

## **KayoThera, Inc. Strengthens Financial Position with \$5.2 Million in Grant and Expanded Series A Funding, Bringing Total Financial Support to \$14 Million**

*New funding comprised of grants from the National Institutes of Health, The Andy Hill Cancer Research Endowment (CARE) Fund, and additional Equity Funding*

*Additional funding will support advancement of KayoThera's development programs in diabetes and oncology*

**Seattle, WA — July 19, 2023**, KayoThera, Inc. (“KayoThera”), an early-stage therapeutics company developing first-in-class, oral, small molecule inhibitors of the retinoid pathway, today announces the strengthening of its financial resources through multiple grant awards and expansion of its [previously announced Series A financing](#). The expanded financing was led by [Accelerator Life Science Partners](#) (ALSP), who also provided Series A funding for KayoThera. With the additional \$5.2 million in new equity investments, non-dilutive grant funding, and initial seed funding from the [New Jersey Health Foundation](#), KayoThera's total financial support to date is \$14 million.

KayoThera has received grant funding from the [National Institutes of Health Small Business Innovation Research \(SBIR\) program](#)<sup>1,2</sup> and [the Andy Hill Cancer Research Endowment \(CARE\) Fund](#)<sup>3</sup>. In addition, KayoThera secured additional Series A financing in an expansion round led by ALSP that also included participation from [BioAdvance](#), [Pier 70 Ventures](#), and [WRF Capital](#). The additional resources secured by KayoThera will further support the Company's therapeutic development programs.

“The grant awards are important validation of our development programs, and the expanded Series A financing reflects our investor's confidence in our ability to innovate oral, small molecule inhibitors of the retinoid pathway,” said Mark Esposito, Ph.D., Vice President, R&D, and Co-Founder of KayoThera. “With the additional financial resources announced today, we are well-positioned to advance our lead diabetes and oncology programs, each of which has first-in-class potential in disease indications with large patient populations and significant unmet medical need.”

“Our belief that KayoThera offers a compelling investment opportunity and has the potential to transform the treatment of serious metabolic diseases and cancer was the key driver for our initial investment in the Company,” said Thong Q. Le, Senior Managing Director of ALSP and CEO of KayoThera. “Since the initial Series A financing in March 2022, KayoThera has made significant progress in advancing its core technology and development programs. The additional funding announced today will allow the Company to continue making exciting advances in innovating small molecule inhibitors of the retinoid pathway and position itself for strategic partnering activity that will further help realize the commercial and clinical value of its science.”

The retinoid pathway is known to play critical roles in several serious diseases. For example, the clinical use of retinoid activators leads to both adverse cardiometabolic events such as hyperlipidemias as well as increased cancer rates and faster cancer progression. KayoThera's unique approach to drugging this pathway is based on biology discovered at Princeton University and represents the first platform to create drug-like retinoid inhibitors.

### **References**

<sup>1</sup> NIH NIDDK (National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases) R43DK136420. Grant title: Development of first-in-class antagonists of the retinoid pathway as novel oral therapies for Type 2 Diabetes.

<sup>2</sup>NIH NCI (National Cancer Institute) R43CA278127. Grant title: Development of first-in-class antagonists of the retinoid pathway as novel oral immunotherapies for solid cancers.

<sup>3</sup>The Andy Hill Cancer Research Endowment (CARE) Fund FY23-LS-05. Grant title: Development of a First-in-Class Immunotherapy to Treat Advanced Solid Tumors Through IND-Enabling Safety Studies.

*The content in this release is the sole responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views or imply endorsement of the National Institutes of Health.*

### **About KayoThera, Inc**

KayoThera, Inc. is an early-stage therapeutics company focused on the development of first-in-class, oral, small molecule inhibitors of the retinoid pathway. This pathway plays a critical role in a variety of serious diseases, including cardiometabolic diseases and cancer. KayoThera is developing therapies to treat diabetes and late-stage and metastatic cancers including breast, lung, pancreatic, colorectal, brain, and kidney cancers. The company was founded based on discoveries from Dr. Mark Esposito's post-doctoral research at Princeton University and professor Yibin Kang, Ph.D. For more information, visit [www.kayothera.com](http://www.kayothera.com).

### **About Accelerator Life Science Partners**

Accelerator Life Science Partners is an early-stage life science accelerator and investment firm that creates and builds next generation biotechnology companies centered on innovative science. ALSP catalyzes the development and commercialization of breakthrough biotechnology innovations by providing a holistic toolkit and leveraging its network and entrepreneurial expertise to accelerate the establishment and operation of early-stage biotechnology companies. ALSP's portfolio companies are backed by some of the world's leading life science investors and are comprised of industry-leading, transformative companies, including Petra Pharma (acquired by a global pharmaceutical company), Rodeo Therapeutics (acquired by Amgen Inc.) and Lodo Therapeutics (acquired by Zymergen). For more information, please visit [www.acceleratorlsp.com](http://www.acceleratorlsp.com).

### **About Andy Hill Cancer Research Endowment (CARE) Fund**

The Andy Hill Cancer Research Endowment (CARE) Fund invests in public and private entities to promote cancer research in Washington. Through research grants and strategic partnerships, the CARE Fund aims to improve health outcomes by advancing transformational research in the prevention and treatment of cancer. The Washington State Legislature created the CARE Fund in 2015 and this public investment in cancer research is maximized by private and nonstate matching funds. For additional information, please visit [www.wacarefund.org](http://www.wacarefund.org).

### **About BioAdvance**

BioAdvance is a \$85 million early-stage life sciences fund with a focus in the mid-Atlantic region, investing up to \$1.5 million initially and up to \$5 million over the lifetime of companies that have the potential to improve human health. Since making its first investments in 2003, BioAdvance has committed more than \$50 million in funding to approximately 100 organizations developing more than 160 products in the therapeutics, medtech, diagnostics, research tools and digital health sectors. BioAdvance portfolio companies have leveraged \$3.7 billion in subsequent

capital, including proceeds from acquisitions. Eleven products have received FDA approval. For more information, please visit [www.bioadvance.com](http://www.bioadvance.com).

### **About Pier 70 Ventures**

Pier 70 Ventures is a US-based venture capital firm investing in impact-driven innovation. The firm's debut fund is the Pier 70 INpact Fund. Looking for brilliance beyond the usual places, Pier 70 Ventures finds and funds technologies with the potential to disrupt the future of healthcare. We invest in talented entrepreneurs pushing humanity forward with innovation. We VENTURE BOLDLY by empowering bright, enthusiastic leaders with capital, mentorship, and access to our global networks. For additional information, please visit [www.pier70ventures.com](http://www.pier70ventures.com).

### **About WRF and WRF Capital**

Washington Research Foundation (WRF) supports research and scholarship in Washington state, with a focus on life sciences and enabling technologies. WRF was founded in 1981 to assist universities and other nonprofit research institutions in Washington with the commercialization and licensing of their technologies. WRF is one of the foremost technology transfer and grant-making organizations in the nation, having earned more than \$445 million in licensing revenue for the University of Washington and providing over \$145 million in grants to the state's research institutions to date.

WRF Capital, the investment vehicle for Washington Research Foundation, has backed 122 local startups since 1996. Returns support the Foundation's investment and grant-making programs.

For additional information, please visit [www.wrfseattle.org](http://www.wrfseattle.org).

### **Contact**

Jessica Burback

Email: [jburback@acceleratorlsp.com](mailto:jburback@acceleratorlsp.com)

Phone: 206-957-7302