# UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION Washington, D.C. 20549

#### FORM 6-K

# REPORT OF FOREIGN PRIVATE ISSUER PURSUANT TO RULE 13a-16 OR 15d-16 UNDER THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the month of December 2021

Commission File Number: 001-40488

#### **Molecular Partners AG**

(Translation of registrant's name into English)

Wagistrasse 14 8952 Zurich-Schlieren Switzerland

(Address of principal executive office)

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant files or will file annual reports under cover of Form 20-F or Form 40-F. Form 20-F [ X ] Form 40-F [ ]
Indicate by check mark if the registrant is submitting the Form 6-K in paper as permitted by Regulation S-T Rule 101(b)(1):
Indicate by check mark if the registrant is submitting the Form 6-K in paper as permitted by Regulation S-T Rule 101(b)(7):

EXHIBIT INDEX

Exhibit No. Description

99.1 Oncology Day presentation - Molecular Partners

#### **SIGNATURES**

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

Molecular Partners AG
(Registrant)

Date: December 15, 2021

Patrick AMSTUTZ

Patrick Amstutz

Chief Executive Officer



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### R&D Day Speakers (and Intro to Agenda)



Patrick Amstutz, PhD Chief Executive Officer, Molecular Partners



Anne Goubier, DVM, PhD VP Biology, Molecular Partners



Michael Stumpp, PhD Chief Operating Officer, Molecular Partners









**Guest Speakers** 

Prof. Adrian Ochsenbein, MD The University of Bern



Prof. Carsten Riether, PhD The University of Bern







Our *purpose* is to transform the lives of people with serious diseases

### 2021 in Review: Corporate & Portfolio Growth

- Ensovibep (Covid) from Phase 1 to POC data imminent
  - · Activity on all variants of concern, to date
- MP0317 (FAP x CD40) into Phase 1
  - Initial data anticipated in H2 2022
- Nomination of MP0533 for the treatment of AML
  - ASH poster; Bern collaboration; Phase 1 initiation in 2022
- · Ongoing assessment of additional antiviral DARPins
  - Updates following ensovibep data in H1 2022
- Completion of NASDAQ Listing
  - Ensuring ability to fund pipeline and discovery

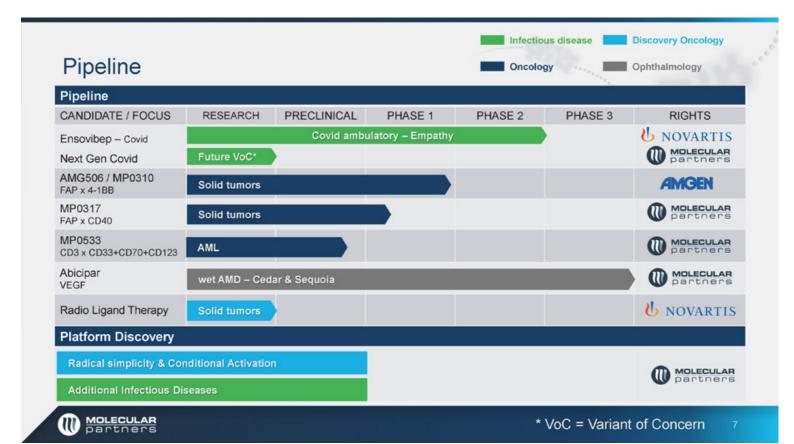


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# DARPins: A Unique Class of Biologics

#### MONO-DARPin MONOCLONAL ANTIBODIES Binding region / specificity Binding regions / specificities DARPin module Multi-specific DARPin Candidate · High affinity and specificity · High affinity and specificity · Large size: 150 kDa Small size: 15 kDa (1/10 of a monoclonal antibody) · Complex architecture; 4 proteins with 12 domains · Simple architecture 1 protein with 1 domain · Long half-life Tunable half-life · Good safety & low immunogenic potential Good safety & low immunogenic potential





## MP Strategy - Building on our Strengths





We leverage the advantages of the **DARPin technology** to provide unique solutions to impact biology and bring value to patients



Our candidates' design aims to directly change the course of disease biology and allow testing in a model with high translatable value



We aim to drive true patient value with early clinical read-outs





We strive to collaborate with the best scientists and clinicians in the field from ideation to clinical trials



### Local Agonists in Oncology: MP0310 (FAPx4-1BB) & MP0317 (FAPxCD40)



Multi-specific DARPin leading to clustering upon co-engagement





· Tumor local activation of immune cells



· Wider therapeutic window for combinations

MP0310: Amgen, MP0317: not partnered









4-1BB or CD40 on the immune cell



### Targeting Leukemic Stem Cell in AML: MP0533 (CD33+CD70+CD123 x CD3)



Tri-specific T-Cell engager with optimized binding affinities and geometry





Avidity driven targeting of leukemic stem cells



Long-term control of AML

Early clinical read-out





University of Bern – Profs. Ochsenbein and Riether





### DARPin Radio-Ligand Therapy, DARPin-Drug-Conjugates



Small sized DARPin with high affinity coupled to a highly toxic payload (radio ligand)

**BIOLOGY** 



Deep tumor penetration, low systemic exposure with high-tox payload



Deep response in hard-to-treat tumors

Early clinical read-out





Novartis, a leader in the field of RLT: US\$ 20 mio up-front, US\$ 560 mio MS, to dd royalties



Small & high affinity DARPin



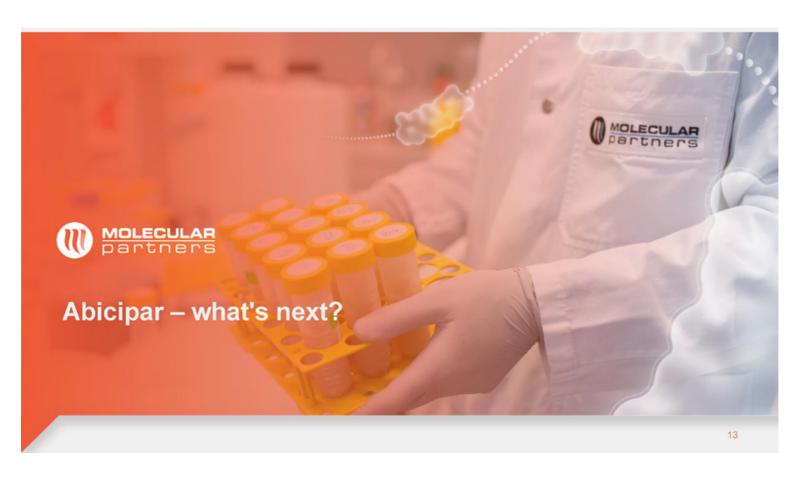


**Drug Payload** 





\* VoC = Variant of Concern



### Abicipar: Phase 3 Asset, Reviewing Data from AbbVie





- Neovascular age related macular degeneration (nAMD) and diabetic macular edema (DME)
- nAMD More than 200,000 cases/year in the US
- · DME- Approximately 75,000 cases/year in the US

Disease Biology



- Growth/leakage of abnormal blood vessels beneath the retina
- VEGF-A has been found to be a key molecule in numerous retinal diseases
- VEGF-A inhibition has been established as a highly effective treatment for these diseases

DARPin Advantage



- · Higher affinity and inhibition of VEGF-A
- Long half-life in the eye (PEGylated)
- · Small higher molarity per mg

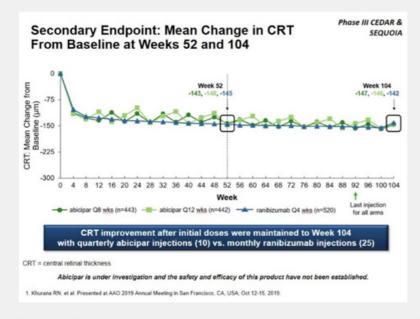
Milestones



- AbbVie returned all rights to Molecular Partners in Aug. 2021
- Full data currently under review
- Meeting request with the FDA to discuss proposed path forward



### CEDAR & SEQUOIA Phase 3 using OCT as biomarker

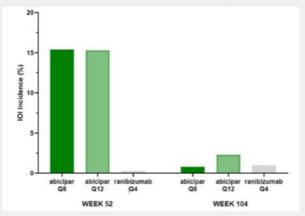


- · Abicipar as effective as Lucentis
  - 10 injections instead of 25 (2 y)
- Fixed Q12w regimen proven
  - · Potential to simplify visits
- OCT ocular coherence tomography, a method to measure the thickness of the retina

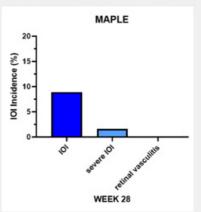


## Reducing Intraocular Inflammation (IOI)

- CEDAR/SEQUOIA (Phase 3)
  - Much less IOI in 2<sup>nd</sup> year (as Lucentis)

