



## Spirea secures further financing to develop the next generation of antibody drug conjugate therapeutics

- *New financing from lead o2h Ventures and Syndicate Room, follows funding from Jonathan Milner and Start Codon, announced in July 2020*
- *Spirea's novel antibody drug conjugate platform technology has been successfully validated following in vitro and in vivo proof-of-concept studies*

**Cambridge, UK, 07 December 2020:** Spirea Limited (Spirea), a spin-out from the University of Cambridge and founded to deliver the next generation of antibody drug conjugate (ADC) cancer therapeutics, has today announced that it has secured financing from lead o2h Ventures and Syndicate Room. The investment will be used to enable Spirea's ADC therapeutic programmes ahead of a significant Seed financing anticipated in 2021. The Company also announces the successful *in vivo* validation of the platform in proof-of-concept studies using a cancer xenograft model.

ADC drugs combine the cell killing activity of a cytotoxic drug payload with the targeting ability of an antibody. However, toxic side-effects, limited flexibility, and the resulting limitations in the range of cancers that can be treated have restricted the field and caused many clinical programmes to stall. Spirea's novel technology overcomes these issues by offering high drug-to-antibody ratio (DAR) and a design flexibility which enables the development of differentiated ADCs with improved efficacy and safety. Because the technology allows more drug to be loaded onto the targeting antibody whilst maintaining drug stability, payloads can also be customised to the target, enabling flexibility in payload potencies, creative drug combinations and novel modes of action to serve a wider patient group.

**Dr Myriam Ouberai, CEO of Spirea, commented:** *"We have now demonstrated that our ADC technology performs extremely well in vivo. The funding and support from o2h Ventures and Syndicate Room serve as an endorsement of our approach and will allow us to start building a pipeline of exciting therapeutic products based on our validated technology."*

**Sunil Shah, CEO at o2h Ventures, said:** *"Spirea's potentially transformative approach to addressing the common obstacles faced in ADC development has the potential to disrupt this field entirely, placing the Company in a unique position to address a very significant market opportunity. This is an exciting time for Spirea and we are pleased to be supporting them."*

Spirea has previously received investment from Jonathan Milner, Start Codon, Innovate UK, IP Group and Cambridge Enterprise and is supported by a number of successful, high-profile board members from the life sciences including Jane Dancer (former Chief Business Officer at F-star), Gaynor Fryers (former Vice-President of Business Development at AstraZeneca) and Christine Martin (Deputy Head of Seed Funds at Cambridge Enterprise). Spirea benefits from being part of the healthcare business accelerator Start Codon and the Cambridge Judge Entrepreneurship Centre's Accelerator, Accelerate Cambridge.

For further information about Spirea, please visit: [www.spirea.co.uk](http://www.spirea.co.uk)

**ENDS**



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**About Spirea** [www.spirea.co.uk](http://www.spirea.co.uk)

Spirea has developed an exciting and flexible new approach to building ADCs that allows more drug payload to be specifically directed to the tumour cell. This results in an increase in therapeutic effect whilst substantially reducing debilitating side-effects. By delivering the right amount of the right drug to the right cells Spirea's proprietary technology will unlock a new generation of accessible, powerful and well-tolerated medicines for the treatment of a wide range of cancers.

Spirea will use its revolutionary technology to build a pipeline of proprietary and partnered ADC therapeutics. As well as developing its own drugs, the company plans to collaborate with partners on new programmes and to revive pre-existing preclinical and clinical-stage assets that have failed because of narrow therapeutic index.

Spirea was founded by Dr Myriam Ouberai, CEO, following her research at the Nanoscience Centre, University of Cambridge and extensive experience in biopharmaceuticals in both academia and industry. Spirea's Head of Business Operations, Adam Collier, has over 15 years' experience in biotech management, business development and early-stage company formation, having held several senior positions at Medimmune, Ablynx and Isogenica. He was also Founder-Director of Horizon Discovery (AIM:HZD).

**About o2h Ventures** [www.o2hventures.com](http://www.o2hventures.com)

The o2h human health EIS Fund is the first S/EIS fund in the UK solely focused on investing in EIS and/or SEIS seed stage companies covering novel drug discovery & AI, digital therapeutics and enabling services.

The o2h team are leaders in the biotech community and have been actively involved as investors, holding various board/industry positions as well as being engaged in grassroots scientific activity for over 20 years. o2h Ventures operates from their proprietary 2.7 acre Mill SciTech Park where they are developing a unique model for incubating small life science companies.

**About Syndicate Room** <https://www.syndicatoroom.com/>

Syndicate Room is a fintech company made up of data-scientists, investment professionals, software developers and marketers with one purpose: to structure and fund the world of startups, so that everyone - entrepreneurs, their teams, investors big and small, and society in general - can share in its profits, advancements and excitement.