

University of Birmingham Spinout Company is developing a novel drug for the treatment of Glaucoma

Scientists at the University of Birmingham have received funding from the Technology Strategy Board, the UK's innovation agency, to develop a novel multi action siRNA drug with proven neuroprotective and neuroregenerative activity to treat Glaucoma.

The World Health Organisation estimates 12.5 million people are blinded from glaucoma globally, with the total number affected at ~66 million. Within the UK 10% of blind people have Glaucoma. Whilst there are treatments available, these focus on reducing the pressure that damage the retinal neurons but do not protect the eye from on-going nerve damage. There is clearly an unmet need for better drugs to treat Glaucoma.

A team of scientists at the University of Birmingham's spinout company Neuregenix Ltd, led by Professor Ann Logan a world leader in neural repair, has identified, tested and patented a novel multi-action siRNA drug (siRhoA) with proven neuroprotective and neuroregenerative activity for the retinal neurons that get damaged in glaucoma.

Funding from the Technology Strategy Board will enable the use of innovative technology to formulate the drug for less invasive/less frequent delivery to the glaucomatous eyes of patients. Specifically the Neuregenix team will prepare and test an injectable formulation for long-term (months) drug release and a daily eye drop formulation of the drug, so that suitability to treat this clinical disease is established.

Prof. Ann Logan, School of Clinical and Experimental Medicine, University of Birmingham said, *"This award recognises the need for effective new drugs to treat Glaucoma and will enhance the potential that our technology will be taken forward with new partners as a therapy to protect against the blindness that this disease causes."*

Richard Mansfield, Business Development Manager, Neuregenix Ltd said, *"Neuregenix is delighted to receive funding from the UK's Technology Strategy Board to progress the development of our novel drug to treat Glaucoma. Successfully winning funding in this Biomedical Catalyst investment round represents a major vote of confidence in our siRNA technology and provides us with the opportunity to further develop the drug for clinical delivery."*

With the support of Research and Innovation Services and Alta Innovations Ltd, the technology transfer Office at the University of Birmingham, Neuregenix will deliver a drug candidate developed to the point that it can be licensed to a commercial partner for clinical development.

About The University of Birmingham

The University of Birmingham is a truly vibrant, global community and an internationally-renowned institution. Ranked amongst the world's top 100 institutions, its work brings people

from across the world to Birmingham, including researchers and teachers and more than 4,000 international students from nearly 150 countries.

The University is home to nearly 30,000 students. With more than 7,500 postgraduate students from across the world, Birmingham is one of the most popular universities for postgraduate study in the UK.

The University plays an integral role in the economic, social and cultural growth of local and regional communities; working closely with businesses and organisations, employing approximately 6,000 staff and providing 10,000 graduates annually.

About Alta Innovations

Alta Innovations Ltd is the technology transfer Office of The University of Birmingham and is responsible for the commercialisation of research undertaken at the University. Alta Innovations links academic research with business through licensing and spinout activity, collaborative research and consultancy projects to generate the new ideas, technologies and processes required to achieve competitive advantage.

For more information please see: <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/generic/alta-innovations/about/index.aspx>

About the Technology Strategy Board

The Technology Strategy Board is the UK's innovation agency. Its goal is to accelerate economic growth by stimulating and supporting business-led innovation. Sponsored by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), the Technology Strategy Board brings together business, research and the public sector, supporting and accelerating the development of innovative products and services to meet market needs, tackle major societal challenges and help build the future economy. For more information please visit www.innovateuk.org.