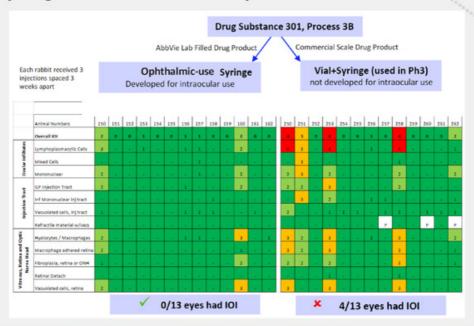


- MAPLE (Phase 2, improved purity)
  - · lower severity of IOI reported





# Type of Syringe Identified as Likely IOI Contributor in vivo





### Abicipar Conclusions and Next Steps

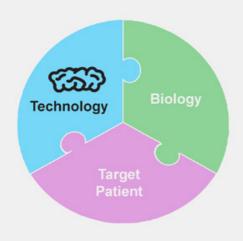
- Increase benefit/risk ratio to address CRL
- Plan to discuss with FDA in Q1/2022
  - Establish precise need for additional clinical data/study
  - Further our understanding of potential timelines for re-submission
- If proposals are feasible, discuss partnerships and appropriate vehicle to enact clinical plan

- Acknowledging competitive landscape
  - Faricimab approval expected in Q1/22
- · ... and some set-backs in the field
  - · Gene therapies
  - Brolucizumab
- Establishing future development plan
  - · With experts in the field
  - Demonstrate value-add of abicipar
  - IP protection well into 2030's





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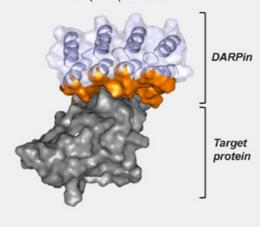


We strive to collaborate with the best scientists and clinicians in the field from ideation to clinical trials



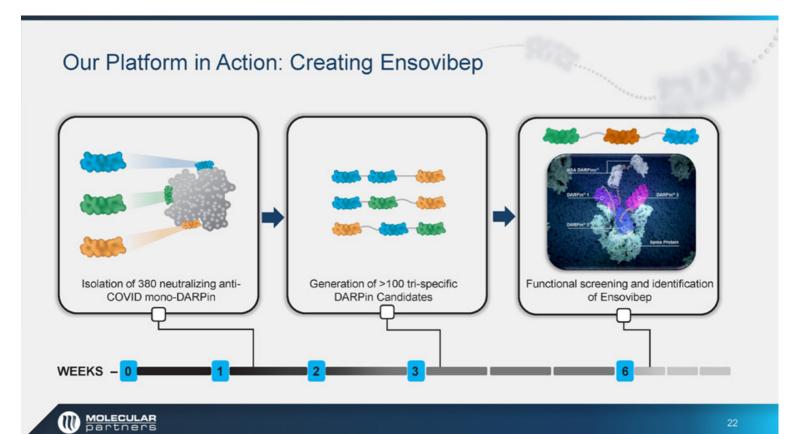
# DARPins: The Core of our Drug Engine

DARPins are binding proteins derived from natural ankyrin repeat proteins

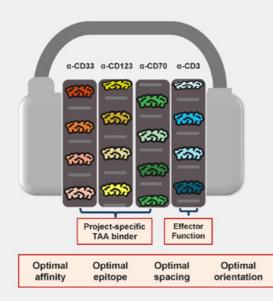


DARPin KEY PROPERTIES		DARPin ADVANTAGE
Small s (15 kDs		<ul><li>Deep tissue penetration</li><li>High molar concentration</li></ul>
Rigid p scaffold		Ultra-high binding affinity and selectivity
Simple archite	& robust cture	<ul><li>Turn-key multispecifics</li><li>Easy coupling of payloads</li></ul>

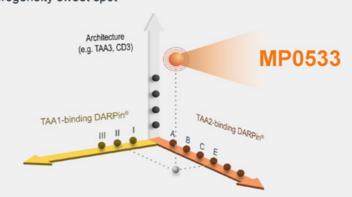




### Creating MP0533: Unique Avidity-Driven Tumor Selectivity



- The problem: Address AML tumor heterogeneity and reduce impact on healthy cells
- The solution: DARPin platform allows to rapidly screen & iterate 100s of tri-specific T cell engagers to find the potency – selectivity – heterogeneity sweet spot





## Multi-DARPins are Offering a Broad Spectrum of Unique Solutions

#### Multispecificity enabled possibilities

Conditional activation

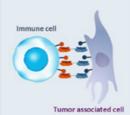
#### Ensovibep

High affinity for deep SARS-Cov-2 inhibition and prevention of escape



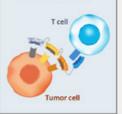
#### MP0310 & MP0317

Tumor localized clustering to activate effector cells in tumor only



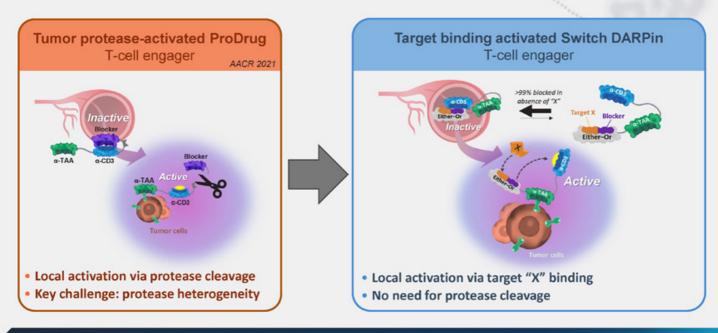
#### MP0533

Avidity driven TCE for tumorspecificity and control of tumor heterogeneity





### Conditional Activation to Unlock full Potential of Potent Effectors





### Expanding Multi-DARPins by Programming of Highly Potent Effectors

Delivery Vectors "radical simplicity"

#### Multispecificity enabled possibilities

### Conditional activation

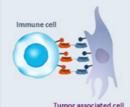
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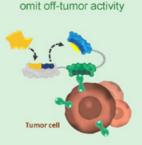
#### MP0533

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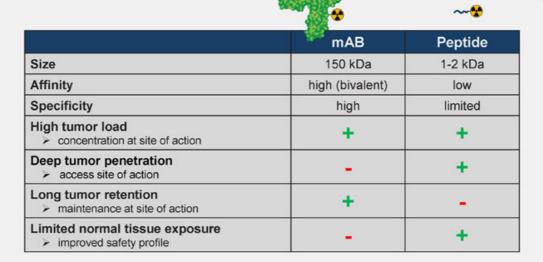
#### **SWITCH**

Programming highly potent effectors to omit off-tumor activity





### Challenges of Standard Delivery Vectors of Potent Payloads





# Mono-DARPins as Ideal Delivery Vectors for Potent Payloads Efficient tumor targeting with limited systemic exposure







Infusion stopped



Small size (15 kDa) fast extravasation & deep tumor penetration



Homogeneous access to tumor cells for killing

Small size (15 kDa) rapid systemic clearance



Limited normal tissue exposure for improved safety

High affinity (< 50 pM) long tumor retention



Maintenance on tumor for complete local killing

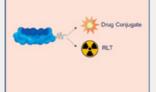


### Applying our DARPin Advantages to Address Disease Biology

#### Delivery Vectors "radical simplicity"

#### **RLT & DDC**

Small size – ultra high affinity for efficient delivery with limited systemic exposure



New / Collaborations

#### Multispecificity enabled possibilities

#### Ensovibep

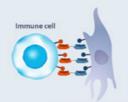
High affinity for deep SARS-Cov-2 inhibition and prevention of escape



New infectious disease

#### MP0310 & MP0317

Tumor localized clustering to activate effector cells in tumor only



Tumor associated cell

#### MP0533

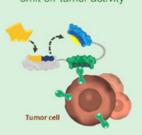
Avidity driven TCE for tumorspecificity and control of tumor heterogeneity



#### Conditional activation

#### SWITCH

Programming highly potent effectors to omit off-tumor activity



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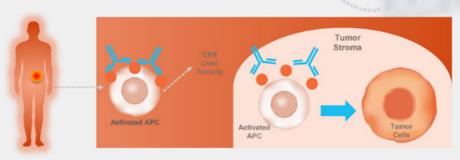
# What We Achieved in 2021 – a Very Challenging & Successful Year @MP

- >900 patients dosed across all clinical programs, a new "record" for MP
  - Ensovibep, MP0310, and MP0317 all progressing well
- Thousands of clinical samples analyzed, despite logistical challenges
  - · Both in house and at external providers
- ~15 clinical batches produced at various scales (up to >10'000 L)
  - · Yielding hundreds of thousands of doses for clinical studies
- Countless hours spent in video calls
  - Learnt how to say "you are on mute" politely

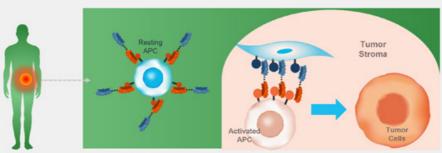


## Toxicity of 4-1BB & CD40 Antibodies Has So Far Limited Their Activity

Systemic activation of immune cells leads to toxicity that limit treatment option



