

PRESS RELEASE

StarkAge Therapeutics Announces Research Collaboration with Gustave Roussy to Advance Senolytic Therapies in Digestive Cancers

The collaboration will inform patient selection for treatment with STX-1, a first-in-class senolytic ADC directed against dipeptidyl-peptidase 4 (DPP4/CD26) as it progresses toward IND-enabling studies.

Lille, France, January 27th, 2025 – StarkAge Therapeutics, a biotechnology company developing first-in-class senolytic antibody-drug conjugates (ADC) in age-related diseases, with an initial focus on oncology, today announced a research collaboration with Gustave Roussy, Europe's leading cancer center. The program is dedicated to characterize cellular senescence induced by standard of care (SoC) treatments in a large series of digestive cancers. The result will inform the clinical development of STX-01, a first-in-class senolytic ADC targeting DDP4, a specific marker of senescence, frequently constitutively expressed on primary tumors and/or overexpressed in metastases.

Benjamin Le Calvé, Chief Executive Officer of StarkAge Therapeutics, and Eric Angevin, Chief Medical Officer, commented: *“This collaboration with Gustave Roussy is an important step as we move forward to IND-enabling studies. Gustave Roussy has an exceptional expertise in digestive cancers, pathology and computational biology and the results will help us enrich the positioning of STX-1 and accelerate the development of senescence-targeted therapies for patients with high medical need.”*

Antoine Hollebecque, MD, Gastrointestinal cancers at the Department of drug development (DITEP) at Gustave Roussy, added: *“Senescence is induced by certain anticancer treatments, and accumulation of senescent cells within tumors significantly reduces patient survival. This collaboration with StarkAge will generate high-resolution biological insights and could open new therapeutic avenues to eliminate both senescent and malignant cells in refractory cancer patients.”*

Conducted under a research agreement with **Gustave Roussy and its technology transfer affiliate, Gustave Roussy Transfert**, this collaboration will combine StarkAge's expertise in senescence biology with Gustave Roussy's world-class capabilities in multiplexed pathology, and computational oncology.

About senescence and cancer

Although they no longer divide and have ceased to exercise their original function, senescent cells accumulate in aged or diseased tissues and release pro-inflammatory molecules that contribute to the development of numerous associated pathologies such as cancers, neurodegenerative diseases, fibroses (renal, cardiac, pulmonary, and hepatic), and skeletal pathologies such as osteoarthritis.

In cancers, many treatments, including chemotherapy, radiotherapy, and targeted therapies, are known to induce senescence of cancer cells, contributing to drug resistance, metastatic dissemination, and local immunosuppression. Accumulation of senescent cells within tumors is strongly associated with poorer outcomes, significantly reducing patient survival.

About DPP4 and STX-1

StarkAge has identified DPP4 (CD26), a highly selective marker of cellular senescence and a relevant tumor-associated antigen, leading to the development of proprietary monoclonal antibodies. STX-1 is a first-in-class DPP4-targeted ADC, currently in preclinical development.

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About StarkAge Therapeutics

StarkAge Therapeutics is a biotechnology company based in Lille, France, developing first-in-class senolytic antibody-drug conjugates (ADCs) to address age-related diseases, with an initial focus on oncology.

The company's lead program, STX-1, is a first-in-class ADC targeting DPP4, a highly selective marker of cellular senescence and a relevant tumor-associated antigen. STX-1 is currently progressing toward IND-enabling studies.

About Gustave Roussy

Ranked first in France, first in Europe and sixth in the world, Gustave Roussy is a centre of global expertise entirely dedicated to patients living with cancer. The Institute is a founding pillar of the Paris Saclay Cancer Cluster. Source of therapeutic innovations and diagnostic breakthroughs, the Institute welcomes nearly 50,000 patients each year, including 3,500 children and adolescents, and develops an integrated approach combining research, care and teaching. An expert in rare cancers and complex tumours, Gustave Roussy treats all cancers at all stages of life. It offers its patients personalised care that combines innovation and humanity, taking into account both care and the physical, psychological and social quality of life.

With 4,100 employees at two sites, Villejuif and Chevilly-Larue, Gustave Roussy brings together the expertise essential for high-level cancer research; 32% of treated patients are included in clinical studies. To find out more about Gustave Roussy and follow the Institute's news: www.gustaveroussy.fr/en, [X](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [Bluesky](#).

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