclinical studies, the stage necessary to enable an investigational new drug (IND) application. These studies ensure the drug is safe to be given to patients. If the studies are successful the experimental drug will be funded through early clinical trials.

Ian Miscampbell, managing partner of Sixth Element Capital which manages the CPF, said: "We're delighted to announce this significant project milestone. And the further investment we've made will pave the way for a potential new cancer drug to be taken into phase I clinical trials. If the first studies are successful we'll seek industry partners to further develop and commercialise these drugs."

The RET inhibitor programme was led by scientists at Cancer Research UK's Manchester Institute. Investment by the CPF in 2014 built on the research of the group and enabled the acceleration of the programme.

The RET gene plays a critical role in the development of medullary thyroid cancer. Up to two percent of non-small cell lung adenocarcinomas – originating in the mucus-secreting cells lining the airways – have RET mutations. The project aims to discover novel compounds targeting the RET gene in a specific population of patients.

Dr Donald Ogilvie, head of drug discovery at the Cancer Research UK Manchester Institute at The University of Manchester, said: "We're pleased to work with the CRT Pioneer Fund to

accelerate progress on the exciting RET inhibitors discovered by Cancer Research UK scientists at our Institute.

“Lung cancer can be difficult to treat successfully. As part of the Cancer Research UK Lung Cancer Centre of Excellence, we’re determined to get new lung cancer treatments to patients. Identifying this candidate drug molecule offers the potential to help boost survival from this disease.”

Dr Phil L’Huillier, Cancer Research Technology's director of business development, said: “It’s fantastic news that CRT’s Pioneer Fund has helped speed up this important research from the lab to potentially benefit patients. It’s essential that we bridge the innovation gap in UK drug discovery, so that patients can quickly get the promising new drugs being developed in Cancer Research UK labs and elsewhere around the world.”

ENDS

For media enquiries contact the Cancer Research UK press office on 020 3469 8300 or, out of hours, on 07050 264 059.

Notes to editors

* The Drug Discovery Unit builds upon fundamental biology discoveries made within the Manchester Cancer Research Centre (MCRC). The University of Manchester, including the Cancer Research UK Manchester Institute, joined forces with Cancer Research UK and The Christie NHS Foundation Trust to form the MCRC, allowing doctors and scientists to work closely together to turn scientific advances into patient benefits sooner. See: <http://www.mcrc.manchester.ac.uk/Our-Research/Research-Groups/Drug-Discovery-Unit>

About Sixth Element Capital and CRT Pioneer Fund

Sixth Element Capital is a fund manager, authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. The partnership is managed by Dr Robert James and Ian Miscampbell, each of whom is highly experienced in the financing and commercialisation of research and development projects. Further information can be found on their web site www.sixthelementcapital.com.

The first fund managed by Sixth Element Capital is the CRT Pioneer Fund, a £70m Fund dedicated to investment in oncology development programmes in Europe. The sweet spot for investment is pre-

lead optimisation through to early clinical trials in man. The Fund is dedicated to financing the best assets and companies emanating from Europe and expects to commit two-thirds of its investment to projects derived from Cancer Research UK's oncology drug discovery portfolio with the remainder being invested in projects from outside Cancer Research UK.

About Cancer Research Technology

Cancer Research Technology (CRT) is a specialist commercialisation and development company, which aims to develop new discoveries in cancer research for the benefit of cancer patients. CRT works closely with leading international cancer scientists and their institutes to protect intellectual property arising from their research and to establish links with commercial partners. CRT facilitates the discovery, development and marketing of new cancer therapeutics, vaccines, diagnostics and enabling technologies. CRT is a wholly owned subsidiary of Cancer Research UK, the world's leading cancer charity dedicated to saving lives through research. Further information about CRT can be found at www.cancertechnology.com and here: <http://www.cancertechnology.co.uk/how-we-are-advancing-discoveries-beat-cancer>

About Cancer Research UK

- Cancer Research UK is the world's leading cancer charity dedicated to saving lives through research.
- Cancer Research UK's pioneering work into the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer has helped save millions of lives.
- Cancer Research UK receives no government funding for its life-saving research. Every step it makes towards beating cancer relies on every pound donated.
- Cancer Research UK has been at the heart of the progress that has already seen survival rates in the UK double in the last forty years.
- Today, 2 in 4 people survive cancer. Cancer Research UK's ambition is to accelerate progress so that 3 in 4 people will survive cancer within the next 20 years.
- Cancer Research UK supports research into all aspects of cancer through the work of over 4,000 scientists, doctors and nurses.
- Together with its partners and supporters, Cancer Research UK's vision is to bring forward the day when all cancers are cured.

For further information about Cancer Research UK's work or to find out how to support the charity, please call 0300 123 1022 or visit www.cancerresearchuk.org. Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).