

## Media Release

Basel (Switzerland) / San Francisco (USA), April 8, 2014

### **Versant Ventures invests CHF 11 million in PIQUR and brings further industry expertise to the Board**

**Since the start of the company, PIQUR has raised total proceeds of over CHF 37 million**

**Funds targeted to reach Phase II and proof-of-concept for lead compound PQR309**

PIQUR Therapeutics AG and Versant Ventures jointly announced today the investment of the California-based venture capital firm of CHF 11 million (USD 12M) in PIQUR. The pharmaceutical company focused on the discovery and development of novel, small molecules for the treatment of cancer, has closed a Series A extension round of CHF 18 million (USD 20M). This round brings the total funding of the Series A to CHF 32 million (USD 36M). Versant Ventures led the extension round, which also included new as well as existing private shareholders. Since the start of the company PIQUR has raised total proceeds of over CHF 37 million (USD 42M).

Versant Ventures, specializing in life sciences investments, has more than USD 1.6 billion in assets under management. Versant Ventures has recently established an industry-leading biotech-focused team in Basel, Switzerland. Concurrent with the closing of the transaction, Guido Magni, Venture Partner with Versant Ventures in Basel, has joined PIQUR's Board of Directors. Guido previously served as a Managing Director of EuroVentures, a Versant incubator, where he was intimately involved in several biotech investments including Synosia (sold to Biotie Therapies), Flexion (IPO) and Okairos (sold to GSK). Prior to that he was the Head of the Medical Science Department of Roche Pharmaceuticals and oversaw the development and the registration of a large number of key oncology drugs.

In addition, Gianni Gromo, Venture Partner with Versant Ventures, will act as an observer in PIQUR's Board of Directors and will give strategic advice to the company. He was previously the Global Head of the Cardio Metabolic Disease Area at Roche Pharmaceuticals. Currently, he serves on the Board of Novira Therapeutics and on scientific advisory boards of a number of academic institutions and biotechs.

"We would like to thank our existing investors for their strong confidence in PIQUR. We welcome the new private shareholders and Versant Ventures as new investors and look forward to working with Guido Magni and Gianni Gromo," commented Vladimir Cmiljanovic, CEO of PIQUR Therapeutics AG. "Their experience and network in drug development, profound expertise in oncology as well as in the investment sector, nicely complements PIQUR's other Board members' perspectives. We plan to use the funds to advance development of our lead compound PQR309 to reach Phase II and deliver

proof-of-concept in the clinic, as well as the discovery of additional drug candidates for oncology and non-oncology indications.”

“This is an exciting time to become involved with PIQUR. The company’s innovative dual-acting PI3K/mTOR inhibitors and highly experienced team made this an attractive investment for Versant. In recent months we have conducted a detailed due diligence of the company and its assets and were impressed by PIQUR’s overall IP and the lead compound PQR309. We are excited to bring in our management and industry expertise into a great management team and to support the development of novel anti-cancer therapeutics,” said Guido Magni, Venture Partner of Versant Ventures.

### **To turn cancer into a manageable disease**

PIQUR aims to help turn cancer into a manageable disease. Despite significant advances in the fight against cancer, there remains a high unmet medical need for therapies that not only prolong patients’ survival but also significantly improve quality of life. PIQUR targets both PI3K (phosphoinositide 3-kinase) and mTOR (mammalian target of rapamycin), two key signaling molecules that are vital to several essential biological processes, such as cell proliferation and survival, making inhibition of the target attractive for cancer therapy.

PIQUR’s differentiation is the level of innovation with its unique, proprietary fragment and scaffold libraries, as well as cellular technology platforms, and their excellent products with novel, dual-acting ‘strong PI3K plus fine-tuned mTOR’ inhibitors that address the given challenges, meeting therapeutic, tolerance and galenic needs.

### **About Versant Ventures**

Versant Ventures is a leading venture capital firm that specializes in investments in innovative biopharmaceuticals, medical devices and other life science opportunities. Founded in 1999, the firm consists of an experienced team of managing directors committed to helping entrepreneurs build successful companies that impact healthcare and improve quality of life. The firm’s successful IPOs include Clovis Oncology, Jazz Pharmaceuticals, Genomic Health, Insulet and Kythera. M&A exits include Amira, LenSX, Acclarent, Cameron Health, Ablation Frontiers and Okairos. In addition to an industry-leading biotech-focused team in Basel, Switzerland, Versant is present in San Francisco and two locations in Canada. [www.versantventures.com](http://www.versantventures.com)

### **About PIQUR**

PIQUR is a Swiss pharmaceutical company incorporated in August 2011 as a spin-off of the University of Basel, focusing on the discovery and development of innovative anti-cancer drugs based on lipid kinase (PI3K) and mTOR inhibition. PIQUR’s pipeline originates from one of the most promising research areas in oncology. While mTOR is a clinically validated drug target, PI3K inhibition achieved proof of concept status in clinical Phase III. PIQUR has a secured patent scope protecting many chemical compounds. In January 2014 PIQUR launched the clinical Phase I study with the active ingredient PQR309; the first results of the study are anticipated in the fourth quarter of 2014. [www.piquor.com](http://www.piquor.com)

# PIQUR

TARGETED CANCER THERAPIES

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