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Novo Nordisk acquires Embark Biotech, including its lead asset targeting obesity and other cardiometabolic diseases.

Embark Laboratories announced today that Novo Nordisk has acquired Embark Biotech, including its lead metabolic program, and has entered a three-year research and development collaboration to discover and develop novel pharmaceuticals to treat obesity and related co-morbidities.

Under the acquisition agreement for Embark Biotech, Novo Nordisk receives the full rights to develop and commercialize the lead program, while the Embark shareholders will receive 15 million Euro in an upfront cash payment and are eligible to receive potential development, regulatory, and commercial milestones of up to 456 million Euro.

The research and development collaboration with Embark Laboratories provide Novo Nordisk with the option to acquire selected assets based on the Embark Biotech discovery across several indications, including obesity and type 2 diabetes.

Brian Finan, Vice President of Obesity Research at Novo Nordisk, said: “Novo Nordisk has been engaged in obesity research for 25 years, and we continuously search for new ways to address this serious chronic disease. We are excited about the opportunity to advance Embark Biotech’s lead program and look forward to co-creating novel treatments for cardiometabolic diseases with Embark Laboratories to complement our in-house R&D,”.

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Zach Gerhart-Hines, Chief Technology Officer at Embark Laboratories commented: “There is a clear strategic fit between the novel biology we have discovered and Novo Nordisk’s expertise and focus on developing new drugs in the cardiometabolic space. We are thrilled to pass on the baton for our lead metabolic program to Novo Nordisk. This deal and Embark’s success are direct outcomes of the unique and innovative ecosystem in Denmark that has been cultivated by the BioInnovation Institute and the University of Copenhagen and through initiatives from the Novo Nordisk Foundation and the Innovation Fund Denmark”.

About Embark Biotech:

Embark Biotech is a 2017 spin-out from the Novo Nordisk Foundation Center for Basic Metabolic Research (CBMR) at University of Copenhagen, where Associate Professor Zach Gerhart-Hines, together with then postdoctoral fellow Jakob Bondo Hansen and Professor Thue W. Schwartz, discovered a novel target that suppresses appetite increases energy expenditure and enhances insulin sensitivity (seed support from Novo Holdings). Development of the target was initiated via an early collaboration with Novo Nordisk. The project was then further matured through support and guidance from the InnoBooster program at the Innovation Fund Denmark and from the BioInnovation Institute (BII) during a residency in the Venture House Program.

About Embark Laboratories:

Embark Laboratories is a Danish biotech company that focuses on cardiometabolic disease with an emphasis on energy expenditure. All former Embark Biotech staff will continue their work and scientific journey in Embark Laboratories.

For more info, please contact CEO Casper Tind Hansen (contact@embarklaboratories.com)