

To: Galien Prize Committee

Dear Galien Prize committee members,

I am writing to provide my enthusiastic recommendation for DarwinHealth as a new biotechnology company most deserving of your consideration for the Galien Prize in the “Best Startup” category. I became acquainted with the groundbreaking methodologies that DarwinHealth is bringing to drug discovery when, as Senior Vice President, Research, at Celgene, I approved an extremely fruitful collaboration to interrogate our proprietary library of Cereblon E3 Ligase Modulating Drugs (CELMoDs) to identify compounds that would target Master Regulator (MR) proteins representing mechanistic determinants of protein homeostasis in cancer using the DarwinOncoDiscovery platform.

Compared to many other biotech startups, DarwinHealth distinguishes itself by leveraging cutting-edge systems biology-based technologies, originally developed at Columbia University, and applying these technologies to improve cancer treatment. Studies confirming the translational relevance of these systems biology-based approaches for cancer care have been published in the highest impact-factor scientific journals and have been rigorously and extensively validated in large-scale preclinical trials and, recently, in clinical trials in advanced cancer patients.

Even before launching this outstanding and productive collaboration with DarwinHealth, we had been very impressed with these systems biology-based technologies, so much so that we recruited several scientists who graduated in the laboratory of Professor Andrea Califano (a DarwinHealth co-founder) precisely because of the exceedingly high quality of training they had received in the emerging field of cancer systems biology and systems pharmacology.

Following Celgene’s acquisition by Bristol Myers Squibb, not only did we begin receiving remarkably comprehensive and informative data that is allowing us to prioritize further development of our CELMoD compounds in multiple, highly aggressive human malignancies, but we also executed a second research collaboration with DarwinHealth to elucidate and validate druggable MR protein targets that elicit tumor essentiality as well as their most direct druggable upstream modulators.

Furthermore, we are now in the advanced stages of considering a third research collaboration to extend recent work in targeting Master Regulators of immunosuppressive tumor microenvironment subpopulations, using an approach similar to that recently published in Cancer Cell (Obradovic et al. Cancer Cell 2023).

Although still a “start-up” company, DarwinHealth’s legacy of accomplishments, scientific breakthroughs, publications in high impact journals, and innovation-based technologies has eclipsed what most mid-sized biopharmaceutical companies have managed to achieve after many years of operation. The result is that DarwinHealth and its proprietary technologies/products are now poised to both (a) make cancer treatment at the patient-centric, point-of-care intersection



more effective and precise; and (b) dramatically accelerate drug discovery processes based on an entirely novel set of mechanistic/molecular targets that govern the cancer cell state.

It is with great pleasure that I unreservedly provide this endorsement for their submission in the "Best Startup" category in the Galien Prize Competition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Rolfe", written over a light grey horizontal line.

Dr. Mark Rolfe

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Research

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