



## Science park launches cell & gene therapy accelerator to de-risk early stage research

### Advanced therapy expertise & up to €500,000 in funding for European researchers

**Charleroi, Belgium, June 29<sup>th</sup> 2021** – Brussels South Charleroi BioPark (BSCB), the science-driven biopark at the heart of Europe, has launched a Cell and Gene Therapy Accelerator program to de-risk early stage research and create the advanced therapy companies of the future. With access to industry expertise and scientific infrastructure plus up to €500,000 in funding per project, the Accelerator has been established to de-risk research at the proof-of-concept stage. The financing comes from BSCB's Butterfly Fund and regional non-dilutive R&D grants from the Walloon Region. The program is co-chaired by Drs Miguel Forte (Bone Therapeutics, ARM<sup>1</sup> and ISCT<sup>2</sup>) and Christian Homsy (Capstan Therapeutics, ex Celyad).

Open to academic, industry or independent researchers across Europe, the 12-18 month Accelerator program consists of an intensive bootcamp, workshops and coaching, plus access to Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB) Open BioLab and state-of-the-art technology platforms. BSCB accounts for over 20% of the European cell and gene therapy manufacturing capacity, led by accelerator partners CDMOs Catalent, ThermoFisher and Exothera.

Other partners include funders such as Sambrinvest, Theodorus and Fund+, industry players such as UCB, Bone Therapeutics and Ncardia and R&D services providers and innovation related institutions such as the European Patent Office, CMMI, Gevers, Nexelis and 2Bridge. The Accelerator, which is expected to increase the chances of successful seed fundraising, opens for applications on June 29 and closes on August 13, with the program starting around September 20. More details are available [here](#).

The cell and gene therapy seed accelerator program is part of the Butterfly Fund acceleration activity at BSCB's Incubator. Since inception in 2010, the Incubator has contributed to the creation of 40+ companies, creating 1.000+ jobs, and raising over €1,5 billion.

Program Co-Chairman Dr Miguel Forte said, 'European researchers are working on exciting projects with the ability to drive change in areas of medical need. Our rigorous accelerator program will help them advance to the next stages of development.'

Program Co-Chairman Dr Christian Homsy added, 'Our partners in this acceleration program are leaders in the development of cell and gene therapies. Their expertise, combined with the venture capital and grant funding available, will provide the insights needed to make the new companies VC-ready.'

Florence Bosco, CEO of BSCB & Program Director, said, 'We are delighted to launch our Accelerator at such an exciting time for the cell and gene therapy sector. This is a key area of focus for the Park and we have been able to bring together an impressive list of partners to make the program a success. We'd like to thank them for their input.'

--ENDS--

<sup>1</sup> Alliance for Regenerative Medicine, <sup>2</sup>International Society for Cell and Gene Therapy



You can find out more about the program [here](#).

For more information please contact:

**Brussels South Charleroi BioPark**

Emma Palmer Foster

[communications@biopark.be](mailto:communications@biopark.be)

**About Brussels South Charleroi BioPark**

Brussels South Charleroi BioPark is a science-driven Biopark located at the heart of Europe. Originally founded by the Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB), it brings together a unique ecosystem of scientific, clinical and business expertise with world class facilities to create a perfect environment for drug research and development. Visit our [website](#).