

Immungenetics AG sets up a cooperation with Prof. Jens Pahnke, M.D. Ph.D., E.F.N., for the further development of the new “Alzheimer’s gene”

Today, Immungenetics AG has announced that the company entered into a long-term cooperation with Professor Jens Pahnke of the University of Rostock. As part of this collaboration Immungenetics AG and Prof. Pahnke will jointly work on the research and commercialization of genetic diagnosis, prognosis and treatment markers. Furthermore, they will work on active compounds to improve the treatment of neurodegenerative diseases. “I am very glad to enhance our research with a competent and innovative industrial partner who will support us in the development and application of our recent results,” says Prof. Pahnke. Together with his team, Prof. Pahnke has continuously delivered research results that were implemented in the cooperation with various industrial partners. The cooperation with Immungenetics AG is aimed at strengthening research activities in the early stages of research and development by establishing strong scientific synergies between Immungenetics AG and his research group and at the same time boosting the use for the public. “This is an important strategic investigation for Immungenetics AG because the cooperation with Prof. Pahnke enables us to benefit from his internationally acknowledged expertise on a long-term basis and, thus, expands the indications we have been addressing so far into the important field of neurodegenerative diseases,” Moritz v. Grotthuss says, CEO of Immungenetics AG.

In a first project, the cooperation will investigate the application of Thiethylperazine (Torecan[®]) and Thiethylperazine derivatives to activate the brain’s ABC transporter ABCC1 for the treatment of neurodegenerative disorders. This project will set up a new treatment strategy to delay the course and the onset of Alzheimer’s disease for several years and, thus, not only helps patients but at the same time will save considerable health care expenses. It’s is the second indication for a known drug which was established in the 1960ies for vomiting and nausea. Recently, Prof. Pahnke published this new mechanism for sporadic Alzheimer’s disease (99% of all AD patients) in a widely recognized article in the US-American scientific ‘Journal of Clinical Investigation’, October 2011 edition (available online from September 1st, 2011, <http://www.jci.org>). Moreover, the function of the ABCC1 will be employed for the use as an early diagnostic and therapy monitoring marker of Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s disease.

The further development of the new compounds and their commercialization in the setting of early diagnosis, preventive therapy and also therapy monitoring will be accomplished in a closed cooperation with strong partners from the pharmaceutical industry.

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Prof. Jens Pahnke, M.D., Ph.D., E.F.N., studied Medicine and Molecular Biology at the University of Greifswald. After spending a few years as a researcher at the University of Zurich, he was offered the Professorship for Neurodegeneration at the University of Rostock in 2005. He is a neuropathologist and head of the Neurodegeneration Research Lab (NRL) at the Center for Mental Diseases in Rostock which specializes in basic and translational research on Alzheimer's disease (AD) and other neurodegenerative disorders. His discovery of a new mechanism of sporadic AD was highly acclaimed. Prof. Pahnke is also member of the German Center for Neurodegenerative Diseases [Deutsches Zentrum für Neurodegenerative Erkrankungen, DZNE].

Immungenetics AG was founded by Prof. Saleh Ibrahim M.D., Ph.D. in cooperation with engage Key Technology Ventures AG. Immungenetics AG specializes in genetic associations to allow for improved recommendations regarding the prognosis and treatment of various autoimmune diseases, with a special focus on multiple sclerosis or rheumatoid arthritis. These genetic associations are employed to develop respective active ingredients. Immungenetics AG have their headquarters in Rostock as well as offices in Lübeck, they work closely together with the University of Rostock, the University Hospital of Rostock, the University Hospital of Schleswig-Holstein (Campus Lübeck) and the company Gensoric GmbH. Immungenetics AG receives funds from the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research's program "Unternehmen Region" [a program to support cooperation aimed at innovation on a local level].

Immungenetics AG is a company of innoveas AG (www.innoveas.com) and is certified according to the quality management system DIN EN ISO 9001 as well as DIN EN ISO 13485.