Media Release
Zurich, May 6 2025

Xlife Sciences AG Announces Strategic Collaboration between Portfolio Company Firstgene Life Sciences and Hovione in the Field of Gene Therapy

Zurich, 6th of May 2025: Xlife Sciences AG («Xlife Sciences»; SIX:XLS) is proud to announce a strategic collaboration between its portfolio company Firstgene Life Sciences GmbH («Firstgene») and Hovione S.A. («Hovione»), a globally active specialist in pharmaceutical development and manufacturing, for the development of a new gene therapy approach for the treatment of Hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC), the most common type of liver cancer.

Through this partnership, Firstgene and Hovione have entered into an exclusive license agreement to utilize Hovione's gene therapy platform for the development of a tissue-specific therapy targeting HCC - the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths worldwide. With approximately 900,000 new cases diagnosed annually and a five-year survival rate of only 21%, HCC represents a significant unmet medical need. The collaboration aims to tackle this challenge through a novel therapeutic strategy.

Hovione's proprietary gene therapy platform enables the highly specific delivery of genetic material to target tissues, addressing key challenges of conventional gene therapy such as off-target effects. This innovative approach opens up new treatment possibilities for indications that have historically lacked effective therapeutic solutions.

The partnership combines Hovione's advanced expertise in molecular engineering and production enabling the supply of tailor-made virus-like particles (VLPs) and supporting preclinical research efforts with Xlife Sciences expertise in commercialization and business development capabilities.

This collaboration also marks Xlife Sciences AG's entry into the gene therapy market - a strategic move that expands its portfolio into high-potential therapeutic areas, as well as synergies with existing portfolio companies. It underscores the relevance and scalability of Xlife Sciences AG's business model, highlighting its ability to initiate and advance innovative life sciences projects in partnership with established industry players. The project represents another milestone in validating Xlife Sciences' approach to early-stage biotech innovation.

Oliver R. Baumann, CEO of Xlife Sciences AG, commented: *«This collaboration is a strong validation of our approach at Xlife Sciences. The partnership with Hovione underlines the scalability of our business model and confirms the strategic and financial value we create at the interface between innovation and industrial application. By entering the field of gene therapy we are not only expanding our technological footprint but also demonstrating our ability to attract and work with highly specialized partners. This project reflects our commitment to identifying early-stage breakthroughs and advancing them toward impactful therapeutic solutions that address urgent medical needs.»*

Dr. Jean-Luc Herbeaux, CEO of Hovione, stated: *«Our partnership with Firstgene represents a timely and significant advancement in our mission to expand the reach of our virus-like particle platform beyond rare diseases and into oncology. By uniting our expertise in particle engineering and gene delivery with Firstgene's deep clinical insight and focus on hepatocellular carcinoma, we are working to accelerate the development of precision therapies for one of the world's most urgent and complex cancer challenges.»*

Dr. Frank Plöger, CSO of Xlife Sciences AG commented: *«Our vision is to provide patients with safe and highly effective therapies. With the exclusive license to a tissue-specific gene transfer technology, we are targeting new standards for drug delivery and durable personalized medicine of the future. Cell and gene therapy is one of the most promising fields in modern medicine. Virtually all leading pharmaceutical companies are heavily investing in this revolutionary technology. Now, Hovione, is expanding its commitment to this sector, introducing an innovative approach that has the potential to significantly improve treatment options for patients. The key advantage of Hovione`s novel gene therapy platform, lies in its tissue-selective gene transfer. This precision has the potential to minimize unwanted side effects and significantly increase the safety of a therapy - an essential factor for clinical success and patient acceptance.»*

Xlife Sciences AG, Talacker 35, 8001 Zurich, Switzerland, Phone +41 44 385 84 60
info@xlifesciences.ch, www.xlifesciences.ch, Commercial Register Zurich CHE-330.279.788

Financial calendar

Annual Shareholders Meeting 2025	24 June 2025
Half-Year Report 2025	23 September 2025

Contact

Information for investors and journalists: Xlife Sciences AG, Dr. Dennis Fink, dennis.fink@xlifesciences.ch

About Xlife Sciences AG (SIX:XLS)

Xlife Sciences is a Swiss company focused as incubator and accelerator on the value development and commercialization of promising research projects from universities and other research institutions in the life sciences sector, with the aim of providing solutions for high unmet medical needs and a better quality of life. The goal is to bridge research and development to healthcare markets. Xlife Sciences takes carefully selected projects in the four areas of technological platforms, biotechnology/ therapies, medical technology, and artificial intelligence/digital health to the next stage of development and participates in their subsequent performance. For more information, visit https://www.xlifesciences.ch/en/home

About Hovione S.A.

Hovione is an international CDMO with over 60 years of experience in pharmaceutical development and manufacturing. The company offers integrated services from drug substance to drug product, including particle engineering and the production of highly potent compounds. With sites in Europe, the US, and Asia, Hovione is known for its focus on innovation, quality, and reliable delivery. For more information, please visit https://www.hovione.com/

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