DARPin advantage: Increasing therapeutic window via a tumorlocalized approach





### AMG 506 / MP0310: Localized Activation of 4-1BB











Patient populations where there are T-cell engagers in development, that can be boosted

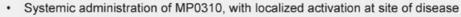
**Disease Biology** 



- Many solid tumors are surrounded by dense stromal tissue in which FAP expression is high
- 4-1BB activation is a strong recruiter of T cells

**DARPin** Advantage





- MP0310 is observed in tumor tissue, with no liver toxicity or systemic activation of immune cells
- Tumor biopsies show tumor-localized immune response consistent with the MoA



- Analyze data from ongoing phase 1 study, exploring weekly dosing.
- Determine appropriate next steps



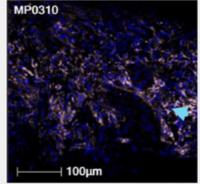
# FAP - an Ideal Target for Tumor-localized Activity

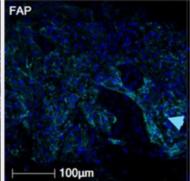
- FAP is expressed on activated cancer associated fibroblasts (CAFs)
- Overexpression in the stroma of many solid tumors
- · Limited expression in normal adult tissues





MP0310 (FAP-4-1BB) Phase 1 human biopsy samples



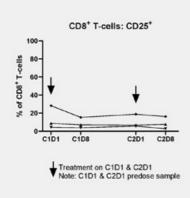


FAP is a clinically validated target for tumor-localization



# PD Activity in Paired Biopsies Supports AMG 506 / MP0310 MoA on 4-1BB Activation





 In the blood, immune cells remain inactive (CD8+ & CD4+ T-cells, Treg, NKT, B-cells, NK)

# TUMOR CD8 T Cytotoxicity Gamma NK Cells T Cells TH1 Cells Gamma NK Cells T Cells TH1 Cells Figure 1 Baseline Time point Post (C1D15)

· In the tumor, T-cells and NK cells are activated



### Objectives of MP0310-CP101 Study

### **Primary Objectives**

- To define the safety and tolerability of MP0310 as monotherapy (with or without rituximab pretreatment) in patients with advanced solid tumors
- To determine the maximum tolerated dose (MTD) AND recommended expansion dose (RED) for MP0310 as monotherapy, based on biomarkers from biopsies
- Cohorts (1-7): 0.015-12 mg/kg, completed to plan

### Data to date:

### Best clinical response:

- Part A: 1/21 pts PR (Pt 03-010); 10/21 pts SD; 10/21 pts PD;
- · Part B & C: Ongoing
  - · 6 patients enrolled, analysis pending

**Drug safety:** no DLT or SAEs; IRRs (mostly G2) in 28% of infusions => incomplete infusions in 10% of cases; clinically manageable

- Peripheral cytokines: increased levels of CXCL9 and CXCL10 at DL3-6 (0.15-5 mg/kg) suggest enhanced IFN<sub>v</sub> signaling
- > Peripheral immune cells: no activation observed





### MP0317: Localized Activation of CD40







- Solid tumor patients with positive FAP expression
- · Many patients still fail to benefit from current immunotherapy options, or relapse

Disease Biology



- CD40 is a potent activator of dendritic cells, macrophages, and B cells, and has long been considered an attractive immunotherapy target
- Prior attempts at targeting CD40 have shown anti-tumor activity but remain hampered by toxicity issues

DARPin Advantage



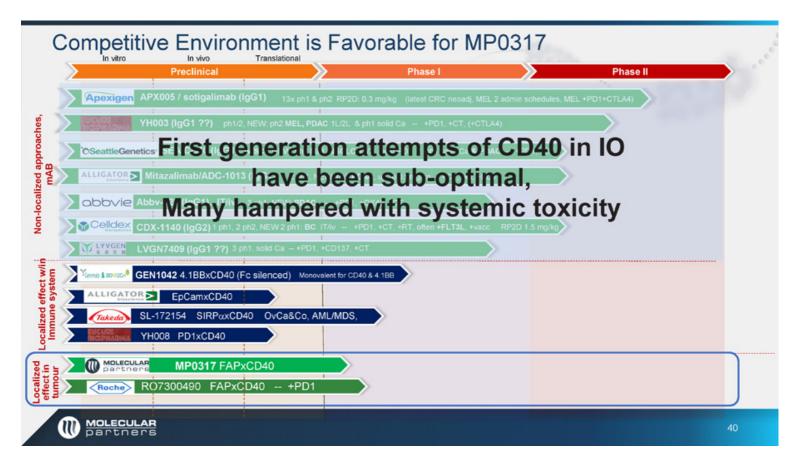
- MP0317 is designed to activate CD40 in a context dependent manner, by anchoring to FAP and activating via clustering
- · Preclinical data show local activation of immune cells while limiting off target toxicity

Expected Milestones



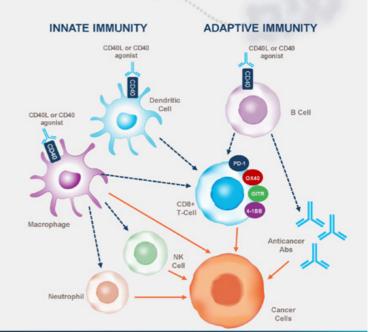
- FIH studies initiated in Q4 2021
- Initial data in H2 2022
- · Rapidly explore expansion arms in phase 1b



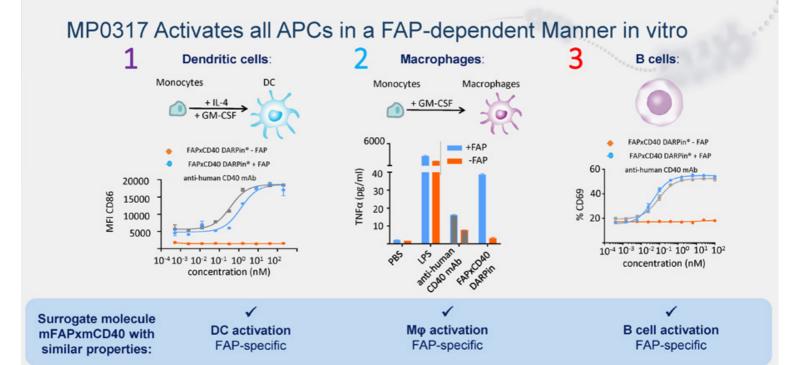


### CD40 Biology and Therapeutic Potential

- · Cell surface receptor member of the TNFRSF
- Expressed broadly on Antigen Presenting Cells (B cells, DC and macrophages) as well as many non-immune cells and a range of tumors
- CD40 is a central regulator of multiple pathways of both the innate and adaptive immune system
   → reduce the risk of immune escape
- Potential for therapeutic activity in cold tumors by targeting the myeloid compartment
  - → Ccomplementarity with T cell directed therapies





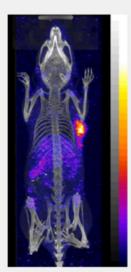


MOLECULAR partners

Presented at AACR 2021

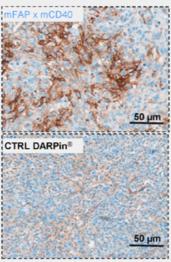
### MP0317: Localizes to MC38-FAP Tumors

### **SPECT-CT study**



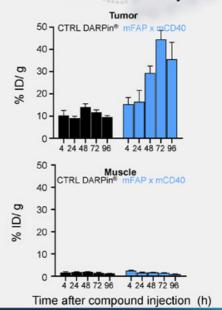
mFAP x mCD40

# DARPin detection in the tumor by IHC



CTR DARPin Binding HSA but not FAP and CD40

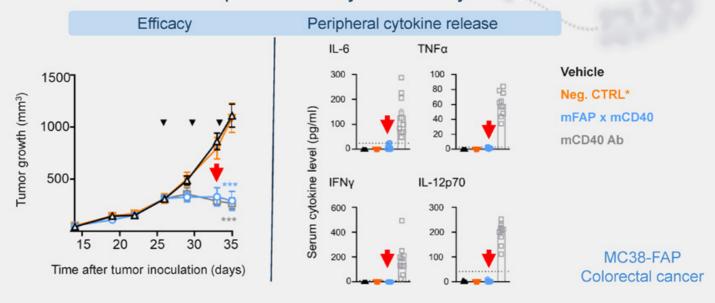
### Biodistribution study





Published at AACR 2020

## MP0317 Shows Therapeutic Activity without Cytokine Release





Published at AACR 2020

# ex-vivo: mFAPxCD40 Activates DC in the TME NATE MONTH ADAPTIVE IMMUNITY ADAPTIVE ADAPTIVE IMMUNITY ADAPTIVE IMMUNITY ADAPTIVE IMMUNITY ADAPTIVE ADAPTIVE IMMUNITY ADAPTIVE ADAPTIVE IMMUNITY ADAPTIVE ADA

