



Grünenthal

KU LEUVEN



CD3

CENTRE FOR
DRUG DESIGN
AND DISCOVERY

PRESS RELEASE

Grünenthal and KU Leuven join forces to develop an innovative non-opioid pain treatment

Aachen, Germany and Leuven, Belgium, April 09, 2018 – Grünenthal, the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven's Centre for Drug Design and Discovery (CD3) and the Laboratory of Ion Channel Research (LICR) announced today that they have entered into a research collaboration for the development of novel non-opioid drug candidates for the treatment of painful diseases with a high unmet medical need.

The partnership builds on lead compounds jointly developed by CD3 and LICR as well as on the know-how of Thomas Voets (LICR) and Joris Vriens (LICR), leading experts in the field of TRP ion channels, who have identified a novel, innovative and potentially pivotal target for non-opioid pain management. Grünenthal will provide its expertise and technical capabilities in pain research and drug development to further optimize the compounds towards novel, innovative first-in-class clinical candidates.

"We are delighted to be part of this collaboration. It is a perfect example of an integrated approach that comprises the capabilities of the academic environment, early drug discovery centers and the pharmaceutical industry to deliver innovative solutions for unmet patient needs", Klaus-Dieter Langner, Chief Scientific Officer Grünenthal explains. "To leverage the latest approaches in pain research, Grünenthal is strongly committed to initiate close collaborations with the scientific community on early stage R&D projects."

"There is still a high unmet medical need in pain management. Chronic pain is the most common cause of long-term disability, affecting up to one in three adults at some point of their lifetime. About half of the patients suffering from chronic pain report inadequate pain control with existing treatments," Thomas Voets, Head LICR said. Patrick Chaltin, Managing Director CD3 added: "The fact that pain is such a widespread health problem has driven us to work with Prof. Voets and Prof. Vriens towards new potential pain treatments based on LICR's innovative science and we are now extremely happy to also join forces with Grünenthal, a leading company in the pain field."

About TRP ion channels

Transient receptor potential (TRP) channels are a group of ion channels located mostly on the plasma membrane of numerous cell types. There are about 28 TRP channels that share some structural similarity to each other. Importantly, many of these channels mediate a variety of sensations like the sensations of pain, hotness, warmth or coldness, as well as different kinds of tastes and pressure. Additionally, TRPs have been seen to have complex multidimensional roles in sensory signaling. The reduction of chronic pain may be possible by targeting ion channels involved in thermal, chemical, and mechanical sensation to reduce their sensitivity to stimuli.



About Grünenthal

Grünenthal is an entrepreneurial, science-based pharmaceutical company specialized in pain, gout and inflammation. Our ambition is to deliver four to five new products to patients in diseases with high unmet medical need by 2022 and become a € 2 bn company. We are a fully integrated research & development company with a long track record of bringing innovative pain treatments and state-of-the-art technologies to patients. By sustainably investing in our R&D above the industrial average, we are strongly committed to innovation aimed at helping patients.

Grünenthal is an independent, family-owned company headquartered in Aachen, Germany. We are present in 32 countries with affiliates in Europe, Latin America and the US. Our products are sold in more than 155 countries and approx. 5,200 employees are working for the Grünenthal worldwide. In 2017, Grünenthal achieved revenues of approx. € 1.3 bn.

More information: www.grunenthal.com
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About the Centre for Drug Design and Discovery

The Centre for Drug Design and Discovery (CD3) translates innovative science into promising drug discovery programs that are well qualified for further development by pharmaceutical or biotech companies. CD3 brings expert drug discovery capabilities and financial means to academic research groups and small companies in order to discover innovative small molecule drugs. Supported by KU Leuven Research & Development and the European Investment Fund, CD3 launched a 60 million euro fund in 2016. CD3 has entered into several successful partnerships with pharmaceutical companies and also integrated drug discovery programs in spin-off companies. For more information: www.cd3.eu

About LICR

The Laboratory of Ion Channel Research of KU Leuven is one of the world leading research groups in the field of ion channels. The main research aim is to better understand the modus operandi and (patho)physiological role of transient receptor potential (TRP) channels and to translate this knowledge into a better understanding of the etiology of certain human diseases and ultimately into the development of novel therapies.

About KU Leuven

KU Leuven is a leading European university dedicated to research, education and service to society. It is a founding member of the League of European Research Universities (LERU) and has a strong European and international orientation. Its sizeable academic staff conducts basic and applied research in a comprehensive range of disciplines. University Hospitals Leuven, its network of research hospitals, provides high-quality healthcare and develops new therapeutic and diagnostic insights with an emphasis on translational research. The University welcomes more 50,000 students from over 140 countries. Its doctoral schools organize internationally oriented PhD programs for over 4,500 doctoral students. More info: www.kuleuven.be/english.

For further information, please contact:

Štěpán Kráčala
Head Global Communications
Tel.: +49 241 569-1335
Stepan.Kracala@grunenthal.com
Grünenthal GmbH, 52099 Aachen, Germany

Patrick Chaltin
Managing Director CD3
Tel: +32-16-852.605
Patrick.Chaltin@kuleuven.be
CD3, BioIncubator 2, Leuven, Belgium