

## Greenhouse Fund Recipient



Alteris Therapeutics, Inc. is developing vaccines and therapeutics for the treatment of multiple cancer types. Most current anti-cancer treatments, such as traditional chemotherapies, work by preferentially killing cancer cells. However, since these treatments work by altering proteins or processes also found in normal cells, they are typically associated with severe side effects.

While targeting the critical proteins or processes associated with cancer, Alteris adds a step of identifying differences in these proteins or processes that arise from differential gene regulation that is specific to cancer cells. Thus, Alteris therapies should be efficacious in destroying the tumor, and because the targets are specific to cancer, should have a better safety profile. This has been demonstrated with the company's first product, ALT-110, a vaccine currently in Phase I clinical trials, which has completely prevented tumor formation in mice and has to date been demonstrated to be safe in humans.

The company's second program is being developed both as a vaccine and a therapeutic. This program targets a protein that is essential for supplying blood and nutrients to the tumor thereby allowing its growth. By inhibiting the protein—vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF)—the tumor is starved and dies.

Current therapies against VEGF have demonstrated efficacy, but since they target the normal form of the protein, they have been associated with significant side effects. Alteris has identified variant forms of the VEGF protein that have the same function of recruiting blood and nutrients to the tumor, but have regions that are distinct from the normal VEGF.

By targeting these cancer-specific regions of the protein, Alteris has demonstrated effectiveness at inhibiting tumor growth without affecting the normal VEGF protein, which should result in an increased safety profile. The company is currently analyzing other proteins known to be important in cancer for the presence of cancer-specific variants.

### Proposed Project

BioAdvance will invest in a project supporting the therapeutic aspect of the VEGF program, including identifying additional cancer-specific forms of VEGF, identifying which forms are expressed by the largest number of tumors, and developing monoclonal antibodies (MAbs) against these forms. The MAbs will then be tested for efficacy at reducing tumor size in mice and for lack of activity against the normal form of VEGF as a measure of safety. These MAbs will ultimately be developed preclinically. As a second goal of the project, three additional cancer-specific targets will be identified and analyzed for their specificity toward different tumors. Alteris's core technology is licensed from Thomas Jefferson University.

### Management

**Tony Giordano, Ph.D.**, President, is responsible for the overall business, operational and financial management of the company. He has held senior management positions at three separate biotechnology companies. Most recently, he served as President of Nucleonics, Inc., an RNAi company he co-founded in 2001. Dr. Giordano also serves as a consultant to venture capitalists, such as GeneChem, Hambro and Paul Sonz Partners, having completed scientific due diligence for nearly two dozen companies.

**Albert J. Wong, M.D.**, Chief Scientific Consultant, is a co-founder of Alteris and is responsible for the overall scientific direction of the company. He is also on the faculty of the Kimmel Cancer Institute at Thomas Jefferson University. The key technologies on which Spliceomix is based were developed from his research at Jefferson. Dr. Wong has served and chaired grant review panels for the NIH and the American Cancer Society, has been the organizer of several scientific meetings, and has served on the advisory board for cancer programs and the NCI.

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