Tumor

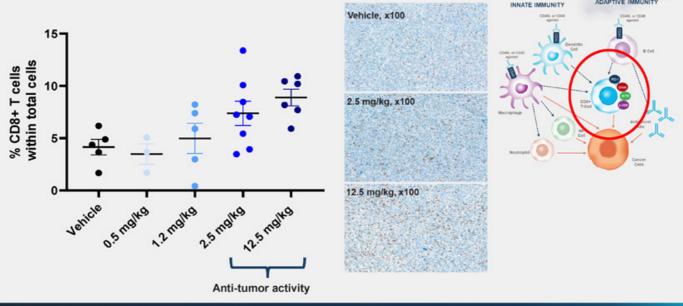
- Upregulation of co-stimulatory molecules on tumor Dendritic cells → potential for better T cell activation
- · Higher activity in Tumor vs LN, in contrast to aCD40

Tumor



Presented at ESMO-IO 2021

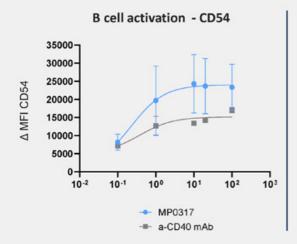
# mFAPxCD40 Increased CD8 T cell Infiltrate in the TME



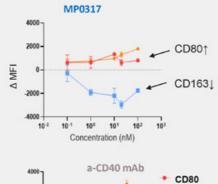
MOLECULAR partners

Presented at ESMO-IO 2021

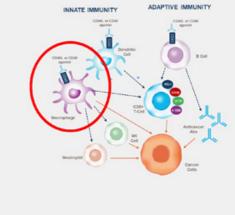
# FAP Expression in Human Tumor Allows CD40 Mediated Immune Activation



 Macrophage repolarization is further supported by in vitro data Macrophage repolarisation – inflammatory phenotype (CD80hi CD163lo)



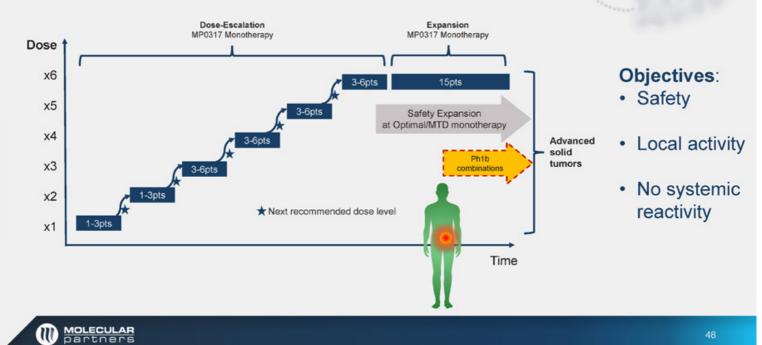
CD163 CD68



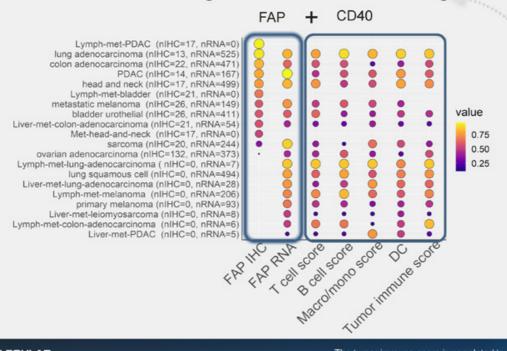


Presented at ESMO-IO 2021

# MP0317-CP101 Biomarker and Safety Trial Design



### Identification and Screening of Potential Tumor Targets from MP0317





The tumor immune score is correlated to response to aPD1. The FAP threshold is 20% > 2/3 score.

# CD40 Open for Multiple Combination (IO or Other)

# Chemo / Radio Therapy - Direct tumor killing - Release of tumor antigens - Debulking aids immune cell access - Timing with immunotherapy is important because immune cells can also be damaged - Neduces suppressive effect of macrophage activity - Reduces suppressive effect of macrophage activity - Removes suppression of T-cell responses by PD-L1 in the tumor - Removes suppression of T-cell responses by PD-L1 in the tumor

· Promotes B-cell activation



50

Tumor

### Conclusions: Highly Differentiated Multi-Specific IO Assets

- Localized activity achieved with MP0310/AMG 506
  - · No systemic immune activation observed
  - Tumor local immune stimulation confirmed after 1<sup>st</sup> dose
  - · FAP "validated" as target in the TME of many solid tumors for DARPin IO agonists
  - · Clinical work to establish optimal dosing regimen ongoing
  - H1 2022 data for review with MP and Amgen
- · MP0317 is at the intersection of the innate and adaptive immune system
  - Additional combination strategies possible with CD40
  - · Ongoing Phase 1 will provide critical information re: dosing, safety, and immune activation
  - Initial data in H2 2022







Prof. Adrian Ochsenbein, MD, EMBA

Director Department Medical Oncology, Inselspital, University Hospital Bern

- Trained in Experimental Oncology in the lab of Prof. Zinkernagel, University of Zürich
- Translational Research in the lab of Prof. Greenberg, FHCRC, Seattle, USA
- Research on Cancer Stem cells in the lab of Prof. Reya, UCSD, USA
- Research focus on anti-tumoral immunity, interaction of immune cells with cancer (leukemia) stem cells, CD70/CD27



Prof. Carsten Riether, PhD

Head of Research Department Medical Oncology, Inselspital, University Hospital Bern

- · PhD in Immunology, ETH Zurich
- Post-doc in Tumorimmunology in the lab of Prof. A. F. Ochsenbein, University of Bem
- Research focus on the identification of molecular and cellular mechanisms by which cells of the tumor microenvironment regulate cancer stem cells in leukemia and solid tumors.



Anne Goubier DVM, PhD

VP Biology, Molecular Partners

- Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine, Ecole Vétérinaire de Nantes
- PhD in Immunology, Université Claude Bernard Lyon 1
- · Former CSO, Black Belt Therapeutics
- · VP Immunology, Tusk Therapeutics

# **RD Day Molecular Partners**

VINSELSPITAL

UNIVERSITÄTSSPITAL BERN

HOPITAL UNIVERSITAIRE DE BERNE



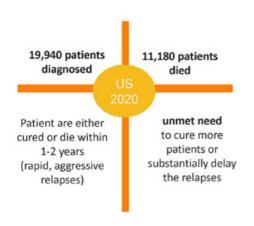
Adrian Ochsenbein / Carsten Riether

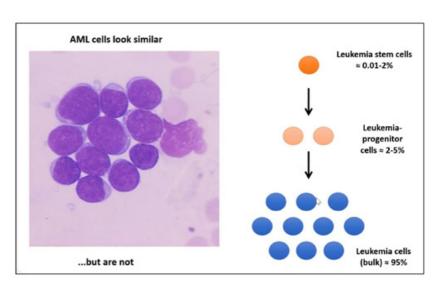
### Disclosures

Molecular Partners: consultancy

Argenx: research funding, consultancy, royalties

# **AML: Deadly Disease for About Half of the Patients**

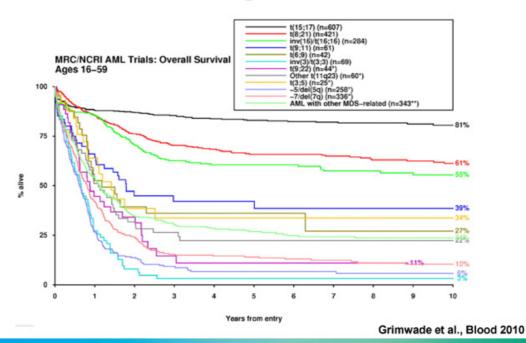




MRD+ is driver of relapse (only partial eradication of leukemic stem cells)

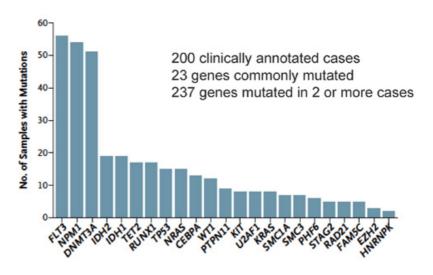
→ for curative intent LSCs need to be fully eradicated, while leaving HSCs untouched

# **AML** is a Heterogeneous Disease



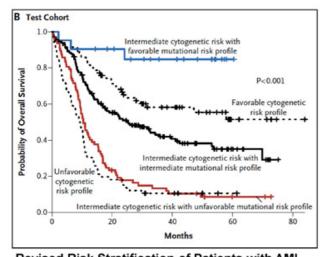
# Pathogenesis and Biology of AML

Gene	Overall Frequency (%)
FLT3 (ITD, TKD)	37 (30, 7)
NPM1	29
DNMT3A	23
NRAS	10
CEBPA	9
TET2	8
WT1	8
IDH2	8
IDH1	7
KIT	6
RUNX1	5
MLL-PTD	5
ASXL1	3
PHF6	3
KRAS	2
PTEN	2
TP53	2



Patel, et al., NEJM 2012; TCGA NEJM

# 2017 European Leukemia Net Stratification by Genetics



Revised Risk Stratification of Patients with AML on the Basis of Integrated Genetic Analysis

Genetic Risk Group	Subset
Favorable	<ul> <li>t(8;21)(q22;q22); RUNX1-RUNX1T1</li> <li>inv(16)(p13.1q22) or t(16;16)(p13.1;q22); CBFB-MYH11</li> <li>Mutated NPM1 without FLT3-ITD (normal karyotype)</li> <li>Biallelic mutated CEBPA (normal karyotype)</li> </ul>
Intermediate	Mutated NPM1 and FLT3-ITD <sup>high</sup> (normal karyotype)     Wild-type NPM1 without FLT3-ITD or FLT3-ITD <sup>low</sup> (normal karyotype)     t(9;11)(p22;q23); MLLT3-MLL     Any cytogenetics not classified as favorable or adverse
Adverse	inv(3)(q21q26.2) or t(3;3)(q21;q26.2); GATA2.MECOM(EVI1)     t(6;9)(p23;q34); DEK-NUP214     t(v;11)(v;q23); KMT2Arearranged     Monosomy 5 or del(5q); monosomy 7; -17p; complex karyotype (≥3 abnormalities)     Mutated RUNX1     Mutated ASXL1     Mutated TP53

Patel et al. NEJM 2012 March 22; 366(12):1079-89.

