

# Press Release

OCR together with ImmunXperts and Rarecells win k€520 funding in Eureka Eurostars program to initiate €1,3m “ICOM” platform for preclinical and clinical human cancer drug evaluation in pet dog’s model

**Lille, 17<sup>th</sup> September 2018** – OCR, Rarecells and ImmunXperts combine their strength and expertise into the creation of a new platform to significantly improve preclinical assessment of cancer drug candidates and to expand companion dogs involvement in translational oncology.

Currently less than 6% of oncology drugs developed based on studies in rodents successfully reaches the authority approval. This number indicates the need for a validation using a real-world model system before launching a clinical trial in human. For that, pet dogs as a heterogeneous model due to the same complex nature of tumorigenesis, progression and drug-resistance as in humans and provide valuable and more predictive results. It has become crucial for Biotech/Pharma to get access to better predictive animal models especially for their immuno-oncology drug development projects. Therefore, their translational departments are seeking for alternative, flexible and responsive pharmacological approach to improve the decision-making process.

ICOM consortium, in this matter, addresses the existing gap between murine model and human patients proposing the inclusion of companion dogs in order to increase the predictability of the preclinical studies and increase the probability of novel cancer drugs success in humans.

The platform’s aim is to optimize the selection of drugs for parallel human and canine clinical trials, by providing innovative screening and monitoring innovative tools:

A **dedicated canine immunophenotyping panel**, to enable the clinical assessment of immune-modulating therapies and identification of immune biomarkers of response. It will be the 1<sup>st</sup> non-academic service of this type available for industry in Europe.

The 1<sup>st</sup> **canine primary cancer cells platform** available for preclinical evaluation of oncology drugs to allow the detection of biological effects (general toxicity, genotoxicity, etc.) of a tested compound.

The **ISET® technique** (isolation/detection of circulating tumor cells) **validated in canine patients**, to help with tumor diagnosis, prognosis and analysis of drug response. In scope of canine blood CTC counting and characterization, it is currently not available anywhere in the world.

The benefits of this approach will serve both human and vet pharmaceutical industry, as it will allow a relevant pharmacological assessment of immuno-oncology strategies under development for human and provide innovative solutions to treat companion dogs affected by cancer.

## About OCR

Founded in 2011 by Dr. Dominique Tierny, OCR is a CRO based in Eurasanté, Lille, France and employs 15 people. Unique in Europe, OCR aims to accelerate the development of new human and pet treatments for serious chronic diseases by addressing the unmet need of providing access to highly predictive living organisms via their ethical clinical studies in pets. OCR works with pharmaceutical partners for the cost-effective design and management of in vitro, pre-clinical and clinical trials in dogs and cats. This innovative approach helps to advance the R&D process for new drug candidates and medical devices for humans in a variety of therapeutic areas including oncology, cardiology, neurology and inflammation. OCR has signed numerous collaborations with Biotech-Pharma-MedTech players focused on Human health, as well as Vet players.

### To learn more about OCR

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