

Innovative Drug Discovery for New Therapies in Brain Tumors

North Rhine-Westphalia Supports Dortmund Consortium within the EFRE Funding Program "Gesünder.IN.NRW"

Dortmund, June 24, 2026 - The State of North Rhine-Westphalia is supporting a research project aimed at developing novel therapeutic approaches against glioblastoma, a particularly aggressive and hard-to-treat brain tumor, using funds from the EFRE/JTF program "Gesünder.IN.NRW". In the project "ReACT-GBM – Refining AKT-based Cancer Therapy for Glioblastoma," the Dortmund start-up KyDo Therapeutics GmbH, Lead Discovery Center GmbH (LDC), and TU Dortmund University (Prof. Dr. Daniel Rauh's research group) are working closely together.

At the core of this joint project is the development of innovative AKT inhibitors that are specifically optimized for the treatment of central nervous system tumors. The ReACT-GBM project aims to transfer these insights into the preclinical development of groundbreaking drug candidates.

This collaborative project brings together the complementary expertise of LDC, Prof. Rauh's group at TU Dortmund University and KyDo, who coordinates the project. The entire early drug discovery pipeline is fully represented within the Dortmund consortium; from medicinal chemistry optimization of the new drug candidates to the development of innovative therapy strategies.

With the funding from "Gesünder.IN.NRW", the state of NRW is specifically strengthening innovative biomedical research at the interface of science and application. The ReACT-GBM project is contributing to the development of urgently needed treatment options for patients suffering from glioblastoma, while also underlining North Rhine-Westphalia's pioneering role in biomedical innovation.

ReACT-GBM started in January 2026. The NRW state government and the European Union are supporting the project over a period of three years.



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About the Rauh Research Group at TU Dortmund University

At TU Dortmund University, the Rauh research group conducts research in the fields of Chemical Biology and Medicinal Chemistry, with a focus on genetically defined cancers. Using protein X-ray crystallography, structure-based drug development, and organic synthesis, the group investigates mechanisms of therapy resistance and develops novel therapeutic approaches. To promote the translation of scientific findings into practical applications, Daniel Rauh initiated the Center for Integrated Drug Discovery (ZIW) as well as the Drug Discovery Hub Dortmund (DDHD). In addition, he is a co-founder of several companies in the field of cancer research, including Pearl River Bio GmbH, which was acquired by Centessa Pharmaceuticals in 2021, and KyDo Therapeutics GmbH.

<https://www.rauh-lab.de> <https://www.ddhdortmund.de>

About KyDo Therapeutics

KyDo Therapeutics (KyDo), based in Dortmund, Germany, was jointly founded by Lead Discovery Center GmbH (LDC), together with scientists from the Rauh Lab at TU Dortmund University. KyDo successfully concluded a seed financing round in 2025 spearheaded by I&I Bio together with KHAN-II, and with notable participation of VORNvc, and TU capital. KyDo's covalent-allosteric drug discovery platform addresses highly relevant cancer targets with novel precision medicine that bear a huge potential to improve the efficacy, minimize the side effects and enable completely new combination therapies that are urgently needed.

www.kydo-tx.com

Lead Discovery Center GmbH

Lead Discovery Center GmbH (LDC) was established in 2008 by the technology transfer organization Max Planck Innovation, as a novel approach to capitalize on the potential of excellent basic research for the discovery of new therapies for diseases with high medical need. The LDC takes on promising early-stage projects from academia and transforms them into innovative pharmaceutical leads and antibodies that reach initial proof-of-concept in animals as well as candidate nomination. In close collaboration with high-profile partners from research and industry, the LDC is building a strong and growing portfolio of small molecule and antibody leads with exceptional medical and commercial potential.

LDC sustains a long-term partnership with the Max Planck Society and its institutes as well as with KHAN Technology Transfer Fund, and has formed numerous alliances with pharma and biotech companies, in particular with Shionogi as well as AstraZeneca, Bayer, Merck KGaA, Qurient, InvIOS, Cumulus Oncology, Nodus Oncology, KinSea Lead Discovery, HLB Life Science R&D, KyDo Therapeutics and the Helmholtz Center for Infection Research, e.g. In addition, LDC also works with leading translational drug discovery centers and in addition to a preferred partnership with KHAN with various investors to provide its assets for company creation.

www.lead-discovery.de

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