Döhner et al. Blood 2017;129:424-447.

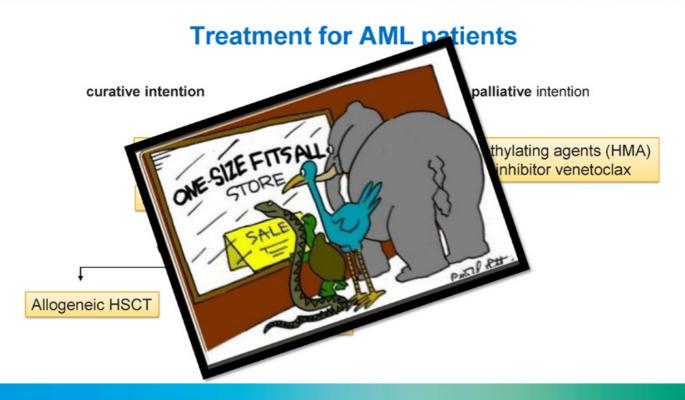
# **Treatment for AML patients**

### curative intention

# Induction 43+7» Induction Response to the second of the

### palliative intention

- hypomethylating agents (HMA)
- + BCL 2 inhibitor venetoclax



# **History of FDA approved AML therapy**



## CD33 and CD123 as single therapeutic targets in AML

**CD33** 

### Expression:

- on blasts and LSCs > 90% patients
- on virtually all healthy myeloid and progenitor cells

### Treatment approaches:

- Gemtuzumab ozogamicin (GO, Mylotarg): CD33-targeting antibodydrug conjugate; approved treatment in combination with daunorubicin and cytarabine for newly diagnosed CD33-positive AML
- AMG330, AMG 673 and AMV564: BITE molecules. Ongoing Phase I/II studies (NCT02520427, NCT03224819, NCT03144245)

### Toxicity:

 The on-target off-leukemia toxicity is a major side effect observed in the clinical practice and in clinical trials investigating CD33-targeting therapies

### Alternatives:

- Combination of CD33 with other antigens. Dual CD33-CLL1 CAR-T Therapy in R/R AML (NCT05016063)
- Gene editing: A first-in-human trial will be initiated that combines an alloHSCT utilizing genetically modified, CD33-negative HSCs with CD33directed CAR-T cells

### CD123

### Expression:

- · on blasts and LSCs > 90% patients
- on virtually all healthy myeloid and progenitor cells, megakaryocytes, B cell subsets as well as endothelial cells.

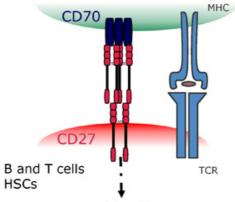
### Treatment approaches:

- Flotetuzumab: humanized BiTE; FDA-orphan drug. ongoing phase I/II clinical trials (NCT02152956), (NCT04158739).
- Other CD123 x CD3 bispecific antibodies in early-phase: Vibecotamab (XmAb 14045, NCT02730312), SAR440334 (NCT03594955), APVO436 (NCT03647800), and JNJ63709178 (NCT02715011)
- IMGN632, CD123-targeting antibody-drug conjugate, : phase Ib/II in combination with standard of care (Ven/Aza) or monotherapy MRD+ AML (NCT04086264)
- CD123-targeting CAR T cells: Autologous CD123-specific CAR-T cells are under investigation (NCT02159495) for R/R AML. Few reports using CD123 CAR T cells have shown muted effectiveness in patients compared to pre-clinical models.

### Toxicity:

- Cytokine-release syndrome
- on-target off-leukemia toxicity: CAR T cell infusion was accompanied by serious adverse events; CRS

# activated lymphocytes dendritic cells



- proliferation
- anti-apoptotic signals
- effector function
- memory function

### CD70/CD27 signaling .....

- .. induces T cell expansion and differentiation of effector cells Hendriks J. Nat Immunol. 2003
- $\ldots$  improves secondary expansion of effector cells and CTL memory

Matter M. EJM, 2005, Matter M. EJM 2008

 $\ldots$  increases resistence of HIV specific CTL to exhaustion

Ochsenbein AF 2004. J Exp. Med.

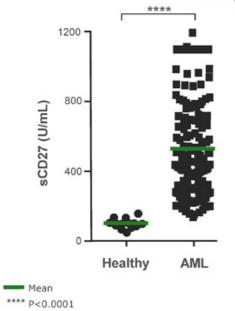
.. induces immunopathology and aquired immunodeficiency in chronic LCMV infection Matter M. 2006. J Exp Med.

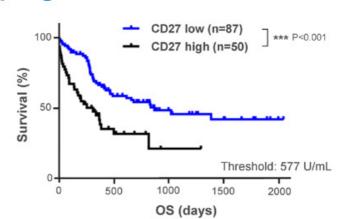
 $\ldots$  induces regulatroy T cells and promotes tumor progression

Claus C. 2012. Cancer Research

... provides a negative feedback signal to leukocyte differentiation during immune activation Nolte M. 2010. Nat. Immunol.

# Elevated levels of soluble CD27 correlate with poor prognosis in AML

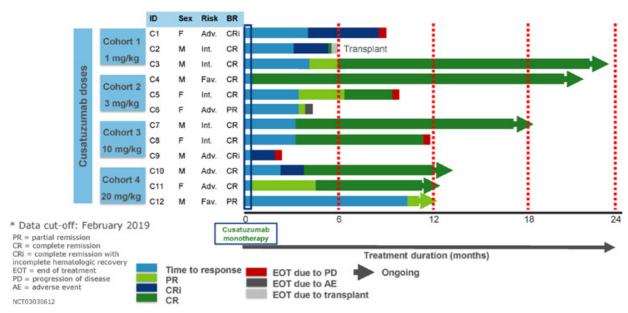




Parameter	HR (95% CI)	P-value	
sCD27	2.17 (1.34–3.50)	0.0016	
Risk group	1.69 (1.29-2.38)	0.0024	
Age	1.03 (1.01-1.05)	0.0050	

Riether et al, J Exp Med 2017; 214:359-80

# **Cusatuzumab: Swimmer plot**



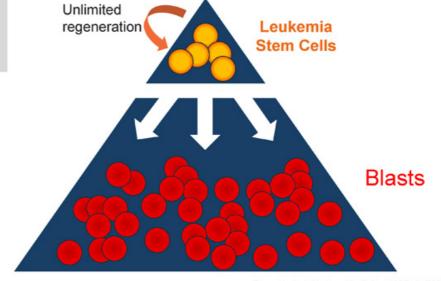
Riether et al, Nat. Med. 2020; 26; 1459-1467

## **Summary I**

- CD70 has a unique expression pattern on activated immune cells and on AML LSCs
- Blocking the CD70/CD27 signaling pathway eliminates LSCs
- Treatment with HMA upregulates CD70 on LSCs
- cusatuzumab monotherapy reduces AML blasts and LSCs within 2 weeks of therapy
- Different strategies to target CD70 are currently under investigation: CAR-T cells; bi- (tri-) specific antibodies
- Although cusatuzumab reduced LSCs, all patients in the phase Ib/II trial relapsed

# Leukemia: a Paradigmatic Stem Cell Disease

- Self-renewing
- · Therapy-resistant
- Quiescent

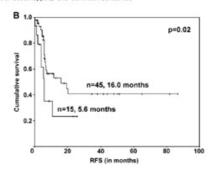


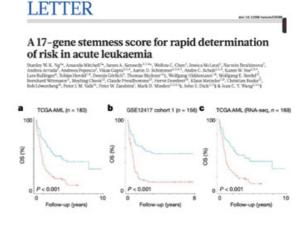
Bonnet et al. Nature Medicine 1997; 3, 730 - 737

