

## Press Release

# Origenis founds biotech company Neuron23 in Silicon Valley together with star investor Kleiner Perkins

## Origenis successfully establishes its new business model for the clinical development of its neuroprotective drug pipeline

Martinsried near Munich, Germany, March 01, 2021 - Origenis GmbH, a privately held German biopharmaceutical company, announces the formation and financing of Neuron23 Inc. in South San Francisco. Neuron23 was launched through an innovative partnership of the German biotechnology company Origenis GmbH with the very renowned venture capitalist KPCB October 2018. Neuron23 Inc. has been contributed by Origenis the best optimized small molecule programs in the field of neurodegeneration and neuroinflammation. Neuron23™ Inc. will focus on the clinical development of these precision medicines for genetically defined neurological and immunological diseases. Since inception, Origenis and Neuron23 have been working together under the radar at full speed to prepare for entry into clinical phases. Then, on December 2020, the formation and funding of Neuron23 was publicly announced.

A successful Series A and B financing of \$113.5 million will enable the preclinical and clinical development of Origenis' compounds in Neuron23. The financing consists of \$33.5 million in Series A financing from Westlake Village BioPartners and Kleiner Perkins, and \$80 million in Series B financing led by Redmile Group. Other Series B investors included Westlake Village BioPartners, Kleiner Perkins, Cowen Healthcare Investments, Acorn Bioventures, HBM Partners, Perceptive Advisors and Surveyor Capital (a Citadel company).

"We are pleased to have the strong support of this consortium of blue chip investors who recognize our potential to build a new kind of precision medicine company," said Nancy Stagliano, PhD, CEO and Chairman of Neuron23. "Neuron23's approach can revolutionize the way we treat genetically defined neurological and inflammatory diseases, significantly improving patients' lives."

"With Neuron23 Inc. we have established an excellent basis to develop preclinical and clinical programs selected and optimized by us in the field of neurodegeneration and neuroinflammation. The most advanced of these are the two lead programs against Leucine-Rich Repeat Kinase 2 (LRRK2), a gene associated with Parkinson's disease, and against Tyrosine Kinase 2 (TYK2), a protein of the JAK family that plays an essential role in the immune response of inflammatory diseases in the body and also in the brain," said Michael Almstetter, CEO of Origenis. "Separating technology development and clinical development into two different companies is the basic idea of Origenis' business concept. Applying this here was very important to us, as risk and capital requirements are very different in these areas. As a shareholder in Neuron23, Origenis naturally has a stake in Neuron23's success."

"Our integrated Origenis AI technology platform delivers highly optimized compounds for novel targets for challenging indications, which is impressively confirmed by this investment," said Dr. Michael Thormann, CSO of Origenis. "We are already developing the next portfolios of novel small molecule compounds for additional challenging therapeutic indications, and we are confident to multiply this business model in the near future."

"We are delighted that the IZB based Origenis drives its vision and innovative platform technology towards novel small molecule drugs addressing the challenging therapeutic area of neurodegeneration. We are also very excited to see the progress and the interaction of Origenis with the Silicon Valley based Neuron23," said Dr. Peter Hanns Zobel, Managing Director of the Biotechnology Innovation and Start-up Center (IZB) in Martinsried near Munich. Origenis is headquartered at the IZB.

Origenis' goal is to create other new companies along the lines of Neuron23. Once programs are sufficiently advanced, they will be spun out as start-ups to fund preclinical and clinical developments with strategic investors, through IPOs or pharma partnerships.



Foto (f.l.t.r): The founders of Origenis - Dr. Andreas Treml, COO; Dr. Michael Thormann, CSO, Michael Almstetter, CEO

### **About Origenis GmbH**

Origenis GmbH is a privately held German biopharmaceutical company developing brain-penetrating, highly selective small molecule drugs and diagnostics for a variety of neurodegenerative and neuroinflammatory diseases. Origenis leverages its unique drug design, synthesis and characterization capabilities to develop a continuous stream of intellectual property (IP) protected new chemical entities that can cross the blood-brain barrier. Origenis' approach has been validated by multiple partners, resulting in a significant IP and R&D portfolio that provides strong patent protection. For more information, visit [www.origenis.com](http://www.origenis.com).

### **About Neuron23™**

Neuron23™ Inc. is an early-stage biotechnology company focused on developing precision medicines for genetically defined neurological and immunological diseases. Neuron23 leverages recent advances in human genetics combined with its state-of-the-art artificial intelligence (AI)-powered drug discovery and biomarker platforms to develop therapeutics for devastating diseases. The company's focus areas are neurodegenerative diseases, neuroinflammatory diseases, and systemic

autoimmune and inflammatory diseases. Neuron23 was founded in 2018 and has assembled a world-class team of experts and entrepreneurs based in South San Francisco, CA, and Munich, Germany. For more information, please visit [www.neuron23.com](http://www.neuron23.com).

#### **About Innovation and Start-up Center for Biotechnology (IZB) in Martinsried near Munich**

The Fördergesellschaft IZB mbH, founded in 1995, is the operating company of the Innovation and Start-up Centers for Biotechnology in Planegg-Martinsried and Freising-Weihenstephan, which have developed into a leading biotechnology center. Over 50 biotech companies with over 700 employees are currently located on 26,000 m<sup>2</sup> in Planegg-Martinsried. Here, work is being carried out on developing drugs against the most serious diseases, such as cancer, Alzheimer's and various autoimmune diseases. An essential criterion for the success of the IZBs is the spatial proximity to top research on the Martinsried / Grosshadern campus. The new infrastructure features such as the Faculty Club G2B (Gateway to Biotech), the IZB Residence CAMPUS AT HOME, the Elhardt Chemistry College, the two kindergartens Bio Kids and Bio Kids<sup>2</sup>, as well as the two restaurants SEVEN AND MORE and Café Freshmaker are location factors that are very much appreciated by company founders. Successful companies that have emerged from the IZB are, for example, Medigene AG, MorphoSys AG, Micromet GmbH (today Amgen AG), Octopharma GmbH, Corimmun (today Janssen-Cilag), Rigontec GmbH (today MSD), ibidi GmbH, Coriolis GmbH and Immunic Therapeutics. More information at [www.izb-online.de](http://www.izb-online.de)

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