

## Lead Pharma and Oxeltis receive €800K EUREKA Eurostars grant

### Grant will fund three-year EPIGENEXT joint project aimed at developing first-in-class therapy for diffuse large B-cell lymphoma

**Oss, the Netherlands and Montpellier, France, June 8, 2022** – Lead Pharma, a privately held pharmaceutical company designing and developing innovative therapies for the treatment of immune-mediated diseases and cancer, and Oxeltis, a French medicinal chemistry and custom synthesis company, today announce that they have been awarded an €800K (\$842K) grant from EUREKA Eurostars for their three-year EPIGENEXT joint project.

The EPIGENEXT project is aimed at developing a first-in-class small molecule therapy for diffuse large B-cell lymphoma (DLBCL). DLBCL is an aggressive, fast-growing blood cancer that develops from B-cells in the lymphatic system. It affects approximately 115,000 people per year worldwide, of which 50,000 are in Europe and the US<sup>1,2</sup>.

The first-line treatment for DLBCL is a regimen combining an antibody therapy with four chemotherapy drugs known as R-CHOP. Unfortunately, this does not cure 30-50% of DLBCL patients, who eventually relapse. The long-term prognosis for these patients is poor, with a one-year survival rate of less than 30%. In addition, chemotherapy drugs are non-selective, leading to debilitating, systemic side effects such as tiredness and anemia. Therefore, there is a high need for novel, effective therapies that improve survival and quality of life for DLBCL patients.

Arthur Oubrie, CSO of Lead Pharma said: "We are delighted that our approach to combat DLBCL has been awarded a Eurostars grant. We look forward to joining forces with Oxeltis, who will bring extra power in organic and medicinal chemistry to the joint project team."

Stéphane Salamone, chemistry director at Oxeltis, said: "We are pleased to contribute to Lead Pharma's innovation in drug discovery, the EPIGENEXT project perfectly matches Oxeltis' capacity to be a medicinal chemistry partner and is aligned with the company's strategy to invest in long-term partnerships."

Eurostars is a European program that supports innovative SMEs and project partners (small and medium-sized companies, universities, research organizations and other types of organizations) by funding international collaborative R&D and innovation projects. Eurostars is run by EUREKA, an intergovernmental network, which involves 37 countries.

#### About Lead Pharma

Lead Pharma develops innovative small-molecule drugs for patients with autoimmune diseases or cancer. It is headquartered at Pivot Park, the biopharmaceutical life sciences campus in Oss, the Netherlands, where it has fully equipped labs for all stages of drug discovery, including medicinal chemistry, cellular pharmacology and molecular

<sup>1</sup> <https://lymphomahub.com/medical-information/epidemiology-pathology-and-clinical-features-of-dlbcl>

<sup>2</sup> <https://ashpublications.org/blood/article/130/16/1800/36474/Outcomes-in-refractory-diffuse-large-B-cell>

pharmacology, as well as an *in-silico* lab for computational chemistry, bioinformatics and data mining activities. Lead Pharma works with a select network of specialized contract research organizations to whom it outsources *in vivo* pharmacology and toxicology studies. Lead Pharma has a qualified team of 30 employees, including 11 with PhDs, who have long-term experience working in large pharmaceutical companies, biotech companies and academia.

[www.leadpharma.com](http://www.leadpharma.com)

### **About Oxeltis**

Oxeltis is a medicinal chemistry services company created in 2010 in Montpellier, France, by former researchers from Idenix Pharmaceuticals (formerly MSD). The company has a small-scale custom synthesis business, as well as hit and lead optimization services, in various areas such as antivirals, antibiotics and anticancer compounds. Oxeltis' scientific team is made up of 26 experienced chemists (including 15 PhDs), with recognized expertise in specific areas of organic synthesis: nucleosides/nucleotides, modified sugars, and oligo/polysaccharides, macrocycles and PROTAC. The team is focused on speed of delivery, and the quality and the confidentiality of the services and collaborations it develops. Oxeltis has completed more than 30 projects with complex synthetic chemistry for pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, including five of the ten largest global pharmaceutical manufacturers. Several drug candidates delivered to its customers are in clinical development.

[www.oxeltis.com](http://www.oxeltis.com)

Media and analysts contact  
**Andrew Lloyd & Associates**  
Emilie Chouinard – Saffiyah Khaliq  
[emilie@ala.com](mailto:emilie@ala.com) – [saffiyah@ala.com](mailto:saffiyah@ala.com)  
Tel: +44 1273 952 481  
@ALA\_Group