



## **Libra Therapeutics Launches with \$29 Million Series A to Develop Novel Therapeutics for Neurodegenerative Diseases**

*Company appoints Isaac Veinbergs, Ph.D., an established leader with strong expertise in diseases of the central nervous system, as President and CEO*

SAN DIEGO, September 23, 2020 -- Libra Therapeutics, Inc. launched today to develop novel drug candidates focused on restoring the cellular balance lost in neurodegenerative diseases. These include amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) and frontotemporal dementia (FTD), which are both characterized by disequilibrium caused by the production and decreased clearance of neurotoxic proteins. In conjunction with the company's launch, Libra Therapeutics has secured \$29 million in Series A financing co-led by Boehringer Ingelheim Venture Fund (BIVF), Epidarex Capital, and Santé. The round was joined by Yonjin Venture, Dolby Family Ventures, and Sixty Degree Capital.

Libra Therapeutics was founded on breakthrough science generated by Axxam S.p.A., a leading discovery research organization, which provides Libra Therapeutics novel and proprietary chemical matter, cutting edge and exclusive assays, and robust drug discovery expertise. The financing proceeds will be used primarily to build the team and advance a pipeline of novel small molecule drug candidates for the treatment of neurodegenerative diseases.

"My career has been dedicated to CNS drug discovery. I have seen firsthand the devastation diseases like ALS, Alzheimer's, and Parkinson's disease have on patients and their families," said Isaac Veinbergs, Ph.D., President and CEO of Libra Therapeutics. "We are delighted to build on Axxam's pioneering foundational research to accelerate the development of novel therapies with the potential to slow or prevent disease progression to deliver meaningful improvements in patient outcomes across a wide range of neurodegenerative diseases."

The most frequent genetic cause of ALS and FTD is the expansion of the C9orf72 gene. Multiple studies have proposed that C9orf72 regulates intracellular trafficking and autophagy in neuronal cells, and thus Libra Therapeutics aims to increase autophagy to counter the loss of C9orf72 function. The company's therapeutic platform is uniquely positioned to discover and develop novel small molecule drugs that can both increase autophagy to more rapidly clear toxic proteins and attenuate the production of neurotoxic proteins.

"Libra Therapeutics takes a unique approach to tackling neurodegenerative diseases with two distinct but complementary approaches that target key pathways that drive neurodegeneration," said Martín Heidecker, Ph.D., Managing Director, BIVF USA. "By modulating scientifically and genetically validated targets to decrease neurotoxic proteins, there's a clearly defined development path with translational and clinical biomarkers."

"We are delighted to have played a key role in the creation and funding of Libra Therapeutics as well as co-leading the financing. The science behind the company is outstanding and has enabled the recruitment of a highly experienced executive and an exceptional international investor syndicate," said Henning Steinhagen, Ph.D., Venture Partner, Epidarex Capital. "By bringing together these key components, Libra Therapeutics has a highly differentiated platform to generate novel therapies that aim to improve the lives of patients with neurodegenerative diseases."



### **About BIVF**

Created in 2010, the Boehringer Ingelheim Venture Fund GmbH (BIVF) invests in groundbreaking therapeutics-focused biotechnology companies to drive innovation in biomedical research. BIVF is searching for significant enhancements in patient care through pioneering science and its clinical translation by building long-term relationships with scientists and entrepreneurs. BIVF's focus is to target unprecedented therapeutic concepts addressing high medical needs in immuno-oncology, regenerative medicine, infectious diseases and digital health. For more information, visit [www.boehringer-ingelheim-venture.com](http://www.boehringer-ingelheim-venture.com).

### **About Epidarex Capital**

Epidarex Capital is a transatlantic venture capital firm with a track record of building exceptional life science companies in emerging hubs in the US and UK. Epidarex' experienced team of early stage investors partner with entrepreneurs and leading research institutions to transform world-class science into highly innovative products addressing major unmet needs in the global healthcare market. For more information, visit [www.epidarex.com](http://www.epidarex.com).

### **About Santé**

Founded in 2006, Santé is a specialized healthcare and life sciences investment firm with over a half-billion dollars in capital under management. The Firm invests in early-stage companies developing innovative new medical technologies, biotechnologies and digitally-enabled healthcare services. Since inception, the Firm has made nearly 40 portfolio investments, including Claret Medical (Boston Scientific), TVA Medical (Becton Dickinson), Millipede Medical (Boston Scientific), Molecular Templates (MTEM), AbVitro (Celgene) and Explorys (IBM Corp). Santé invests nationally and is headquartered in Austin, Texas, with additional offices in Houston. For more information, please visit [www.sante.com](http://www.sante.com).

### **About Libra Therapeutics**

Libra Therapeutics is a biotechnology company focused on developing novel disease-modifying therapeutics that can restore the cellular balance disrupted in neurodegenerative diseases. The company is advancing three distinct and novel preclinical small molecule programs designed to increase autophagy and decrease production of neurotoxic protein aggregates. Libra Therapeutics was founded to capitalize on proprietary technologies and therapeutic assets from Axxam, a leading discovery research company. The company is based in San Diego. To connect with the company, visit [www.libratherapeutics.com](http://www.libratherapeutics.com).

**Media Contact:** Jessica Yingling, Ph.D., [Little Dog Communications](http://LittleDogCommunications.com), [jessica@litldog.com](mailto:jessica@litldog.com), +1.858.344.8091