

aTen Therapeutics awarded £282k to develop new breast cancer treatment

Edinburgh, UK, 30 August 2022

Scottish biotech company, aTen Therapeutics, today announced a £282,733 Innovate UK grant to advance a promising new therapy for breast cancer. The award will allow the company, in collaboration with scientists at ARU (Cambridge), to accelerate the development of its novel human monoclonal antibody ATN-E11.

ATN-E11 has already been shown to prolong survival in experimental models of cancer. It targets the angiotensin-II type I receptor (AT1R), which is overexpressed in a range of different cancers. This overexpression stimulates tumour growth and increases the ability of malignant cancer cells to invade and migrate. By blocking the receptor, ATN-E11 could become a powerful new cancer treatment.

Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer globally. With an estimated 2.3 million new cases in 2020, it accounts for 1 in 4 female cancer diagnoses and 685,000 deaths annually. There are several subtypes of breast cancer with different molecular and clinical features (including drug resistance) that dictate and limit treatment options, so demand for novel therapies remains very high.

Dr Karen Spink, Head of Medicines at Innovate UK, said: 'This exciting project, funded through our Biomedical Catalyst Programme, addresses a critical unmet need for better targeted and more effective cancer treatments. Access to a diverse armoury of precision therapies is at the heart of our mission on cancer, that promises to radically improve patient outcomes.'

aTen Therapeutics' CEO, Ian Abercrombie, said: 'We're excited by the potential of our technology to extend and improve lives. The Innovate UK grant is a great endorsement of this potential and the hard work of our team in Edinburgh. We look forward to progressing ATN-E11 towards clinical trials, and ultimately providing a new treatment option for people living with breast cancer.'

Prof Chris Parris, Head of School of Life Sciences at ARU, said: 'We're delighted to be working with the aTen Therapeutics team to explore this exciting new approach to cancer treatment and we look forward to generating key data in the coming months. Our first target is breast cancer but the therapy could also be effective in many other cancer types.'

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aTen Therapeutics Ltd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Oncobiopharm Ltd, is a pre-clinical stage Scottish biotechnology company developing novel antibody therapeutics to treat cancers and other medical conditions. Founded by Prof Christopher Wood, winner of the Lifetime Achievement award at Scotland's Annual Life Sciences Awards 2022, the company is led by an experienced team with a strong track record of developing innovative treatments from initial concept to clinical success.

Innovate UK is the UK's innovation agency. It helps UK businesses to grow through the development and commercialisation of new products, processes and services, supported by an outstanding innovation ecosystem that is agile, inclusive and easy to navigate.