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## **Cellestia Biotech raises CHF 8 million seed financing from private investors and PPF Group to advance its lead anti-cancer compound CB-103 to clinical development stage**

Basel, Switzerland – January 26, 2017 – Cellestia Biotech AG, a private biopharmaceutical company with strategic focus on anti-cancer drugs modulating the NOTCH signaling pathway, today announced the final closing of its seed financing rounds securing a total of CHF 8 million in funding.

The total seed financing includes proceeds of CHF 0.5 million Seed A and CHF 2.3 million Seed B financing rounds conducted during 2016 and the proceeds of the final Seed C financing round closing at CHF 5.2 million today, in which PPF Group, as an institutional investor, and several private investors participated. The funds will enable Cellestia to advance the lead product CB-103 and to conduct and complete a first-in-man phase I clinical study. The preparations for launching the clinical program in 2017 are ongoing.

The lead product CB-103 is a novel, first in class, oral pan-NOTCH inhibitor for the treatment of NOTCH dependent leukemia, lymphoma and solid tumor indications. The NOTCH signaling pathway plays a central role in cell differentiation, growth and stem cell maintenance. When genetic lesions activate the NOTCH pathway, it becomes a major driver for NOTCH-dependent cancers. Indeed, clinical studies confirmed that NOTCH activation is a negative prognostic factor across multiple cancer indications.

CB-103 has achieved a pre-clinical proof of concept, with efficacy demonstrated in vitro and in vivo in various animal models as well as ex vivo efficacy on leukemic blasts in the blood from pediatric leukemia patients. Preclinical studies demonstrated excellent efficacy and the compound's safety profile is well understood.

Michael Bauer, CEO of Cellestia, said: "We are grateful to our investors who supported the successful start of Cellestia and the CB-103 development program during last year, allowing us to rapidly advance our lead compound towards clinical development stage. We are particularly pleased to welcome PPF Group as institutional investor backing our program financially and also adding business and development expertise. With this strong support, we are confident to bring this exciting new therapy to patients as soon as possible."

Dr. Jens Hennecke, Chief Business Officer of SOTIO, said: "We are excited about our investment into Cellestia, with its strong management team and network of excellent academic collaborators. The preclinical data of CB-103 have proven that the broad inhibition of the NOTCH signaling pathway is a very promising approach for the treatment of cancer. We are very much looking forward to demonstrating the benefit of CB-103 to cancer patients,"

SOTIO is an international biotechnology company and as a member of PPF Group, it is spearheading PPF's investment and partnering activities in the biotechnology sector. As part of the agreement, a representative of PPF Group will join the board of directors of Cellestia.

### **About Cellestia Biotech AG**

*Cellestia was founded in 2014 as a spin-off from Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, EPFL. The lead development compound of Cellestia is CB-103, a novel, first-in-class oral pan-NOTCH inhibitor indicated for treatment of patients with NOTCH-dependent leukemia, lymphoma and solid tumors. Cellestia holds a worldwide exclusive license on the intellectual property rights for CB-103 and related series of close analogues, for development and commercialization.*

### **About PPF**

*PPF Group invests into multiple market segments such as banking and financial services, telecommunications, biotechnology, real estate, retail, insurance and agriculture. PPF's reach spans from Europe to Russia, the USA and across Asia. PPF Group owns assets exceeding EUR 24.2 billion (as at 30 June 2016). For more information about PPF visit [www.ppf.eu](http://www.ppf.eu).*

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