# Leukemic SC Numbers and Stem Cell Signatures are negative Predictors for Survival in AML

High Stem Cell Frequency in Acute Myeloid Leukemia at Diagnosis Predicts High Minimal Residual Disease and Poor Survival

Anna van Rhenen,<sup>1</sup> Nicole Feller,<sup>1</sup> Angèle Kelder,<sup>1</sup> August H. Westra,<sup>1</sup> Elwin Rombouts,<sup>2</sup> Sonja Zweegman,<sup>1</sup> Marjolein A. van der Pol,<sup>1</sup> Quinten Weisfisz,<sup>1</sup> Gert J. Ossenkoppele,<sup>1</sup> and Gerrit Jan Schuurhuis<sup>1</sup>



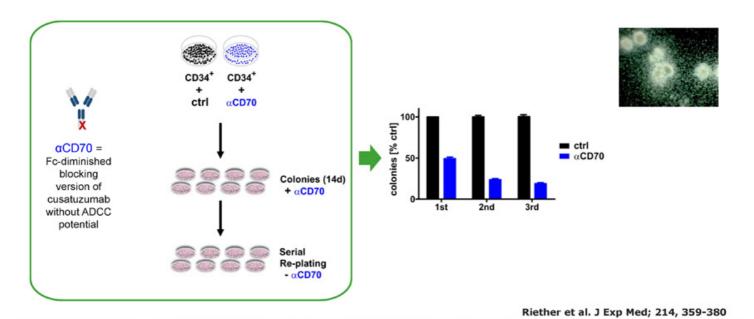


van Rhenen et al. Clin. Cancer Research 2005; 11:6520-6527 Pearce et al. Blood 2006; 107:1166-1173. Gentles et al. JAMA 2010; 304:2706-2715. Eppert et al. Nature Medicine 2011; 17:1086-1093 Stanley et al. Nature 2016; 540(7633):433-437

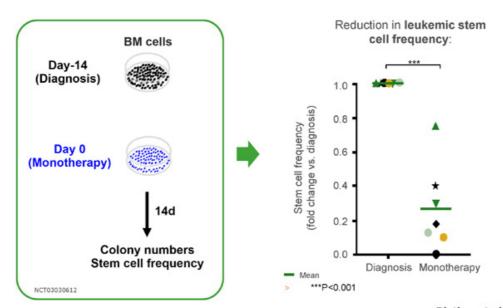
## How Can We Study the Effect of a Treatment on LSCs?

- 1. Colony formation assay (ex vivo)
- 2. Re-platings assays (ex vivo)
- 3. Gold-standard: Patient-derived xenograft model
- 4. Next-generation RNA sequencing analysis

## Blockade of CD70/CD27 Signaling reduces Stem Cell Function



### Cusatuzumab kills leukemic stem cells

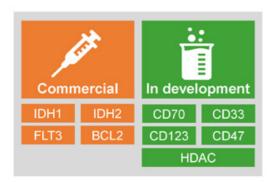


Riether et al. Nat Med 2020; 26, 1459 - 1467

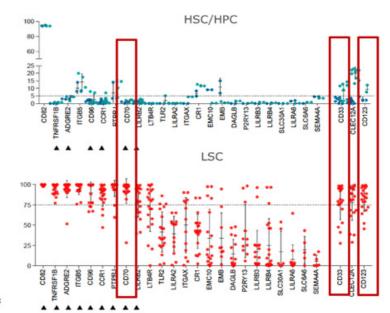
### **Identification of Targets for the Treatment of AML Patients**

New therapies must aim at the elimination of leukemia stem cells

Targeting various surface proteins simultaneoulsy may increase specificity



Expression in % (by flowcytometry)



van Rhenen et al. Clin. Cancer Research 2005; 11:6520-6527; Pearce et al. Blood 2006; 107:1166-1173; Gentles et al. JAINA 2010; 304:2706-2715; Eppert et al. Nature Medicine 2011; 17:1086-1093; Stanley et al. Nature 2016; 540(7633):433-437; Perma et al. Cancer Cell 2017; 32, 506-519

## CD33 and CD123 as single therapeutic targets in AML

#### CD3

#### Expression:

- · on blasts and LSCs > 90% patients
- on virtually all healthy myeloid and progenitor cells

#### Treatment approaches

- Gemtuzumab ozogamicin (GO, Mylotarg): CD33-targeting antibodydrug conjugate; approved treatment in combination with daunorubicin and cytarabine for newly diagnosed CD33-positive AML
- AMG330, AMG 673 and AMV564: BiTE molecules. Ongoing Phase I/II studies (NCT02520427, NCT03224819, NCT03144245)

#### Toxicity:

 The on-target off-leukemia toxicity is a major side effect observed in the clinical practice and in clinical trials investigating CD33-targeting therapies

#### <u>Alternatives</u>

- Combination of CD33 with other antigens. Dual CD33-CLL1 CAR-T Therapy in R/R AML (NCT05016063)
- Gene editing: A first-in-human trial will be initiated that combines an alloHSCT utilizing genetically modified, CD33-negative HSCs with CD33directed CAR-T cells

#### CD1

#### Expression:

- on blasts and LSCs > 90% patients
- on virtually all healthy myeloid and progenitor cells, megakaryocytes, B cell subsets as well as endothelial cells.

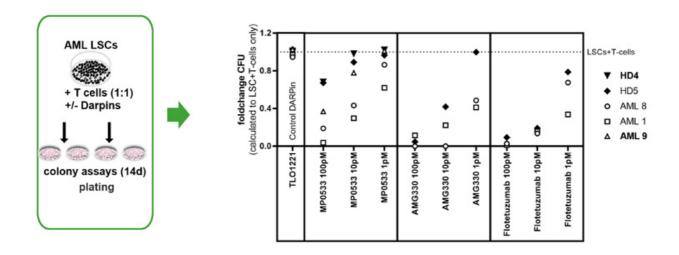
#### Treatment approaches:

- Flotetuzumab: humanized BiTE; FDA-orphan drug. ongoing phase I/II clinical trials (NCT02152956), (NCT04158739).
- Other CD123 x CD3 bispecific antibodies in early-phase:
   Vibecotamab (XmAb 14045, NCT02730312), SAR440334 (NCT03594955), APVO436 (NCT03647800), and JNJ63709178 (NCT02715011)
- IMGN632, CD123-targeting antibody-drug conjugate,: phase Ib/II in combination with standard of care (Ven/Aza) or monotherapy MRD+ AML (NCT04086264)
- CD123-targeting CAR T cells: Autologous CD123-specific CAR-T cells are under investigation (NCT02159495) for R/R AML. Few reports using CD123 CAR T cells have shown muted effectiveness in patients compared to pre-clinical models.

#### Toxicity:

- Cytokine-release syndrome
- on-target off-leukemia toxicity: CAR T cell infusion was accompanied by serious adverse events

### MP0533 Reduces Colony Formation of Primary Human LSCs ex vivo



#### **Summary II**

- Various targetable surface antigens in AML have been identified (e.g. CD33, CD123, CLL-1, CD70).
- Therapeutic approaches targeting most of these antigens have been shown to reduce leukemia burden and induce remission in a fraction but not all patients.
- Major problem: on-target off-leukemia toxicity is a major side effect observed in the clinical practice.
- Potential solution: Targeting several tumor antigens to induce specificity and reduce side-effects.
- · Ongoing collaboration work:
  - Assessment killing of SOC-resistant/refractory LSCs
  - · Combination with SOC and assessment of LSC and HSC killing



## MP0533: Tri-specific T-cell Engager for AML







- Over 50% of patients die in the first year
- High relapse rates

**Disease Biology** 





- "MRD+ status" refers to low level disease and can be detected by immunophenotypic or molecular markers
- Current T-cell engager approaches are limited by on-target toxicity (not clean targets)

**DARPin Advantage** 







Avidity driven multispecific DARPin, targeting 3 TAA's, engaging CD3

- T cell are activated only when 2 or more TAA's are bound
- Should allow for broader therapeutic index with reduced safety issues

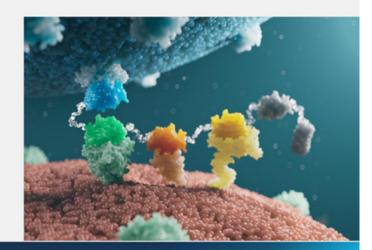
**Expected** Milestones

FIH clinical studies in 2022



# Requisites for an Ideal AML Therapeutic Solution

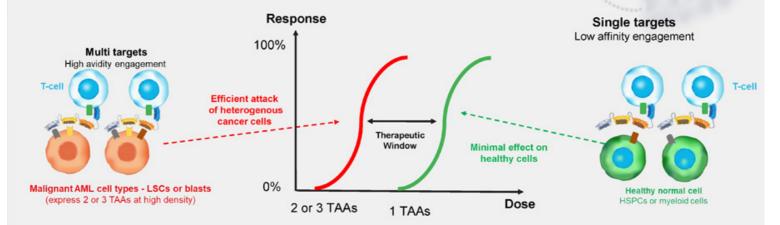
- · An ideal AML therapeutic solution should:
  - · Achieve control of the disease by eliminating LSCs
  - Cover tumor heterogeneity by targeting multiple antigens
  - Increase the therapeutic window: optimal dose levels with limited side effects
    - · Limited killing of healthy HSCs
    - Reduced CRS





