

# Lycera Announces Progress in Immuno-Oncology Program Presented at the 2016 American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) Annual Meeting

Apr 19, 2016

NEW YORK and ANN ARBOR, Mich., April 19, 2016 /PRNewswire/ — Lycera Corp., a privately held biopharmaceutical company developing breakthrough immune modulatory medicines, announced today that research findings from the Company's RORgamma agonist program were presented at this week's annual meeting of the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR), which is taking place in New Orleans, Louisiana, April 16-20, 2016.

In a poster titled, "RORgamma Agonists Regulate Immune Checkpoint Receptors to Enhance anti-Tumor Immunity," presented on April 17, a research team, including scientists at Lycera and the Medical University of South Carolina reported key preclinical research findings from Lycera's program, including:

- Lycera's synthetic RORgamma agonists increase the expression of co-stimulatory molecules, including CD226, CD27, and 4-1BB (CD137), and concomitantly decrease co-inhibitory molecules, including PD-1, TIGIT, and CD73.
- RORgamma agonists decrease PD-1 expression on CD4+ and CD8+ T cells after oral administration and on anti-tumor T cells in models of adoptive cell therapy. In addition, RORgamma agonist-mediated decreased PD-1 expression desensitizes cells to PD-L1 mediated inhibition of proliferation.
- In models of adoptive cell transfer, RORgamma agonists enhance persistence of anti-tumor effector T cells, reduce expression of exhaustion markers, and increase tumor-infiltrating lymphocytes (TILs).

"These findings demonstrate that RORgamma agonists integrate multiple anti-tumor mechanisms into a single approach by modulating gene expression to reprogram immune cells for improved function, as well as decrease immunosuppressive mechanisms. We believe this work provides a strong rationale for combinations of RORgamma agonists with other immune oncology agents," said Paul Sekhri, President and CEO of Lycera. "These findings continue to support the potential of our lead program in immune-oncology as we advance towards the initiation of clinical studies."

## **Additional Poster Details**

*“RORgamma agonists regulate immune checkpoint receptors to enhance anti-tumor immunity”*

*Time & Date: Sunday, Apr 17, 2016, 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM*

*Authors: Xiao Hu<sup>1</sup>, Xikui Liu<sup>1</sup>, Jacques Moisan<sup>1</sup>, Chrystal Paulos<sup>2</sup>, Yahong Wang<sup>1</sup>, Chauncey Spooner<sup>1</sup>, Charles Lesch<sup>1</sup>, Rodney Morgan<sup>1</sup>, David Mertz<sup>1</sup>, Dick Bousley<sup>1</sup>, Clarke Taylor<sup>1</sup>, Chad Van Huis<sup>1</sup>, Don Skalitzky<sup>1</sup>, Thomas Aicher<sup>1</sup>, Peter Toogood<sup>1</sup>, Laura Carter<sup>1</sup>*

*<sup>1</sup>Lycera Corp, Ann Arbor, MI; <sup>2</sup>Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, SC*

## **About RORgamma agonists**

RORgamma is a nuclear receptor transcription factor that serves as a master control switch of the immune system, driving the activation and differentiation of immune cells, including Th17 (helper T-cells) and Tc17 (cytotoxic T cells) T cells. Lycera has discovered selective and potent oral agonists that target RORgamma for the potential treatment of a broad range of cancers. These RORgamma agonists that have demonstrated single agent therapeutic activity in multiple animal models of cancer. In addition, *ex vivo* treatment with Lycera's RORgamma agonist compounds has been shown to enhance the therapeutic benefit of adoptive T-cell therapy by improving both immune cell persistence and activation.

## **About Lycera**

Lycera is a biopharmaceutical company developing novel oral immune modulators for the treatment of autoimmune diseases and cancer. Based on successful progress of its world-class R&D platform, including expertise in immune metabolism, cell signaling, and immune cell differentiation, Lycera is commencing multiple clinical programs in 2016. The company is advancing a wholly owned, oral, gut-directed ATPase modulator, designated LYC-30937-EC, for the treatment of inflammatory bowel disease, and has completed Phase 1 clinical studies in healthy volunteers. The Company also is progressing oral RORgamma agonists for diverse applications in immuno-oncology. Lycera has an exclusive strategic collaboration with Celgene Corporation to advance Lycera's proprietary pipeline for cancer and immune-mediated diseases. In addition, Lycera had previously established collaborations with Merck to discover, develop, and commercialize small molecule therapies for autoimmune disorders.

Lycera's leadership possesses deep experience in drug discovery, development, and commercialization and has established close relationships with renowned thought leaders and clinical researchers worldwide. Lycera was founded in 2006 based on an initial scientific platform in-licensed from the University of Michigan. Lead investors in Lycera include InterWest Partners, ARCH Venture Partners, Clarus Ventures, and EDF Ventures.

**CONTACT:** Justin Jackson, Burns McClellan, 212-213-0006, ext. 327, [jjackson@burnsmc.com](mailto:jjackson@burnsmc.com)

SOURCE Lycera Corp.