



BioPontis Alliance for Rare Diseases

A philanthropic alliance turning science into medicine

***BioPontis Alliance for Rare Diseases recognized by
Minister of Health of Belgium***

Brussels, Belgium – 5 October 2017 - The aims and approach of BioPontis Alliance for Rare Diseases are being recognized by Maggie De Block, federal Minister of Social Affairs and Public Health of Belgium, because it is an important initiative to ensure that more therapies for patients with rare diseases become available worldwide. Advances in basic research have resulted in much progress in the understanding of the more than 7,000 rare diseases, but the translation of this research into therapies is not happening at a fast enough pace. BioPontis Alliance has set up an international therapy development hub with top international experts, to build bridges from basic research to treatments. It has already partnered with top academic institutes such as the Flemish Institute for Biotechnology (VIB) and the University of Antwerp, and further collaborative projects with top international institutions are being finalized and will be announced soon.

“This unique initiative is extremely important for patients with rare diseases all over the world. By contributing to the creation of the missing link between fundamental research and its application, the initiative should help provide a quicker answer to the treatment development expectations of patients left today without therapeutic options”, says Maggie De Block, Minister of Social Affairs and Public Health of Belgium. “Belgium is recognized in Europe and internationally as a leading country with much expertise in rare diseases, so we are supporting BioPontis to build on this expertise.”

Prof. emeritus Jean-Jacques Cassiman, member of the BioPontis Board and Chairman of the Fund for Rare Diseases of the King Baudouin Foundation adds: "We are very pleased with this stamp of approval by the Belgian authorities. We have set up BioPontis Alliance because of the needs of the many patients with rare diseases, as we can often read in the media. We look forward to growing our initiative into a sustainable contributor of new therapies.”

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13200 Strickland Road, Suite 114-244, Raleigh, N.C. 27613
US IRS EIN #46-4764835

<http://biopontisalliance.org>

“We are very grateful to the Minister of Health of Belgium to publicly support BioPontis,” says Dr. Marlene Haffner, Vice-Chair of the Board and former Director of the Office of Orphan Product Development at the US FDA. “We hope that her support is further underlining the need for our approach and will bring us more financing so that we can embark on even more projects, because the patients are waiting.”

BioPontis has already received financial support by a multi-annual contribution of the Baillet Latour Fund, unrestricted donations from Shire and GSK and by private donors. The Directors of the Board of BioPontis are unpaid volunteers.

About the BioPontis Alliance for Rare Diseases

BioPontis Alliance for Rare Diseases is a unique non-profit organization with a 501c(3) Public Charity in the USA (North Carolina) and a Foundation of Public Utility (fup/son) in Belgium (Brussels) for Europe. Managed by an international Board and executive team, BioPontis partners with patients’ organizations, clinicians and researchers to bridge the gap between promising science and new medicines. BioPontis Alliance for Rare Diseases is being established as a global non-profit, inviting corporate, private and foundation philanthropic support. More information, including how contributions to support our programs and mission can be made, at biopontisalliance.org.

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