

## **CEBINA (Central European Biotech Incubator and Accelerator) joins the global efforts to fight COVID-19**

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Vienna, 17<sup>th</sup> April 2020

The Austrian biotech incubator and accelerator CEBINA GmbH today announces the initiation of several collaborative projects that address the global health crisis caused by the pandemic spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. These efforts aim to provide short-, mid- and longer-term solutions to fight COVID-19, and includes projects on drug repurposing, new anti-viral compounds to be used as food supplements and unique vaccine approaches.

The COVID-19 pandemic is expected to be the most influential global event in recent history, shaping everyday life, health and economic stability. The current pandemic is expected to persist for the next 12 to 18 months, and there is a threat of future Corona virus outbreaks in the future. Several approaches to tackle this crisis are being employed in multiple efforts by the healthcare industry and scientists worldwide offering possible solutions with different timescales.

CEBINA GmbH (Vienna, Austria) in collaboration with Calyxha Biotechnologies GmbH and Professor Robert Konrat, a renowned structural biologist (Department of Structural and Computational Biology, University of Vienna, Austria) have identified a number of marketed drugs that have the potential to be effective against COVID-19. These drugs have been identified using an *in silico* prediction platform which uses a radically new approach, and has been validated in several successful drug discovery projects. The prediction is based on the activation of biological pathways shown to be involved in COVID-19. Combinations of these drugs are expected to be especially effective by interfering with different SARS-CoV-2 infection mechanisms. The drugs that have been identified are marketed medications that are commonly prescribed and mostly generics, and none of them are currently considered by other drug repurposing projects (based on the publicly available information).

“As a response to this global health crisis, we have applied our existing technologies and experience to create a collaborative platform to initiate several projects that offer potential solutions to COVID-19 on different time scales” - said Dr Eszter Nagy, MD PhD, CEO and founder of CEBINA GmbH and Calyxha Biotechnologies GmbH. "Due to the rising death toll, an immediate treatment is needed for COVID-19. As development of new drugs and vaccines takes too long to help severely sick patients now, the repurposing of existing, marketed and available drugs with large safety datasets and known side-effect profiles is the most viable short-term solution." - concluded Dr. Nagy.

“We have applied an *in-silico* approach based on meta-structure prediction-software and biological pathway analysis to screen the available drug database for predicted activity against SARS-CoV-2. The results represent a novel pool of potential drugs that we hope will be beneficial in the fight of COVID-19.” - commented Professor Robert Konrat, CSO and co-founder of Calyxha. “Prioritization of potential drugs and their combinations is ongoing based on *in vitro* testing and translational analysis of medical data in collaboration with the BSL4 Laboratory led by Prof. Ferenc Jakab in the Szentágothai Research Centre and the Institute for Translational Medicine headed by Prof. Péter Hegyi, respectively, at the University of Pécs, Hungary. We intend to publish the data shortly.”

### **ABOUT CEBINA**

CEBINA GmbH ([www.cebina.eu](http://www.cebina.eu)) is a Vienna-based biotech incubator and accelerator company (founded in 2018) providing facilities and diverse services to its resident companies in business development, product development, management, operations, legal and financing. The mission of CEBINA is to nurture early-stage life sciences start-up companies and projects that have the potential of creating new medicines and cutting-edge technologies. This mixed incubator/accelerator model generates early momentum, accelerated maturation and increased survival rates. CEBINA actively seeks early projects for feasibility evaluations and also develops projects internally with the aim to create spin-off companies. The founder of CEBINA, Dr. Eszter Nagy, MD PhD and the core team (previously with Intercell AG, Arsanis Inc, Evelique Biotechnologies GmbH, MedImmune/Astra Zeneca) have decades long experience

in biotechnology, product development, mainly in the field of infectious diseases and vaccines.

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Supplementary material:

