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CytomX, Astellas to find cure for cancer

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CytomX Therapeutics and Astellas Announce Strategic Collaboration to Develop ProbodyÃ?Â® T-Cell Engaging Bispecific Therapies for Treatment of Cancer



US based CytomX Therapeutics and Japan based Astellas Pharma have entered into a strategic collaboration agreement focused on the discovery, research, development and commercialization of novel T-cell engaging bispecific antibodies targeting CD3 and tumor cell surface antigens for the treatment of cancer. The parties will utilize CytomX's Probody® therapeutic technology platform, as well as its proprietary bispecific formats and CD3 modules.

Probody® therapeutics are designed to remain inactive until they are activated by proteases in the tumor microenvironment. As a result, Probody® therapeutics are designed to bind selectively to tumors and minimize binding to healthy tissue, thereby reducing toxicities and potentially creating safer, more effective therapies. Probody T-cell engaging bispecifics are antibody constructs capable of directing cytotoxic T-cells to tumor microenvironments, leading to cell-mediated anti-cancer activity.

Under the agreement, CytomX and Astellas will collaborate on several initial programs. CytomX will lead research and discovery activities, up to clinical candidate selection, that will be funded by Astellas. Astellas will lead and fund preclinical and clinical development and commercialization activities. Astellas will make an upfront cash payment of $80 million to CytomX with CytomX eligible to receive future preclinical, clinical and commercial milestones of over $1.6 billion. CytomX is also eligible to receive tiered royalties on global net sales that range from high-single digits to mid-teens.