

Press release – RE(ACT) Discovery Institute

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RE(ACT) DISCOVERY INSTITUTE

Foundation of the RE(ACT) Discovery Institute

The RE(ACT) Discovery Institute is a unique, not-for-profit institute that supports innovative scientific research in the field of rare diseases and addresses unmet medical needs in this area. An offshoot of the BLACKSWAN Foundation, a Swiss foundation active worldwide in supporting rare disease research, advocacy, and building an international scientific community, the Institute is located at the Biopôle, the Life Sciences campus, in Epalinges near Lausanne.

The mission of the RE(ACT) Discovery Institute is to foster the discovery and development of new therapies for rare diseases, which affect an average of 500,000 people in Switzerland and some 500 million worldwide. The Institute aims to bridge the gap between publicly funded scientific research and industry-supported applied R&D. It seeks to enable the Swiss and global scientific community working on a specific mechanism, target protein, or process involved in disease onset or progression to move their research from the bench to the bedside, with the declared goal of improving the quality of life of patients.

The Institute aims to discover, collect, and internalize ongoing or discontinued research programs and further develop them by acting as a "bridge" between a research group's "discovery" stage project and the final clinical development. It takes inspiration from existing organizations and drug research & development centers working with universities and industries – mainly start-ups – to provide the resources and expertise to develop new drugs/treatments to a point where they can be licensed to industry.

The RE(ACT) Discovery Institute accelerates research in therapeutic development, enabling academic laboratories with cutting-edge modern technologies to discover and develop potential treatments and diagnostic tools for rare diseases. To fulfill its goal of accelerating drug discovery and drug development for the treatment of rare diseases, the Institute creates partnerships with national

or international universities and institutes of technology, hospitals, research institutes, foundations, and patient associations interested in translational research and development.

The President of the Board of Directors, Prof. Nouria Hernandez, highlighted the importance of the project: "This is a wonderful project that responds to an urgent need, that of all patients suffering from diseases that are still poorly understood and for which there are few or no treatments".

Dr. Olivier Menzel, Chairman and Founder of the BLACKSWAN Foundation, stressed that: "Research on rare diseases is of most importance, not only because people living with a rare disease are not rare at all, mainly because research on rare disease advances progress knowledge in common disease and brings new therapeutic solutions for everyone".