

News Release

Not intended for UK Media

Bayer and NextRNA Therapeutics enter strategic collaboration to develop small molecules targeting long non-coding RNAs (lncRNAs) in Oncology

- lncRNAs represent a new class of therapeutic targets across disease areas, including oncology
 - Companies to collaborate on jointly developing two first-in-class small molecule programs targeting lncRNAs, further strengthening Bayer's precision oncology development portfolio
 - NextRNA will receive up to \$547 million for both programs, including upfront and near-term milestone payments, research funding, and development and commercial milestone payments, as well as tiered royalties on net sales
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Berlin, Germany and Boston, USA, August 28, 2024 – Bayer and NextRNA

Therapeutics, a biotechnology company focused on developing transformative medicines to address long non-coding RNA (lncRNA)-driven diseases, today announced that they have entered into a collaboration and license agreement to develop small molecule therapeutics targeting lncRNAs in oncology. lncRNAs represent a vast class of therapeutic targets that recruit RNA-binding proteins (RBPs) to drive pathological processes across diseases. Disrupting lncRNA-RBP interactions with small molecules represents an innovative approach to develop a new class of therapeutic agents.

Bayer and NextRNA will collaborate to jointly advance two oncology programs in high unmet need indications. The first program is a lncRNA-targeting small molecule program currently in early preclinical development at NextRNA. For the second program, NextRNA will prosecute lncRNA targets that its platform has already identified, and Bayer will have the option to select one target for joint development.

“With NextRNA’s exceptional expertise and lncRNA platform, we aim to advance novel small molecule therapeutics against a new class of targets in oncology,” said Juergen Eckhardt, M.D., Head of Business Development and Licensing at Bayer’s Pharmaceuticals Division. “This partnership further adds to our mission to build one of the most transformative and diversified oncology pipelines in the industry.”

Under the agreement, Bayer gains access to NextRNA’s differentiated approach to inhibit the function of lncRNAs by disrupting the interaction between lncRNAs and RBPs with small molecules. NextRNA’s proprietary platform combines its computational engine NextMap™ with deep lncRNA biology expertise and a diverse set of biochemical, biophysics, and chemistry capabilities.

“We are excited to partner with Bayer, a recognized leader in life sciences and oncology innovation,” said Dominique Verhelle, PhD, MBA, NextRNA Co-Founder and CEO. “This collaboration recognizes lncRNAs as an exciting target class and confirms NextRNA’s position as both a leader in this space and a partner-of-choice for companies seeking to develop transformative small molecule therapeutics across disease areas. We look forward to working closely with the Bayer team to advance first-in-class cancer therapies while continuing to build our pipeline in oncology and neuroscience.”

Under the terms of the agreement, NextRNA will receive up to \$547 million for both programs, including upfront and near-term milestone payments, research funding, and development and commercial milestone payments, as well as tiered royalties on net sales.

About NextRNA Therapeutics

NextRNA is a biotechnology company focused on developing transformative medicines to address long non-coding RNA (lncRNA)-driven diseases, with a primary focus on oncology and neuroscience. Dysregulated lncRNAs recruit RNA-binding proteins (RBPs) to drive pathological processes across disease areas. Our therapeutic approach centers on inhibiting the function of lncRNAs by disrupting the interaction between lncRNAs and RBPs with small molecules. NextRNA’s strategy is uniquely differentiated in that it offers optionality to target the lncRNA or the RBP side of the interaction. Our team is driven by a common passion to advance pioneering science that impacts patients.

For more information, visit us at <https://www.nextnatx.com> and follow us on [LinkedIn](#).

About Bayer

Bayer is a global enterprise with core competencies in the life science fields of health care and nutrition. In line with its mission, "Health for all, Hunger for none," the company's products and services are designed to help people and the planet thrive by supporting efforts to master the major challenges presented by a growing and aging global population. Bayer is committed to driving sustainable development and generating a positive impact with its businesses. At the same time, the Group aims to increase its earning power and create value through innovation and growth. The Bayer brand stands for trust, reliability and quality throughout the world. In fiscal 2023, the Group employed around 100,000 people and had sales of 47.6 billion euros. R&D expenses before special items amounted to 5.8 billion euros. For more information, go to www.bayer.com.

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mj (2024-0132E)

Forward-Looking Statements

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