

## International Consortium Awarded Eurostars Grant for the Development of First-in-class Treatment of Metastatic Cancer

***ONA Therapeutics, Absolute Antibody and RIC partner to create new type of biologic***

**Barcelona, Spain, December 17, 2020.** ONA Therapeutics, Absolute Antibody and RIC - three leading European companies in the biotech landscape - have been awarded a Eurostars grant for a two-year project that will develop a proprietary biological drug with a unique mode of action for the treatment of various types of metastatic cancers. Taking the lives of more than 9 million people globally each year, metastatic cancers are often unresponsive to existing cancer treatments, leaving a large unmet need. In order to tackle this important health problem, the newly established consortium - named **LIPOLOGIC** - will combine industry know-how in complementary areas of drug development: from target discovery, across molecule formatting and manufacturing, to lead selection and characterization.

**ONA Therapeutics**, a Spanish biotech company specialized in the discovery and development of therapeutic biologics targeting tumor metastatic-initiating cells and lipid metabolism, will take the lead in the LIPOLOGIC program. *“Our research demonstrates that the survival of metastatic cells is linked to the intake of certain saturated fats and if we block the capacity for intake of these fats, we significantly reduce the cell’s metastatic potential. We are excited to partner with Absolute Antibody and RIC to develop novel revolutionary therapies that target this mechanism of action and with the potential to treat multiple types of metastatic cancer,”* said ONA co-founder and CEO Valerie Vanhooren.

**Absolute Antibody**, experts in recombinant antibody technology, will engineer the biologic into an optimized format and then recombinantly produce and purify the molecule for preclinical analysis. According to Ian Wilkinson, Chief Scientific Officer, *“Our contribution to the team will result in a reproducible, defined biologic to progress to the IND stage and clinical trials. We are very excited about the potential of this unique mode of action.”*

**RIC**, expert in biopharma analytics, will apply its comprehensive knowledge and in-house platforms to provide the CMC data necessary for evaluating the project’s candidate molecules and selecting the best lead: identifying physicochemical liabilities, better understanding target binding through epitope mapping and evaluating overall pharmacokinetics. *“The complex nature of biological products makes the development of innovative therapies like these truly challenging. We are proud to bring our analytical skill set to the table and help make this new type of treatment a reality,”* said Koen Sandra, CEO at RIC.

The LIPOLOGIC consortium has just kicked off its pre-clinical development against a variety of tumor types and plans to move its lead candidate into first clinical studies in patients with metastatic cancer in the upcoming years. The initiative is funded by the Eurostars-2 joint programme with co-funding from the European Union Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme.



#### **About ONA Therapeutics, SL**

ONA Therapeutics, with headquarters in the Barcelona Science Park (PCB), Barcelona, Spain, is a biotech company that specializes in the discovery and development of therapeutic biologics targeting tumor metastatic-initiating cells and lipid metabolism. Founded in 2019 by Salvador Aznar-Benitah and Valerie Vanhooren, it was a spin-off from ICREA and the IRB Institute for Research in Biomedicine. Learn more at [ONA-therapeutics.com](http://ONA-therapeutics.com).

#### **About Absolute Antibody, Ltd.**

Absolute Antibody is a rapidly growing company with a vision to make recombinant antibody technology accessible to all. We offer antibody sequencing, engineering and recombinant production as custom services, as well as a unique catalog of recombinant antibodies, engineered into new and useful formats. Learn more at [AbsoluteAntibody.com](http://AbsoluteAntibody.com).

#### **About RIC, BV**

RIC is a privately-owned European center of excellence in the field of analytical solutions with headquarters in Kortrijk, Belgium. For more than 35 years RIC has been supporting customers worldwide in various industries with scientific know-how and technical expertise. Under its brand name "RIC biologics" it provides all-round analytical solutions to pharma and biotech companies working on biological products and chemical entities. Learn more at [RIC-biologics.com](http://RIC-biologics.com).

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