## The DARPin Solution: a Trispecific CD3 Engager DARPin

For Specific killing of all LSCs and blasts via avidity-driven T cell engagement



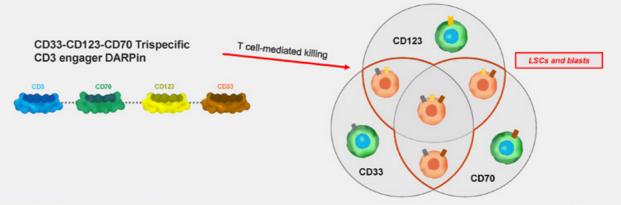
CD3 engager: demonstrated potency in hematological malignancies Targeting 3 TAA in order to:

- · Ensure tumor-specificity via avidity-driven T cell activation
- · Control tumor heterogeneity



#### CD33, CD123 & CD70: Optimal Targets to Maximize Efficacy and Selectivity

- · Clinically validated targets
- · Co-expression pattern of CD70, CD33 and CD123 on LSCs and AML blasts
  - Differentiates LSCs and AML blasts from healthy cells → optimal selectivity
  - Covers tumor heterogeneity → optimal efficacy





# CD123/CD70/CD33 co-expression differentiates LSCs and AML Blasts Allowing for or avidity-driven specific T cell killing of LSCs and blasts

	LSCs	Blasts	нѕс	Lymphocytes	Inflamed EC	Myeloid cells	pDCs	Basophiles
CD70	Low	Low	Neg /Low	Variable	Neg	Neg	Neg	Neg
CD123	High	High	Low	Neg	Medium	Low/ Medium	High	High
CD33	High	High	Medium	Neg	Neg	High/ Medium	Low	Medium
Theoretical Avidity-based killing*	Yes	Yes	Limited	No	No	Limited	Limited	Likely

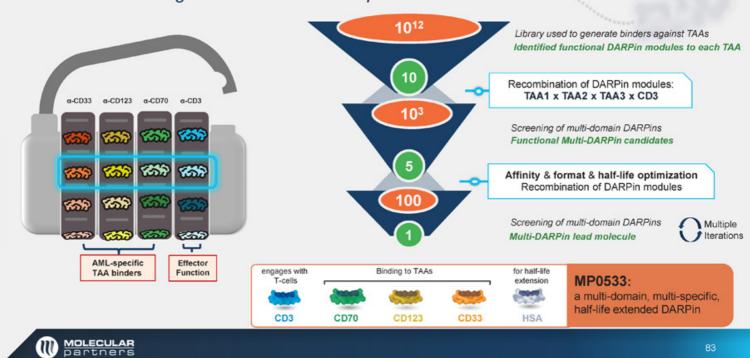
<sup>\*</sup>Assuming equivalent affinity for CD33, CD123 and CD70

Eliminating LSC and Blast through avidity-driven selective targeting should be doable and will allow

- Treating frail patients thanks to a higher safety profile
- Increasing dose and thus deepening responses for long term control of the disease



#### From the Idea to MP0533: Exploiting DARPin Platform Versatility Allows Screening for Function Sweet Spot



#### MP0533: a DARPin Solution for AML Patients?

- Validation of the avidity-driven T cell mediated killing concept
  - Can MP0533 induce killing of cells expressing 2 or 3 TAA while sparing cells with 1 TAA?
- Demonstration of MP0533 efficacy against AML
  - Is the level of TAA expressed by AML blasts sufficient for MP0533-induced killing?
  - Are patient T cells fit and numerous enough for MP0533 to induce AML blasts killing?
  - Is MP0533 also potent in vivo?
- Demonstration of MP0533 enhanced therapeutic window
  - Can MP0533 induce LSCs killing while sparing HSCs?
  - Can MP0533 preserve healthy blood cells and show reduce cytokine release?

MP0533











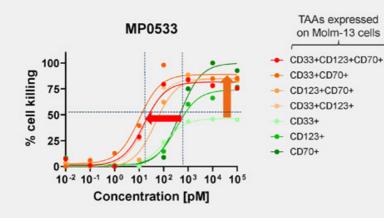


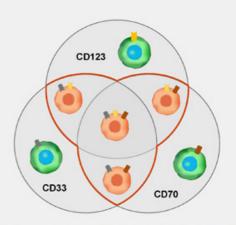
## MP0533 Induces Specific Killing of AML Cells Expressing 2 or 3 TAAs

MOLM-13 cells WT or KO for CD70, CD33 and/or CD123 + Healthy donor T cells (E:T = 5:1)



Tumor cell killing T cell activation







### MP0553 Induces Potent T-Cell Mediated Killing of AML Blasts

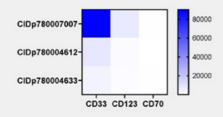
As compared to CD123-DART and CD33-Bite

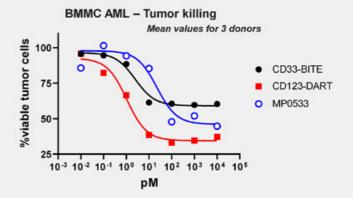
Primary AML samples + Healthy donor T cells (E:T = 4:1)



Tumor cell killing T cell activation







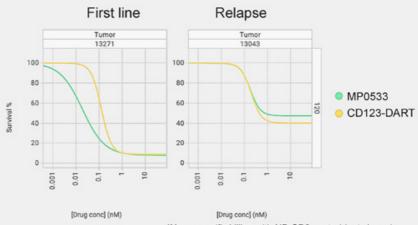


# MP0533 Induces AML Killing by Patients' Own T Cells Despite lower frequency and expected lower quality of T cells

Primary AML samples (no addition of healthy T cells)







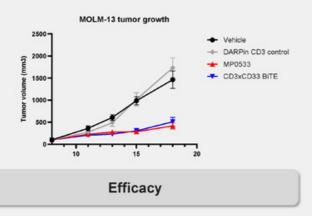
\*No unspecific killing with NB-CD3 control (not shown)

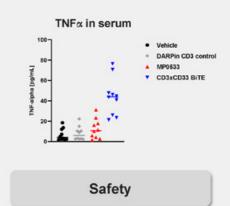


# MP0533 Shows in vivo Efficacy Against Established MOLM-13 Tumors

As compared to CD33-Bite





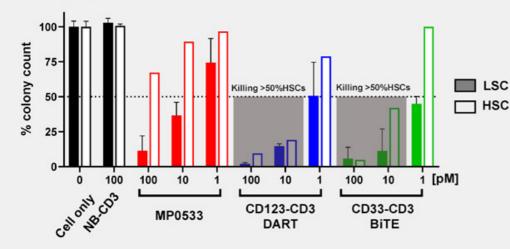


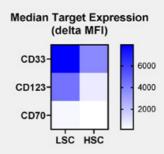


# MP0533 Shows Preferential Killing of CD34+ LSCs over HSC Larger therapeutic window as compared to CD123-DART and CD33-bite

#### Killing of sorted CD34+ LSC or HSC by colony formation assay

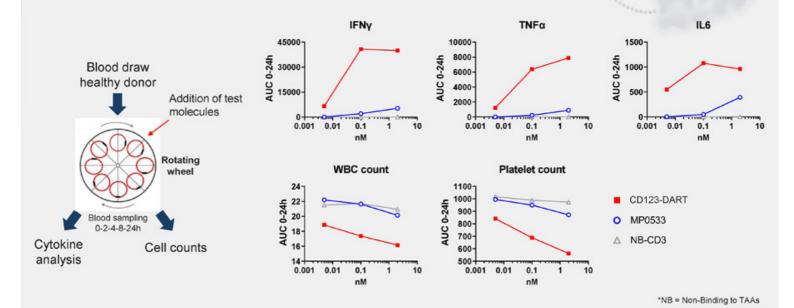
using allogenic T-cells (E:T of 1:1, 4 d) / CFU counted after 2 weeks semi-solid media







# MP0533 Demonstrates Reduced Cytokine Release and Hemotoxicity As compared to CD123-DART





## MP0533: a DARPin Solution for AML Patients

- Validation of the avidity-driven T cell mediated killing concept
  - Can MP0533 induce killing of cells expressing 2 or 3 TAA while sparing cells with 1 TAA?
- Demonstration of MP0533 efficacy against AML ✓
  - Is the level of TAA expressed by AML blasts sufficient for MP0533-induced killing?
  - Are patient T cells fit and numerous enough for MP0533 to induce AML blasts killing?
  - Is MP0533 also potent in vivo?
- 3. Demonstration of MP0533 enhanced therapeutic window ✓
  - Can MP0533 induce LSCs killing while sparing HSCs?
  - Can MP0533 preserve healthy blood cells and show reduce cytokine release?

