Entrepreneurial ID «venture leaders» 2010

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Project/ Company name: Virometix

Short description: Virometix exploits a new approach for the design and production of vaccines using the tools of chemistry to combat infectious and chronic diseases.

Web site: www.virometix.com

Industry: Biotech, Life Science

The Start-up

Status : Incorporation as a limited company based in Zurich in October 2009. | Company / team size: 3

Product / service: Virometix develops a new generation of vaccines and vaccine candidates for clinical development using its proprietary synthetic virus-like particle (SVLP) technology. Possible target diseases include bacterial infections as well as chronic human diseases (e.g. cancer).

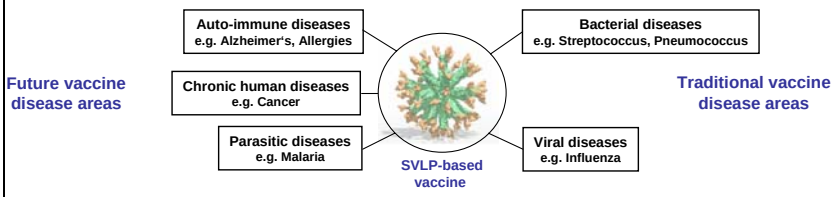
Target customers: Given the focus on production using chemical industry methods and on rational structure guided design, Virometix will be an attractive partner for any of the large pharma companies (Novartis, GSK, Sanofi, Pfizer, Merck) that dominate the vaccine market.

Financing: Virometix plans to finance its initial operations through private investments and research grants. Later, additional external funding (e.g. venture capital or corporate venture funds) will be required. Further financing possibilities will include research collaborations with private and industrial partners.

Growth objectives: In order to maximise its value whilst keeping risks at a minimum, Virometix will focus on the development of first SVLP-based vaccine candidates against relatively low-risk targets. We plan to establish research collaborations with large pharmaceutical companies and expect to have a first vaccine candidate in clinical study phase in five years, which will be out-licensed to a big pharma company after a successful clinical phase I study.

US objectives: The key objectives during Venture Leaders will be to 1.) Improve my business skills, 2.) Build and expand my network and 3.) Present our business.

Description:



The mission of Virometix is the development of clinical candidate products for the therapy of diseases with unmet medical need and high market values. Virometix' proprietary Synthetic Virus-Like Particle (SVLP) platform technology exploits a rational structure-based approach to vaccine design and a totally synthetic chemical approach to vaccine manufacture. As compared to other vaccine technologies, SVLP-based vaccines avoid the use of components made in cells and viruses. Instead, the use of rational methods and chemical synthesis, rather than biotechnology, allows great flexibility in vaccine design, increased efficacy and safety, simplified quality control and registration with savings in time and costs as well as short development times for new products.

During recent years, vaccines have emerged as one of the key revenue drivers for the pharmaceutical industry. Over the past decade, demand has posted a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 10-15% and the annual market is expected to reach $25 billion in 2013. The future growth will arise from novel innovative products, such as those in which Virometix specializes (e.g. streptococcal vaccine).

The venture leader (and her team)

Dr. Nina Geib studied chemistry at the University of Marburg, Germany and joined the group of Prof. John Robinson at the University of Zurich as a PhD student in 2005, focussing on the investigation of glycopeptide antibiotics. In 2009, she co-founded Virometix AG together with Dr. Arin Ghasparian and Prof. John Robinson, where she is currently chief executive officer. She is eager to use this unique chance to turn a highly innovative new platform technology into marketable products and help Virometix to grow fast, increase its value and to reach the expected milestones.

Dr. Arin Ghasparian (CSO) worked on synthetic HIV and malaria vaccine design during his PhD studies and co-invented the SVLP-technology. Prof. John Robinson is the leader of the team who invented the SVLP technology and an expert in synthetic antigen mimetics (SAMs). He has published over 130 papers in leading research journals and is named as co-inventor on 12 patents.

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