

Healthcare industry BW

1.4 mn € grants for immatics

immatics biotechnologies GmbH announced that the company has received grants from three renowned public research funding programs to advance its early-stage cancer immunotherapy programs, with a special focus on glioblastoma and cancer stem cells. The government-sponsored so-called nonrepayable funds add up to more than 1.4 million €.

The first grant covering approximately 540,000 € was awarded by the BioChancePLUS program of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and will support a collaboration of immatics with Dr Christel Herold-Mende of Heidelberg's University Clinic and Dr Philipp Beckhove of the German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) to develop a novel immunotherapeutic vaccine against glioblastoma (brain cancer), a condition with only very limited therapeutic options to date.

The second grant of approximately 250,000 € was awarded by the German federal state Baden-Wuerttemberg within a program supporting research activities of regional biotechnology companies. The funds will be dedicated to the preclinical evaluation of new immunomodulators and to the development of immunogenic formulations in combination with tumor-associated peptides. Such immunomodulators and formulations shall support the enhancement of the efficacy of current and future vaccine candidates.

The third and largest grant immatics has received will be used for the development of a novel class of therapeutic vaccines which trigger immune responses by specifically targeting cancer stem cells. Thereby they allow for a more effective and sustainable elimination of the tumor. Such vaccines may also be able to eliminate a variety of tumor entities and therefore have a significant market potential. The grant of approximately 625,000 € was awarded by the program "KMU-innovativ" of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). Academic collaboration partners for this project will be Prof Dr Pierre-Yves Dietrich of the Hôpitaux Universitaires de Genève and Prof Dr Hans-Georg Rammensee of the Eberhard-Karls-Universitaet in Tuebingen.

"We are delighted about being awarded three important grants within the past months," said Dr Harpreet Singh, Chief Scientific Officer of immatics. "The funds will allow us to strengthen our academic partnerships and to expand our research and preclinical development activities in major cancer fields such as glioblastoma and cancer stem cells. Consequently, our goal is to generate new findings in collaboration with our academic partners and use them to advance our programs in cancer immunotherapy."

Source: immatics biotechnologies GmbH (P)