MP0533







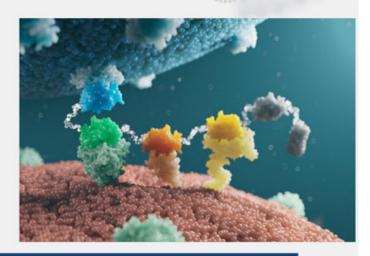






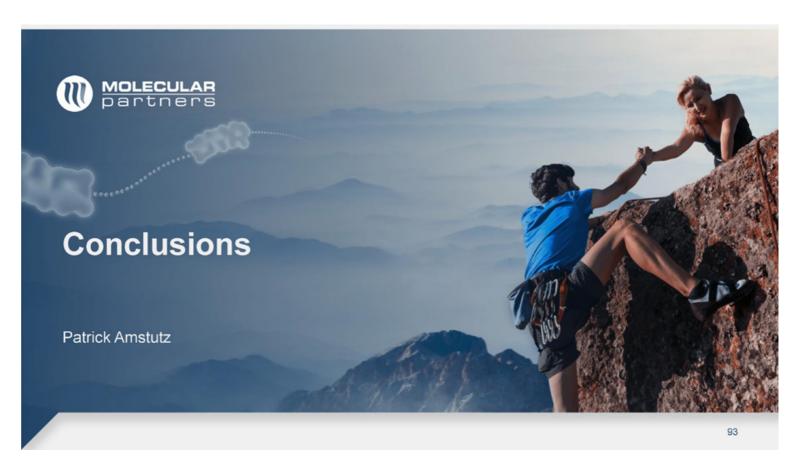
## MP0533: a Unique DARPin Solution for AML Patients

- An ideal AML therapeutic solution should:
  - Ensure long term control of the disease by eliminating LSCs ✓
  - Control tumor heterogeneity by targeting multiple Ag ✓
  - Increase the therapeutic window: optimal dose levels for efficacy with limited side effect
    - Limited killing of healthy HSCs ✓
    - Reduced CRS ✓



# Phase 1 clinical trial initiation H2 2022





# MP Strategy - Building on our Strengths





We leverage the advantages of the DARPin technology to provide unique solutions to impact biology and bring value to patients



Our candidates' design aims to directly change the course of disease biology and allow testing in a model with high translatable value



We aim to drive true patient value with early clinical read-outs



We strive to collaborate with the best scientists and clinicians in the field from ideation to clinical trials



## How we Select Targets for Optimized Risk/Reward



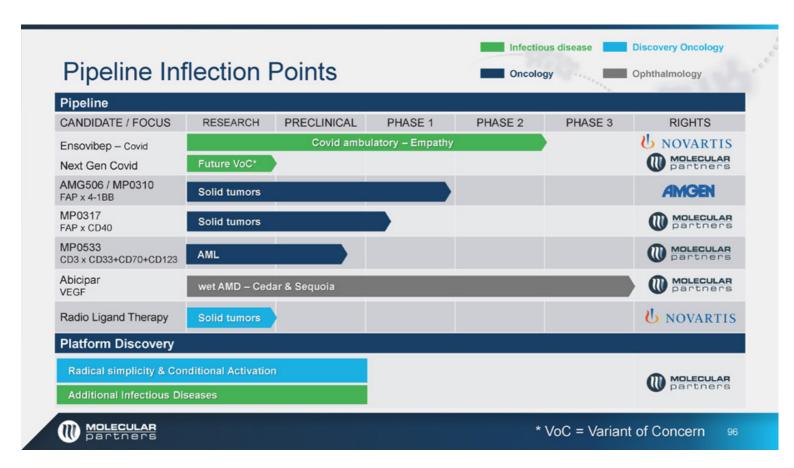
OUR PURPOSE:

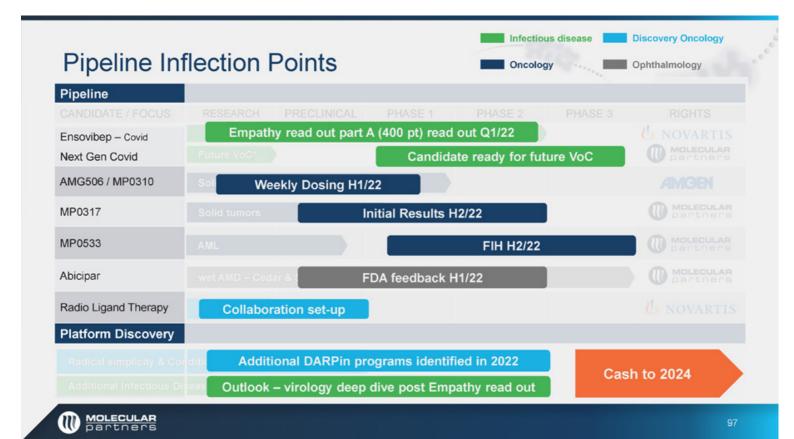
Transform the lives of people with cancer by delivering truly innovative therapies

Putting our Strategy into Action: Slide from our R&D Day Webcast 2019

**Probability of Success** 







# My Key Takeaways

- DARPin leadership and Product Strategy in place
- Strong cross-functional execution: Technology & Biology & Medical
- · Continued collaboration to leverage outside expertise





AND

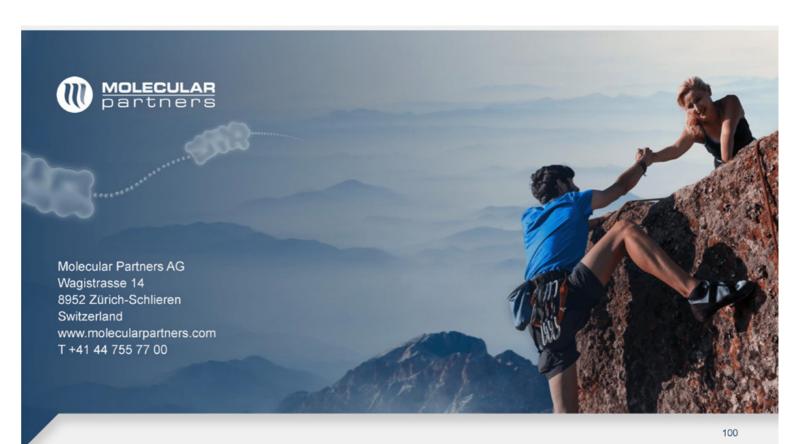
- Creation of molecules where we control our full destiny:
- MP0533 = first DARPin with real potential to generate clinical data for POC in-house (ideally registrational)





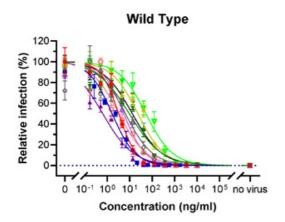


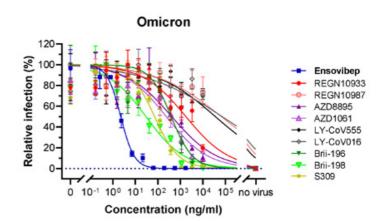






# Covid Pseudotype Inhibition – From Wilde-Type to Omicron







## Ensovibep Remains Fully Active Against Omicron Pseudotype

Neutralization of ensovibep and a panel of monoclonal antibodies in VSV-pseudotype assays containing the Omicron variant spike protein with >30 substitutions.

	Wild Type	Omicron <sup>1</sup>			
Compound	IC <sub>50</sub> (ng/mL)	IC <sub>50</sub> (ng/mL)	fold change to wt		
ensovibep	1.6	2.2	1.4		
REGN10933	3.2	>1000	>100		
REGN10987	3.3	>1000	>100		
LY-CoV555	13	>1000	>100		
LY-CoV016	6.4	>1000	>100		
S309	23	72	3.1		
AZD8895	0.6	415	>100		
AZD1061	5.5	237	43		
Brii-196	9.5	392	41		
Brii-198	52	30	0.6		

IC<sub>50</sub>: green: <10 ng/mL; orange: 10-100 ng/mL; dark orange: 100-1000 ng/mL; red: >1000 ng/mL fold change to wt: green: <10-fold; orange: 10-100-fold; red: >100-fold

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Set of mutations: A67V, Δ69-70, T95I, G142D, Δ143-145, Δ211, L212I, ins214EPE, G339D, S371L, S373P, S375F, K417N, N440K, G446S, S477N, T478K, E484A, Q493R, G496S, Q498R, N501Y, Y505H, T547K, D614G, H655Y, N679K, P681H, N764K, D796Y, N856K, N969K, L981F.





## Radio-Ligand Therapeutics Collaboration



- NIBR established as world leader in the RLT field
- RLTs the potential to deliver targeted radiation to tumor cells anywhere in the body
- DARPins small size and high specificity & affinity may offer an advantage in RLT's, which often require a highly specific delivery vehicle
- Both parties to collaborate on the discovery and optimization of the therapeutic candidates
- Novartis would be responsible for all clinical development and commercialization activities
- \$20 million upfront to Molecular Partners, total potential milestone payments of up to \$560 million, and up to low double-digit percent of royalties.

