

SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN IDEAS COMPETITION

WANTED: BRIGHT MINDS AND FRESH IDEAS

On November 6, this year's winners of the Schleswig-Holstein competition for new ideas will receive their awards. The competition is designed to elicit innovative ideas from universities and research institutes that are commercially feasible and can be put into effect.

Technologies, concepts, products, innovative methods and services – the inventiveness of scientists in North Germany knows no bounds. To offer these ideas a platform for further development, the universities and research institutes in Schleswig-Holstein have

taken the initiative and launched the “Schleswig-Holstein Ideas Competition.”

This year's competition kicked off in May. The organizers are looking for practical ideas that offer a realistic prospect of being marketable. It should be possible to put them into effect in Schleswig-Holstein and they must not have formed the basis for a previous start-up. Participating is well worthwhile. The competition alone opens the door to a strong network of sponsors and multipliers. Prizes totaling 12,500 Euros will be awarded to the most outstanding ideas. There will also be non-monetary prizes, including

rent-free office space or coaching for persons interested in starting a business.

This year, the competition is being organized by Dr. Werner Jackstädt Center for Entrepreneurship and SME Flensburg and the Business Development and Technology Transfer Corporation of Schleswig-Holstein (WTSH). The competition's patron is Reinhard Meyer, Minister of Economic Affairs, Employment, Transport and Technology of Schleswig-Holstein. [hp](#)

Further information:
www.seedfonds-sh.de/idee2014-wettbewerb.html

AUTOIMMUNE DISEASES

NANOPARTICLES TO COMBAT MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

What autoimmune diseases such as multiple sclerosis (MS) and type 1 diabetes have in common is a misdirected immune system. New therapies are needed to suppress the body's destructive immune response directed against the central nervous system in a targeted manner. The German Ministry of Education and Research has provided funding of about 2.8 million euros to the NANodeLIVER project.

At present, it is not possible to cure autoimmune diseases – but it is hoped that this will change. The application of nanotechnologies is giving rise to entirely new approaches and therapies. It is now planned to try and use nanoparticles to induce a natural liver function in MS patients, leading to immune tolerance. In a properly functioning organism, the liver performs the important task of suppressing immune responses to harmless antigens. In the case of multiple sclerosis patients, this mech-

anism could be used to “switch off” the incorrect response to the body's own antigens.

Immunosuppressives are frequently prescribed as a therapy for patients with autoimmune diseases. However, these also suppress all the immune responses that are important for the organism. The NANodeLIVER method causes by using nanoparticles a much more targeted – and therefore largely free of side effects – antigen-specific tolerance induction, which emanates from the liver.

NANodeLIVER GmbH (NdL) was formed as a spin-out from a highly promising project collaboration between Bionamics GmbH and University Medical Center Hamburg-Eppendorf (UKE). The name says it all – NdL's main activities relate to the use of nanoparticles to transport peptides that induce immune tolerance into the liver.

The catalyst for the start-up was the preceding recommendation of the NEU² consortium to review this innovative technology approach with regard to its suitability as an MS

therapy. To gain investors and sufficient capital to expand the platform and its numerous clinical applications, a suitable corporate framework has been established in the shape of NdL. At the same time, a licensing agreement has been concluded with the UKE to cover the underlying intellectual property.

The 2.8 million euros provided by the BMBF funds the project for the first step towards a NANodeLIVER-based therapy for multiple sclerosis. The successful testing and clinical validation of this technology approach could trigger a large number of therapy developments for various immune-related diseases. Further projects are already at the application stage on a national and European level. Dr. Johannes Pohlner, managing director of NANodeLIVER GmbH, is planning the next steps: “Solid private funding is essential to establish NdL, but we are making good progress!” [hp](#)

Further information:
www.neu-quadrat.de