

Press release | November 5th 2019



HEALTHCARE | STARTUP | PUBLIC RESEARCH | ALSACE

A new Biotech Startup in Alsace: ALENTIS DEVELOPMENT, powered by the SATT Conectus

The Alsace region, renowned for its scientific innovations, is home to the creation of a new biotechnology startup, based on a technology supported by the SATT CONECTUS, the Institute of Image-Guided Surgery (IHU Strasbourg), the University of Strasbourg and Inserm. ALENTIS DEVELOPMENT, based at IHU Strasbourg, is developing promising new drugs for the treatment of advanced liver diseases such as liver fibrosis and cancer, a key challenge for public health worldwide.

Chronic liver disease and cancer: a global health threat on the rise

Chronic liver diseases such as advanced liver fibrosis and cancer (hepatocellular carcinoma: HCC) are major global health challenges. HCC is one of **the fastest growing cause of cancer death** worldwide with about one million patients dying each year. **Liver fibrosis is the most important risk factor for developing liver cancer** but can also leads to liver failure and the need for transplantation. Changes in lifestyle with overweight and unhealthy nutrition are key drivers of this global health challenge. **Current treatment options are unsatisfactory, leading to high morbidity and mortality**, which represents a progressing economic and public health burden. Thus, there is a major unmet medical need to develop novel efficient and safe therapeutic approaches.

ALENTIS aims to overcome these hurdles by targeting novel mechanisms of action and using patient-derived technologies.

ALENTIS was founded to address these unmet medical needs by developing therapeutic approaches based on a novel mechanism of action. ALENTIS development program is based on ground-breaking research of a scientific and clinical team coordinated by **Prof. Thomas BAUMERT, a world-renowned liver disease scientist, medical doctor and university professor at the University of Strasbourg, the IHU Strasbourg, the Strasbourg University Hospitals and the Inserm** (French National Institute of Health).



From scientific talent to startup

Thanks to the TheraHCC program led by IHU Strasbourg and supported by the ARC Foundation, together with major contributions from the Laboratory of Excellence HepSYS, the European Union, ANRS, the Foundation of the University of Strasbourg and Inserm, Thomas BAUMERT and his team made **unprecedented discoveries for the treatment of liver diseases**.

The foundation of ALENTIS as a biotech startup located in Strasbourg, France and Basel, Switzerland has been facilitated by a unique support of the Alsatian environment and its organisations. These include **SATT CONECTUS, the technology transfer organization of Alsace, who invested € 600,000 in the technological development of these discoveries, to achieve a future therapeutic product for patients.**

- **Caroline DREYER, President of SATT CONECTUS**, confirms the challenge: *"The CONECTUS teams have joined forces with Thomas BAUMERT's to guide research work as closely as possible to the real needs of the market and the expectations of hospital practitioners. Our financial investment has not only structured a solid intellectual property portfolio but also demonstrated the therapeutic potential of the compounds developed for chronic liver diseases. It was a necessary step before imagining talking about startup and convincing future investors to give the next boost."*
- **Markus L.E. EWERT, PhD, CEO of ALENTIS**, would like to highlight the excellent collaboration with CONECTUS: *"Professor BAUMERT's project was of remarkable scientific quality. The CONECTUS team provided a relevant market perspective that confirmed the full potential of the emerging technology. The combined involvement of CONECTUS and the IHU has made it possible to bring valuable science into a business environment to develop urgently needed medications for patients with liver disease."*
- **Prof. Jacques MARESCAUX, CEO of IHU Strasbourg**, says: *"Thomas BAUMERT and his team have used the resources of our unique research and technology transfer environment to deliver results beyond all expectations. The creation of ALENTIS is a landmark event that validates the successful partnership of two entities created in Strasbourg by the "Investment for the future" Program: IHU Strasbourg and SATT CONECTUS. This is a good example of how clinical and scientific expertise can lead to better patient care - in this case identifying breakthrough therapeutic innovation for precision treatment of liver diseases."*
- **Prof. Thomas F. BAUMERT, Head of the Inserm Institute of Viral and Liver Diseases, Inserm U1110, Professor of Medicine and Hepatologist at the Center of Digestive and Liver Diseases, at the University Hospitals of Strasbourg and founder of ALENTIS** concludes : *"The scientists and clinicians of our team are excited to translate novel approaches and therapeutic compounds with a unique mechanism of action into the clinic to improve the dismal outcome of patients with advanced liver disease."*



