

Press release

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« CDK4PPI » awarded « best academic project » by the MATWIN international board

CDK4 kinase is a key cell cycle regulator and attractive pharmacological target for development of anticancer therapeutics. While recently marketed anti-CDK4 drugs present limitations in terms of efficacy and selectivity, due to their conventional, ATP-competitive mechanism of action, the team project composed of May Morris (biologist and CNRS Research director at Institut des Biomolécules Max Mousseron¹ and Frederic Bihel (CNRS chemist at Laboratoire d'Innovation Thérapeutique²) have identified a promising family of compounds that target CDK4 in a different fashion (allosteric inhibitors). These molecules block proliferation of several cancer cell lines very efficiently (melanoma, lung and breast cancers, etc) by tampering with an unexpected function of CDK4, opening the way to novel alternatives for anticancer therapies.

Among the nine projects interviewed this year, the CDK4PPI project proposed by May Morris and Frédéric Bihel, was awarded « Best project – academic team » by the [MATWIN International Board](#), a unique committee in Europe, composed of key academic opinion leaders from leading European cancer research centers and international Global R&D decision makers from the 15* industrial partners of MATWIN. Given the board feedback highlighting the project's originality and potential, MATWIN has exceptionally delivered a prize of 60k€ to support the project's maturation that was first initiated by the [Conectus Technology Transfer Office](#) which manages the project's valorization. The support aims at validating the product's mechanism of action that may differentiate it from other CDK4 inhibitors currently in clinic. The MATWIN board will reassess the project within 12 months in close interaction with the project leaders May Morris / Frederic Bihel and Conectus, to ensure that the recommendations made have been taken into account and get further in the mechanism of action and its efficacy in an animal model.

« Once again, MATWIN demonstrates its added value in a cross-collaboration with all the partners involved (here Conectus and the host institutions^{1&2} of the two teams behind the inventions) on the support and maturation of this project to be followed considering the first expression of industrial interest already initiated » reports Lucia Robert, CEO of MATWIN.

« The recognition of the innovative nature of our project by this prestigious panel of international renowned experts is extremely motivating, and the additional support granted will allow us to go further in the valuation of our concept » explain May Morris and Frederic Bihel.

« This project is a good example of a continuum where partners push up together innovations from academic laboratories to become a market reality » says Caroline Dreyer, President of Conectus.

About SATT Conectus (TTO)

Being a link between Alsatian public research and companies, the [Conectus](#) TTO drives inventions from Alsatian laboratories to the market. It protects their discoveries, finances and supports the projects with best potential until their transfer to industry and / or investors, bearing the technological and financial risk. Conectus is also the operator for Researchers / Companies partnerships for the majority of its shareholders. More info on : www.conectus.fr

About MATWIN

[MATWIN](#), a Unicancer subsidiary, is an original national open-innovation initiative aiming at developing translational research in oncology and facilitating the transfer of innovations to patients. MATWIN's main objective is to support innovative projects from academic laboratories or start-ups to promote early partnerships. The programme relies on a historic partnership with 15* major international laboratories (Amgen, AstraZeneca, BMS, Boehringer Ingelheim, Celgene, Genomic Health, Gilead, GSK, Janssen, Nanostring Technologies, Novartis, Pierre Fabre, Pfizer, Roche, Sanofi) and the global ecosystem concerned with developing innovation in the fight against cancer. More info on : www.matwin.fr

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