



## **Cynbiose and VirNext strengthen their partnership to accelerate the development of innovative prophylactic and therapeutic treatments in the field of respiratory infections.**

Marcy l'Etoile, Lyon, France - June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022

*The Covid-19 crisis has highlighted the need to pool and leverage scientific and technical expertise in order to be more reactive to the (re)-emergence of infectious diseases.*

On the basis of a public-private partnership initiated in 2017, Cynbiose and VirNext teams collaborate closely on various aspects of Research and Development in the field of respiratory infectious diseases. The two organizations based in the Auvergne-Rhone-Alpes region, the historical birthplace of vaccines and diagnostics, have already developed several *in vitro* and *in vivo* models of infections by respiratory viruses such as influenza, pneumovirus (hRSV, hMPV) and coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2).

As of 2020, Cynbiose and VirNext have also joined forces to offer a complete preclinical package of services for the evaluation of drugs, vaccines and antibodies candidates for SARS-CoV-2, from *in vitro* screening to *in vivo* efficacy models of infections on large animals (supported by exceptional funding from the AURA region). Thus, they have contributed to the evaluation of hundreds of candidates for SARS-CoV-2 using cell lines, reconstructed human respiratory epithelium cultivated at air-liquid interface and rodent models, but also to the implementation of 6 clinical trials evaluating antivirals, nebulized antibodies and vaccine candidates.

This regional collaboration with a global reach enables the creation of scientific, technological and economic values. Beyond the capacity of innovation and research of VirNext and Cynbiose, this partnership combines the strengths of each of them in their respective fields of expertise and unique know-how including logistics (BSL-2/BSL3 and A2/A3 facilities), but also great flexibility, agility and customer relationship and support.

Based on this strong and operational collaboration, Cynbiose and VirNext are pleased to announce the strengthening of their public-private partnership in order to offer a continuum of expertise and services to accelerate entrance to the clinic of drug candidates (immunotherapies, vaccines, antibodies, antivirals) in the field of respiratory infectious diseases. The objective of this partnership is to reinforce and develop a unique and innovative service offering in the field of respiratory infectious diseases:

- A unique and large-scale library of respiratory viruses,
- A complete range of services from *in vitro* and *ex vivo* screening to relevant preclinical *in vivo* models (rodents and non-rodents) for respiratory infectious diseases,

- The enrichment of Cynbiose's offer dedicated to the evaluation of aerosol therapies with a screening offer on an *ex-vivo* model on human airway epithelium.

*"Thanks to our long-standing private-public collaboration, we are in the front line in meeting the ambitions of the French Health 2030 innovation plan and actively contributing to strengthening the positioning of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region and France in the fight against (re)-emerging infectious diseases. We are proud to be able to support academic teams and the biopharmaceutical industry with a very high value-added scientific and technical offer and thus contribute to global health,"* says Hugues Contamin, Cynbiose CEO and Manuel Rosa-Calatrava, INSERM Research Director, Co-Director of VirPath Laboratory, Co-founder and Director of VirNext Platform.

## **About Cynbiose**

Cynbiose is the only non-clinical Contract Research Organization (CRO) of its kind in Europe and is AAALAC accredited. The company specializes in the development and commercialization of innovative non-human primate models to accelerate the preclinical development phases of drug candidates. It works on exploratory DMPK and toxicology studies, as well as proof of concept studies in different human pathologies, such as infectious diseases and respiratory conditions, the central nervous system and inflammatory, musculoskeletal disorders and cardiovascular/neurovascular diseases. The company provides its services in line with quality guidelines that meet industry requirements.

Cynbiose has expertise in every stage and technique required to manipulate these preclinical models. It boasts an extensive network of experts and partners in the academic and private domains, allowing complex studies to be conducted with dedicated project teams. Cynbiose is committed, responsible and proud to contribute to advancing healthcare research by participating in numerous preclinical development programs for new therapies.

The SME Cynbiose was founded in 2008 by CEO Dr Hugues Contamin (DVM, PhD) and is based in Marcy l'Etoile near Lyon, France. It currently has 18 staff. In 2017, Cynbiose established the subsidiary Cynbiose Respiratory (based in Tours), with expertise covering infectious and non-infectious respiratory diseases, studies on drugs nebulization and drug deposition in the lungs. Cynbiose is a founding member of the French Association of Service and Innovation Companies for the Life Sciences (AFSSI).

[www.cynbiose.com](http://www.cynbiose.com)

## **About VirNext**

The Technology Research Platform VirNext is a spin-off (EZUS Lyon) of the Université Claude Bernard Lyon 1 (UCBL1), which was co-founded by Dr Manuel Rosa-Calatrava (PhD) within the VirPath laboratory to foster industrial partnerships and enhance translational and biomedical research, which led to the build up of a substantial portfolio of patents, the transfer of technologies towards the industry, the implementation of several clinical trials and the creation of four companies (VirHealth, Signia Therapeutics, Vaxxel and VirexpR). VirNext offers expertise in the field of respiratory viruses and provides a large panel of technologies, including egg and cell-based processes of virus and vaccine antigen production, and several potency tests using *in vitro* (cell lines and reconstituted human airway epithelium) and *in vivo* (mouse, hamster, ferrets) models of infections by influenza viruses, pneumoviruses, adenovirus, rhinoviruses and coronaviruses (including SARS-CoV-2 variants), dedicated to the evaluation of prophylactic and therapeutic candidates. Founded in 2012, the VirNext

platform was awarded twice by the innovation trophy of the French National Institute for Industrial Property. Currently, VirNext has 10 staff and is committed in several preclinical and technological development programs and services in order to contribute to a better control of (re)-emergent respiratory viruses.

<https://www.virnext.fr/>

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