

## Novartis goes nuclear, again



Jacob Plieth

Novartis's licence to FAP inhibitors from an affiliate of the private company Sofie Biosciences marks yet another move by the Swiss group to strengthen its position in radiotherapeutics. It comes after the takeovers of Advanced Accelerator Applications and Endocyte, for \$3.9bn and \$2.1bn respectively, which brought assets targeting well-known oncology targets including PSMA, and using actinium-225 and lutetium-177 as radioactive payloads. The latest deal's value is not disclosed, but the transaction mirrors a [2019 agreement between Clovis and 3B Pharmaceuticals](#), which focused on a separate FAP-targeting radionuclide, FAP-2286. Novartis says the FAP-directed assets it has licensed include FAPI-46 and FAPI-74, which Sofie at present conjugates with Gallium-68 for use as tracers; work will presumably now focus on linking these to different alpha or beta-emitting isotopes for therapeutic use. Radiotherapeutics is quietly becoming a hot area: earlier this month [Fusion Pharmaceuticals licensed an NTSR1-targeting small molecule from Ipsen](#), aiming to combine this with actinium-225 and develop it as a radionuclide coded FPI-2059. And private start-ups with as-yet undisclosed pipelines are getting in on the act, including Rayzebio and Aktis Oncology, which recently raised \$105m and \$72m respectively from venture funds.

### Novartis's radionuclide pipeline

Project	Source	Target	Radioisotope	Emits	Status
Lutathera	Advanced Accelerator Applications	SSTR2	Lutetium-177	Beta	<a href="#">Marketed</a>
177Lu-PSMA-617	Endocyte (ex ABX Biomedizinische Forschungsreagenzien)	PSMA	Lutetium-177	Beta	<a href="#">Phase 3</a>
177Lu-PSMA-R2	Advanced Accelerator Applications	PSMA	Lutetium-177	Beta	<a href="#">Phase 1/2</a>
177Lu-NeoB	Advanced Accelerator Applications	GRPR	Lutetium-177	Beta	<a href="#">Phase 1/2</a>
177Lu-NeoBOMB1	Advanced Accelerator Applications	Bombesin	Lutetium-177	Beta	<a href="#">Phase 1 completed Apr 2019</a>
225Ac-PSMA-617	Endocyte (ex ABX Biomedizinische Forschungsreagenzien)	PSMA	Actinium-225	Alpha	<a href="#">Phase 1 starting Apr 2021</a>
177Lu-FF-10158	Advanced Accelerator Applications	Integrin alphavbeta3/5	Lutetium-177	Beta	Preclinical
FAPI-46	Itheranostics/Sofie (ex Uni of Heidelberg)	FAP	?	?	Preclinical
FAPI-74	Itheranostics/Sofie (ex Uni of Heidelberg)	FAP	?	?	Preclinical

Source: company presentations.

44-(0)20-7377-0800

Evaluate Americas  
+1-617-573-9450

Evaluate APAC  
+81-(0)80-1164-4754

© Copyright 2022 Evaluate Ltd.