



BCI Pharma appoints Didier Malherbe as chairman of board of directors

UCB Belgium veteran's expertise will support company's next stage of development

Liège, Belgium, July 6, 2020 – BCI Pharma, a biotechnology company that develops an innovative kinase inhibitor, announces today that it has appointed Didier Malherbe as chairman of the board of directors. With his experience working as managing director of UCB Belgium and head of public affairs at UCB, Didier Malherbe will increase the accountability of BCI Pharma and pave the way for creating a mature biotech company.

His expertise will enable the company to build and improve its business strategy, extend the BCI network and increase its level of compliance. Didier Malherbe will also be responsible for guiding the company on legal affairs and turning BCI Pharma into a more structured company aligned with current pharma expectations.

BCI Pharma is a biotech company that focuses on the discovery and development of novel, selective and very potent kinase inhibitors for high unmet medical needs, such as peripheral neuropathic pain, psoriasis, neuroinflammation and peripheral inflammation. The company has recently started a second round of financing to initiate clinical trials of its best-in-class kinase inhibitors. Malherbe's appointment is expected to increase investor confidence and create goodwill in the biotech industry.

BCI Pharma has nominated a preclinical candidate as a new way to treat peripheral neuropathic pain and psoriasis. Looking ahead, it aims to start early clinical development of its assets to demonstrate the high value of its platforms and technology. This will help identify innovative drug candidates for peripheral neuropathic pain, for which today's treatments have only moderate efficacy – in less than 50% of patients – and are associated with serious central nervous system side effects.

The company plans to close a capital increase in 2020 and will then begin regulatory toxicological studies of BCI-1446, its preclinical candidate for neuropathic pain and psoriasis.

"BCI Pharma is very pleased to welcome Didier Malherbe as chairman of the board of directors. He has a huge amount of experience in the public and private sectors and in the biopharmaceutical industry. His expertise will improve the structure of BCI Pharma, supporting the company's development and future strategy," said Dominique Surleraux, BCI Pharma's CEO. "He will be in charge of consolidating the structure of the company – in terms of compliance, processes, finance and legal affairs – and will be directly involved in our business strategy, including the alignment of planning, objectives, resources, licensing and partnerships."

"I am very happy to join the team at BCI Pharma, which is part of the vibrant Belgian/Walloon biotech ecosystem. I have promoted and developed this ecosystem for over 15 years, as co-founder of BIOWIN and of the R&D biopharma platform within the Belgian government," said Malherbe. "My appointment will allow me to share my management experience with the whole team, helping them achieve the goals and milestones set by the board."



About Didier Malherbe

Didier Malherbe joined UCB Belgium in 2006, as vice president, public affairs, UCB and managing director, UCB Belgium. He previously worked for ten years as executive director of the FEB (Federation of Enterprises in Belgium). There, he managed and developed communications, press relations, publications and events, together with the external relations of the FEB and the economic activities in state visits abroad for HRH King Albert II. He also worked for Spadel (Belgium) and BellSouth (US), developing the mobile telephony business in Europe.

He started his career as a cabinet member for various governments at both regional and federal levels. His first project focused on the development of regional airports in Wallonia. In 2000, he founded the European Business Summit (EBS) where he remains director.

After graduating in law at UCL in 1985, Malherbe completed a postgraduate corporate and business law degree at the VUB. He also took an executive master's in the business administration program (EMBA) at George Washington University and completed an internship at the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

About BCI Pharma

BCI Pharma is a biotech company with extensive expertise in medicinal chemistry, including a special focus on an innovative chemical library. The company designs and validates innovative kinase inhibitor libraries (Bikin 1-3). Its kinase platform is based on a new chemotype with excellent physical and chemical properties which enable BCI to run research projects on inflammation, neuroinflammation, pain, cancer and metabolic diseases. It also provides screening technology in the discovery of selective, potent kinase inhibitors. This technology enables experts to decide on the correct binding pocket, which is key to selectivity.

BCI has identified the preclinical candidate BCI-1446 as a new way to treat peripheral neuropathic pain and psoriasis. Right now it has three projects running and is in advanced partnership discussions with big pharma and biotech. So far, the company has received around €4 million (\$4.5M) in public/private investment and in the form of a research grant from the Walloon Region, as part of the development of its chemical library. BCI is based at two sites: Liège, Belgium (biology) and Montpellier, France (medicinal chemistry). It has eight employees.

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