

Kinaset up for a tough ride with inhaled Jak focus



[Madeleine Armstrong](#)

Jak inhibitors have proven a tricky class to master – just ask Gilead and Galapagos. But this has not put off the newly formed group Kinaset Therapeutics, which fresh from a \$40m venture fund-raising today licensed Vectura’s inhaled pan-Jak inhibitor VR588 for severe asthma. Toxicity has been an issue with Jaks, particularly those with broad activity across subtypes, but Kinaset no doubt hopes that delivering the project directly to the lung could help avoid this. VR588, now known as KN-002, is set to begin phase I in the first half of next year, putting it well behind Theravance’s phase II inhaled Jak TD-8236. That project [recently flunked a phase II lung allergen challenge](#) study in mild asthma, but Theravance has not written it off, with a phase I trial in more severe disease still being analysed. For its part, Kinaset plans to study KN-002 in eosinophilic and non-eosinophilic asthma; there are few options for the latter, but Amgen and Astrazeneca [recently reported promising results here](#) with their TSLP inhibitor tezepelumab. Little else is known about Kinaset other than that its chief executive is Robert Clarke, who led the inhaled therapy specialist Pulmatrix in 2012-19.

Selected inhaled Jaks in development

Project	Company	Mechanism	Indication	Status
TD-8236	Theravance Biopharma	Jak 1-3 & Tyk2 inhibitor	Asthma	Phase II missed primary endpoint (NCT04150341)
TD-0903	Theravance Biopharma	Jak 1-3 & Tyk2 inhibitor	Covid-19	Phase II data due Q2 2021 (NCT04402866)
RG6151 (GCD-0214)	Roche	Jak 1 inhibitor	Asthma	Phase I
AZD0449	Astrazeneca/Rigel	Jak 1 inhibitor	Asthma	Phase I (NCT03766399)
VR588/ KN-002	Kinaset (ex Vectura)	Jak inhibitor	Asthma	Preclinical

Source: EvaluatePharma.

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