

## **AiCuris announces opening of second round of AiCubator corporate innovation accelerator initiative to propel anti-infective drug development**

- AiCubator was launched by AiCuris in 2020 to provide long-term support for early but promising research projects in the field of anti-infectives
- Second round application period open through December 31, 2021; up to three projects will be awarded AiCubator Resident Status and, over a period of up to three years, will benefit from expert scientific advice

**Wuppertal, Germany, October 07, 2021** - AiCuris Anti-infective Cures AG, a leading company in the discovery and development of drugs against infectious diseases, today announced the opening of the second round of its AiCubator corporate innovation accelerator initiative.

Launched in 2020 by AiCuris, the AiCubator is designed to help scientists and start-up companies foster innovation in the anti-infective field and to promote ideas that might lead to the next resistance-breaking anti-infectives or help prevent future pandemics. By providing financing and business development advice, AiCuris supports AiCubator Residents in developing their exciting, novel approaches, while learning from experts about pre-clinical and clinical drug development, IP protection and other aspects of the pharmaceutical business.

Academic groups or recently formed biotech start-ups with anti-infective research projects or early pre-clinical stage development programs are invited to apply to the AiCuris AiCubator (see criteria and timelines below). The focus of the initiative is on targeted antiviral therapies for hepatitis B virus cure, BK virus, Epstein-Barr virus and adenovirus as well as antibacterial therapy for blood stream and diabetic foot infections. Additionally, AiCuris is interested in applications focused on new platform approaches and technologies in the antiviral and antibacterial field. Submitted projects will be evaluated by AiCuris experts based on criteria such as status of target identification, preliminary efficacy data, as well as indications addressed and potential competitive advantages over existing standard of care. Every year, up to three projects will be awarded AiCubator Resident Status. These projects will benefit from expert scientific support, over a period of up to three years, to advance their ideas and approaches.

Interested parties can apply to the AiCubator program by completing the AiCubator standard application form on [www.aicubator.com](http://www.aicubator.com), describing the project, its status and development plans.

“AiCuris strongly believes that there is an urgent need in the anti-infective field to encourage the development of early projects based on new scientific principles. Sadly, we have seen what it means when the world faces a deadly healthcare threat without effective treatment options. We must constantly search for novel technologies and creative approaches to develop more effective treatments for infections with high medical need, to fill pipeline gaps, tackle anti-microbial resistance and prevent future pandemics,” said **Dr. Holger Zimmermann, CEO of AiCuris Anti-infective Cures GmbH**. “We are excited about the achievements during our first year of the AiCubator initiative and are very much looking forward to receiving again innovative and promising applications in this second round and to providing three additional projects the opportunity to join us in our innovative accelerator program.”

**Professor Ulf Dittmer and Dr. Kathrin Sutter from the Institute for Virology at the University of Duisburg and Essen**, who submitted one of last year's winning projects, are excited about the support they have received during their first year as residents of the AiCuris AiCubator initiative. "Being part of the AiCubator program has been an inspiring experience. The deep scientific expertise and the strong commitment of the AiCuris team really have helped us to design the further development of our new targeted immunotherapeutic strategies and to bring our HBV project to the next level."

### **AiCubator 2021 call – Submission criteria:**

#### **Project description:**

- Drug discovery project in the anti-infective area (antiviral or antimicrobial)

#### **Indications**

- Antiviral therapy for:
  - Hepatitis B virus (HBV cure)
  - BK Virus
  - Epstein-Barr virus
  - Adenovirus
- Antibacterial non-small molecule therapy for:
  - Bloodstream infections
  - Diabetic foot infections
- Novel antiviral platform approach
- Novel antibacterial platform approach

#### **Project minimal criteria**

- Target identified
- Preliminary efficacy data
- Competitive advantage to existing standard of care

#### **Applicant**

- Start-up company
- Scientific group within a research university or institute

### **AiCubator 2021 call – Important dates and deadlines:**

End of submission period:	December 31, 2021, midnight CET
Announcement of winning projects:	March 2022

#### **About AiCubator**

To promote early ideas that might lead to novel resistant breaking antibiotic or anti-infective approaches, every year, AiCuris selects promising research projects for the AiCubator, an innovative corporate incubator. The AiCubator initiative is dedicated to academic scientific groups or recently formed biotech start-ups with early stage anti-infectives projects in areas of high priority that are scientifically attractive but too early staged for

licensing deals. The program was designed to help scientists and start-ups build their own business and grow their underlying ideas and approaches to an advanced level. Residents of the AiCubator program receive long-term support including financial, business development as well as scientific and regulatory advice. Additionally, the gain insight into pre-clinical and clinical drug development and the pharmaceutical business.

For more information on AiCubator visit: [www.aicuris.com/AiCubator](http://www.aicuris.com/AiCubator).

### **About AiCuris Anti-infective Cures AG**

AiCuris was founded in 2006 as a spin-off from Bayer and focuses on the discovery and development of drugs targeting infectious diseases. SANTO Holding is the Company's majority investor. PREVYMIS® (Letermovir), a first-in-class non-nucleoside cytomegalovirus (CMV) inhibitor acting via a novel mechanism of action, was licensed to MSD in 2012 and is approved in the EU, the USA, Japan and other parts of the world for use in bone marrow transplants for the prevention of HCMV infections in adults who receive an allogeneic hematopoietic stem cell transplant. The Company is developing drugs for the treatment of viruses such as human CMV, herpes simplex virus (HSV), hepatitis B virus (HBV), and adenoviruses as well as for SARS-CoV-2 and other viruses with pandemic potential. In the field of antibacterials, AiCuris seeks to develop innovative treatment options for indications with high medical need, including life-threatening, multidrug-resistant, hospital-treated pathogens.

In 2018 Dr. Holger Zimmermann, CEO of AiCuris, and Prof. Dr. Helga Rübsamen-Schaeff, Founding CEO, were awarded the German Future Prize 2018 (German President's Award for Innovation in Science and Technology) for the development of Letermovir and their project, "Protection in the Absence of the Immune System - a Life-Saving Innovation against Dangerous Viruses" (original title: "Schutz bei fehlendem Immunsystem - die lebensrettende Innovation gegen gefährliche Viren").

For more information, please visit [www.aicuris.com](http://www.aicuris.com).

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