ABL and RD-Biotech sign strategic partnership in cell and gene therapy GMP manufacturing

Deal offers developers in cell and gene therapy streamlined access to plasmid DNA and viral vector manufacturing in new, flexible end-to-end service

Lyon and Besançon, France, October 25, 2022 – ABL, a pure play Contract Development and Manufacturing Organization (CDMO) with specialized expertise in the development and manufacturing of solutions for biopharma, including viruses for gene therapies, oncolytic viruses and vaccine candidates, and RD-Biotech, a CRO/CDMO providing custom services in development and production of plasmid DNA, monoclonal antibodies and recombinant proteins, today announce the signing of their strategic partnership in Cell and Gene Therapy (C&GT) GMP manufacturing.

This collaboration brings together RD-Biotech's plasmid DNA (pDNA) GMP manufacturing services with ABL's viral vector GMP manufacturing to offer a new and flexible end-to-end service to C&GT developers. As pDNA is vital in the production of these novel therapies, ABL and RD-Biotech aim to provide customers with a seamless process, from its supply to the delivery of vials destined for patients. This seamless process is designed to enable customers to accelerate the development of novel therapies and reach patients faster.

Under the agreement, customers will also have the option to use each partner as a single supplier, working with each independently.

"ABL's partnership with RD-Biotech is a major step forward in enabling our company to roll out our 'Gene to Cell' strategy, aimed at offering all-in-one services to our customers whatever their needs are in Adeno Associated Virus-based (AAV) and lentivirus GMP manufacturing," said Thierry Van Nieuwenhove, CEO of ABL. "ABL, in close collaboration with RD-Biotech, will be able to offer the complete service required by our customers for advancing their gene and cell therapy projects."

This partnership consolidates the strengths of two French market leaders in the development and biomanufacturing of biologics. Their innovative business model, that combines molecular biology, fermentation and mammalian cell culture, offers maximum flexibility to adapt to customer needs.

"RD-Biotech is proud to partner with ABL, whose expertise in cell and gene therapy manufacturing will directly benefit our customers," said Philippe Dulieu, CEO of RD-Biotech. "There is a clear synergy between the services provided by our companies, which includes pDNA and virus manufacturing, that will significantly improve project efficiency. We aim to provide seamless processes, from the supply of pDNA to the delivery of the vials."

RD-Biotech is a CDMO involved in the manufacturing of pDNA as a raw material for new cell therapies as well as for messenger RNA (mRNA) therapies. pDNA can be used as a template for mRNA production in vaccines, including some for Covid-19. It is also used as a vector for encoding those viral sequences necessary for cell transfection, in order to obtain viral supernatant.

This collaboration will allow both companies to work together on innovations in the cell and gene therapy market. RD-Biotech will open a new facility exclusively dedicated to GMP plasmid DNA manufacturing in 2023. ABL is developing in-house AAV platform and will open a brand-new facility to bring viral based gene therapies to commercial scale and strengthen its QC testing department.

About RD-Biotech
Founded in 2002, RD-Biotech is a CRO (Contact Research Organization) and a CDMO (Contract Development and Manufacturing Organization), providing custom services in the development and production of plasmid DNA, monoclonal antibodies and recombinant proteins. Its global offer includes: (1) plasmid DNAs and monoclonal antibodies manufacturing at different quality grades - from R&D to preclinical and high quality grade, soon GMP grade; (2) a platform for DNA engineering and vector design; (3) a mAb engineering platform offering: sequencing, chimerization, humanization and reformatting (scFv, Fab, bispecific, etc.); (4) a platform for cell engineering and cell culture; recombinant protein expression in cell free, CHO, HEK and E.Coli systems, including vector design and engineering; and (5) a bioanalytical platform.
Based in Besançon, France, RD-Biotech employs 45 staff. It is part of mAbexperts, a group based on a strong expertise in immunology and molecular biology.
www.rd-biotech.com

About ABL, an Institut Mérieux company
ABL is a pure play Contract Development and Manufacturing Organization (CDMO) specialized in the development and manufacturing of gene therapies, oncolytic viruses and vaccine candidates. ABL's mission is to provide GMP viral vectors from early-stage to market, contributing to the success of its clients' immunotherapy and gene therapy innovations. ABL's CDMO services include manufacturing of bulk drug substance, fill-finish of drug products, process and assay development, bioanalytical testing and regulatory support.
ABL is a subsidiary of the Institut Mérieux. It operates from various locations in Europe and the US.
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