

# PPF Group acquires a minority stake in biotech company Cytune Pharma in cooperation with SOTIO

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PPF Group has acquired a significant minority stake in Cytune Pharma SAS, a French biotechnology company focused on researching and developing new therapies for immune modulation aimed at enhancing immune response of patients suffering from cancer and infectious diseases. Cytune's platform based on modified IL-15 offers the possibility of combinations with other immunotherapeutic strategies, including checkpoint inhibitors.

The acquisition confirms PPF's focus on biotechnology as one of its key strategic areas of development. The parties to the agreement have agreed not to disclose the price and other details about the transaction.

PPF is currently active in biotech sector through majority stake in SOTIO and investment in Oribase Pharma, a biotechnology company focused on the development of new targeted therapies for aggressive oncology diseases.

PPF has also committed to funding Cytune Pharma's R&D activities related to its lead compound as well as to other developments based on its novel platform.

"Our investment in Cytune Pharma further diversifies our portfolio of activities in oncology research and clinical development and creates potential synergies with the development programs of SOTIO and OriBase Pharma. We hope we will be able to help to bring the results of Cytune's research to the clinical development stage and eventually to market in order to benefit patients suffering from such treacherous diseases," said Ladislav Bartoníček, shareholder of PPF Group and the Board Member responsible for biotechnology.

SOTIO is currently developing therapies for the treatment of prostate cancer, ovarian cancer and lung cancer. Cytune Pharma's research and development focuses on a broad portfolio of novel immunotherapeutic agents, primarily to treat cancer. Its cutting edge approach relies on a proprietary scientific breakthrough in immunology: a fusion

protein mimicking the trans-presentation mechanism of IL-15 by the IL-15R chain, which can enhance anti-tumor immune responses.

“With PPF and SOTIO on board, this strategic investment is a transformative opportunity for Cytune. SOTIO’s industry expertise and PPF’s financial resources will allow the acceleration and expansion of our super IL-15-based products portfolio. We aim to develop new immunomodulatory agents in clinical trials in the coming years,” said Dr. David Béchar, President and founder of Cytune Pharma.

*Notes for editors*

#### PPF Group

*PPF Group invests into multiple market segments such as banking and financial services, telecommunications, real estate, retail, insurance, metal mining, agriculture and biotechnology. PPF's reach spans from Europe to Russia, the USA and across Asia. PPF Group owns assets of EUR 24 billion (as at 30 June 2014).*

#### SOTIO

*SOTIO is an international biotechnology company developing new medical therapies, focusing on the treatment of cancer and autoimmunity diseases. The company conducts research concerning the actual platform of active cellular immunotherapy on the basis of dendritic cells, with the goal of significantly improving this treatment and making it accessible to patients. In SOTIO’s laboratory in Prague, equipped with state-of-the-art technologies, leading scientists research the role of dendritic cells in the therapeutic activation of the immune system and work to verify its safety and efficacy through clinical trials. SOTIO has facilities in Europe, the United States, China and Russia. For more information about the company visit the website [www.sotio.com](http://www.sotio.com).*

#### Cytune Pharma

*Cytune Pharma is a private company dedicated to the research and development of a portfolio of novel immunotherapeutic agents which expand and activate immune responses to treat advanced cancers. Cytune Pharma leverages the transpresentation mechanism of the critical immune factor, IL-15, by the IL-15Ra chain thanks to the development of a proprietary scientific breakthrough in immunology. Its proprietary lead product, CYP0150 (RLI), is a human fusion protein between IL-15 and the high-affinity binding site of IL-15Ra. Cytune is further developing different antibody-RLI conjugates. Cytune’s technology originally emanates from the Dr Yannick Jacques’s academic team at the Inserm unit U892 of Nantes, France. The company was founded in 2007. For more information about the company visit the website [www.cytunepharma.com](http://www.cytunepharma.com).*