Following the opening of ALENTIS THERAPEUTICS in Basel (Switzerland) in March 2019, **ALENTIS DEVELOPMENT has opened as a branch for research and development in Strasbourg (France).**

ALENTIS benefits from **a licensed state-of-the-art platform technology for liver disease drug discovery and a panel of compounds that have demonstrated efficacy in patient-derived models of liver fibrosis and cancer.** The R&D program is led by a seasoned management team of senior pharma executives supported by leading VC investors. The unique ecosystems in Strasbourg and Basel will facilitate the preclinical and clinical development of the program. **ALENTIS anticipates introducing its first compound for treatment of liver disease into the clinical stage of development in 2021.**

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ABOUT ALENTIS

ALENTIS Therapeutics (ALENTIS) discovers and develops novel medications to treat advanced liver diseases, such as liver fibrosis, cirrhosis and liver cancer (hepatocellular carcinoma, HCC).

A Swiss-French biotech company, established as ALENTIS Therapeutics Ltd in March 2019, ALENTIS is headquartered in Basel (Switzerland) with its subsidiary ALENTIS Development in Strasbourg (France).

ALENTIS has in-licensed platform technologies and compounds which are the result of more than a decade of research from the University of Strasbourg and Inserm (French National Institute of Health), the IHU and the Mount Sinai Hospital, New York.

A privately held company, ALENTIS is financed by leading venture investors BioMedPartners, BB Pureos Bioventures, BPI France, Schroder Adveq and the German High-Tech Gründerfonds (HTGF).

<https://alentis.ch/>



ABOUT IHU STRASBOURG

IHU Strasbourg is a multidisciplinary centre committed to the creation and dissemination of innovative image-guided therapies for safe, targeted and personalized patient care.

Its internationally acknowledged program of excellence - bridging patient care, translational research, education and technology transfer - has benefited from its successful operational collaboration and physical alignment with the IRCAD Institute, the University of Strasbourg and the Strasbourg University Hospital (HUS), creating a truly unique environment.

IHU promotes the development of image-guided precision surgery - augmented by virtual reality, robotics and Artificial Intelligence - and embed it within an innovative patient care model, with a focus on the treatment of digestive and liver diseases. Since 2012: 1818 publications, 82 patents, 18 clinical guidelines and consensus conferences, 3000 patients in clinical studies, 48 industrial partnerships, 13 start-ups and start up projects.

<https://www.ihu-strasbourg.eu/en>

ABOUT SATT CONECTUS

SATT* Conectus Alsace is the main entry point for business partners and companies to access all the innovations and capabilities from public research in Alsace, one of the top ranked territories for the excellence of research in France. It borders Germany and Switzerland at the intersection of the most innovative areas of Europe.

Thanks to its investment fund (up to 500k€ per innovative project), SATT Conectus offers advanced, applicative technologies whose proof of concept has been established, and ready to industrialise. Therefore, investors can access to groundbreaking startups built around those breakthroughs yet matured technologies.

Another type of collaboration allows companies to co-develop high potential innovative projects with public research, thus tailoring them to their specific needs.

Since 2012: 1 046 collaborative research contracts signed - 102 innovative projects financed for a total of 31,7 M€ - 86 technologies transferred - 17 startups created, over 100 M€ raised from investors | Shareholders: CNRS, INSERM, ENGEE, INSA, UNIVERSITE DE STRASBOURG, UNIVERSITE DE HAUTE ALSACE, Bpifrance

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* Organisation for accelerating tech transfer

