

Univercells receives EUR 20M financing to accelerate vaccine portfolio

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Financing to support Univercells' R&D investments to develop four essential and undersupplied global health vaccines to be produced at affordable prices, high quality and large volumes



The European Investment Bank (EIB) and Univercells S.A have signed a EUR 20 million loan agreement to support the development of a portfolio of four essential and undersupplied vaccines to be delivered at an affordable price. The portfolio – including polio, measles and rubella, and rabies vaccines – requires significant investment in process development through to clinical and regulatory validation. In funding Univercells, the EIB is aiming to promote the delivery of such vaccines, increasing their availability for diseases with high unmet medical needs.

The fight against infectious diseases is of high policy relevance for the European Union and for the EIB, its financing arm. While infectious diseases are already amongst the leading causes of death worldwide, the emergence of resistant pathogens is on the rise and anti-microbial resistance is therefore expected to become the leading cause of death by the middle of this century. At the same time there is little investment in drugs and vaccines to fight infectious diseases and a limited number of players in the field.

Univercells recently introduced its NevoLine biomanufacturing platform capable of delivering large quantities of vaccines at a fraction of the traditional cost. With the support of the EIB, the company will leverage the technology to pursue its mission and make four global health vaccines more available and affordable to all.

This EIB venture debt financing is backed by the “InnovFin – EU-finance for innovators” programme, a joint European Commission and EIB Group initiative funded by Horizon 2020, the EU’s research and innovation programme. More specifically, the “InnovFin – Infectious Diseases Finance Facility” (IDFF) targets the development of innovative vaccines, drugs, medical devices and novel research infrastructures for combatting infectious diseases. Through this support from InnovFin IDFF, the EIB can provide stable long-term funding with a flexible repayment and interest structure, limiting the cash outflow from the company and thereby enabling it to focus on investing in innovation and growth. Univercells has also benefited from InnovFin Advisory, one of the InnovFin tools, which identified the company as innovative and provided it with advice to improve its access to finance.