Aura Biosciences Boosts Finance Team with Two Key Appointments, Preparing to Move Into Late-Stage Clinical Development in Ocular Melanoma

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CAMBRIDGE, Mass., September 4, 2018 — Aura Biosciences, a leader in the development of novel targeted therapies in ocular oncology, today announced that Julie Feder has joined the company's leadership team as Chief Financial Officer. In addition, the company announced the addition of Kylie Reynolds as Vice President of Finance, further augmenting Aura's in-house finance expertise as the company finalizes its Phase 1/2 clinical trial and prepares to initiate late stage clinical development for its flagship drug in choroidal melanoma next year.

"We're excited to welcome Julie and Kylie to our team at this important moment for our company," said Elisabet de los Pinos, Ph.D., founder and CEO of Aura. "Their combined four-plus decades of experience in financial management will be an asset in our accelerated progress towards developing a groundbreaking new treatment for patients with choroidal melanoma."

Ms. Feder joins Aura from Verastem, where she served as Chief Financial Officer. At Verastem, Ms. Feder was responsible for developing the company's strategic financial plan and overseeing a rapid growth in financing and staff size. Prior to joining Verastem, Ms. Feder spent six years at the Clinton Health Access Initiative, Inc. (CHAI) as Chief Financial Officer. At CHAI, Ms. Feder was responsible for managing a global team across multiple departments. She also developed the global finance strategy and internal audit, treasury, and global payroll functions. Ms. Feder holds a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from Yeshiva University's Sy Syms School of Business.

Ms. Reynolds comes to Aura from Forma Therapeutics, where she served as Senior Director and Controller for the company since 2015. In that role, Ms. Reynolds was responsible for assessing systems, people and processes to prepare the company for financial transformation. Ms. Reynolds holds an M.S. in Banking and Financial Management from Boston University and is a Certified Public Accountant.

About choroidal melanoma

Choroidal melanoma is a rare and aggressive type of eye cancer. Choroidal melanoma is the most common primary ocular tumor and develops in the uveal tract of the eye. No targeted therapies are available at present, and current radiotherapy treatments can be associated with severe visual loss and other long-term sequelae such as dry eye, glaucoma, cataracts and radiation retinopathy. The most common current treatment is plaque radiotherapy, which involves surgical placement of a radiation device on the exterior of the eye over the tumor. The alternative is enucleation, or total surgical removal of the eye. Choroidal melanoma metastasizes to the liver in about 40-50 percent of cases in the long term (source: OMF), and only 15 percent of patients whose melanoma has metastasized survive beyond five years after diagnosis (source: ACS).

About light-activated AU-011

AU-011 is a first-in-class targeted therapy in development for the primary treatment of choroidal melanoma. The therapy consists of proprietary viral-like particle conjugates (VPC) that are activated with an ophthalmic laser. The VPCs bind selectively to unique receptors on cancer cells in the eye and are derived from technology originally pioneered by Dr. John Schiller of the Center for Cancer Research at the National Cancer Institute (NCI), recipient of the 2017 Lasker-DeBakey Award. Upon activation with an ophthalmic laser, the drug rapidly and specifically disrupts the cell membrane of tumor cells while sparing key eye structures, which may allow for the potential of preserving patients' vision and reducing other long-term complications of radiation treatment. AU-011 can be delivered using equipment commonly found in an ophthalmologist's office and does not require a surgical procedure, pointing to a potentially less invasive, more convenient therapy for patients and physicians. AU-011 for the treatment of choroidal melanoma has been granted orphan drug and fast track designations by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and is currently in clinical development.

About Aura Biosciences

Aura Biosciences is developing a new class of therapies to selectively target and destroy cancer cells. Its lead program, AU-011 in primary choroidal melanoma, is being developed under a CRADA with the National Cancer Institute (NCI), part of the National Institutes of Health. For more information, visit www.aurabiosciences.com.

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