



Göttingen, Hamburg, December 9, 2020

## Sartorius and Evotec Partner With Start-up Curexsys on iPSC-Based Therapeutic Exosome Approach

- Evotec leverages iPSC platform for scalable manufacturing of Curexsys' exosome-based therapeutics
- Sartorius to support Curexsys in setting up GMP manufacturing platform
- Evotec and Sartorius form consortium to support Curexsys' 8.2 million euros seed financing round

Evotec SE and the life science company Sartorius announced today that they have entered into a partnership with the recently established Curexsys GmbH, a Göttingen, Germany-based technology leader specializing in the emerging field of therapeutic exosomes.

Curexsys delivers a proprietary isolation technology for exosomes based on a traceless immune-affinity process. This process is different from commonly used antibody-based processes and enables the company to overcome a key hurdle in exosome preparation, i.e. remaining antibodies in the final preparation. Curexsys is founded by Herbert Stadler, a serial biotech entrepreneur, and Jens Gruber, a former group leader of Medical RNA Biology who is going to lead Curexsys as Chief Scientific Officer.

Under the terms of the agreement, Evotec and Curexsys will collaborate with the production of Human Mesenchymal Stem Cells ("MSCs"), which serve as a source for exosomes. These are small vesicles that are naturally released from a cell. They contain proteins, nucleic acids and metabolites, which carry information from secreting to receiving cells. Exosomes have immunomodulatory and anti-inflammatory effects, which makes them a promising novel approach for innovative regenerative therapies, as therapeutics in age-related conditions, but also for diagnostic purposes. Curexsys aims to develop targeted approaches for a variety of diseases, initially focusing on Sicca Syndrome, commonly known as "dry eye", an inflammatory condition affecting 14 % to 17% of the adult population for whom there is currently no effective treatment available.

The collaboration combines Evotec's industry-leading induced Pluripotent Stem Cell ("iPSC") platform with Curexsys' proprietary technology to selectively isolate exosomes. Sartorius will support Curexsys to set up a GMP-compliant and scalable manufacturing platform.

Furthermore, Evotec and Sartorius have formed a consortium to jointly invest in Curexsys' 8.2 million euros seed financing round with Evotec acquiring an equity stake of approximately 37% in Curexsys and Sartorius of approximately 21%.

Dr Cord Dohrmann, Chief Scientific Officer of Evotec, commented: "Therapeutic exosomes hold significant promise for regenerative medicine and beyond. Steadily increasing evidence suggests that exosomes derived from stem cells can aid tissue repair and engineering vesicles could carry drugs to diseased tissues. These efforts have been held back by a dearth of standardised methods to isolate and study vesicles. Combining Evotec's industrial-grade iPSC and PanOmics platforms with Curexsys' proprietary exosome isolation technology and Sartorius' ability to translate these into a fully GMP-compliant process is a unique opportunity to build the leading exosome company in the industry."

Dr René Faber, Head of Sartorius' Bioprocess Solutions Division, said: "With our integrated portfolio of manufacturing solutions Sartorius is the 'go-to' partner for developers of such new modalities when it comes to implementing GMP-compliant, flexible production processes. We are very much looking forward to contributing our proven and scalable technology platform to Curexsys process and help them achieve their next milestones faster."

Dr Jens Gruber, Chief Scientific Officer of Curexsys, added: "We are very happy that we were able to form such a consortium with industry leaders in their field. This unique constellation gives Curexsys an optimal starting position to advance our technologies for highly specific isolation of exosomes and to rapidly approach therapeutic applications."

This press release contains forward-looking statements about the future development of the Sartorius Group. Forward-looking statements are subject to known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied by such statements. Sartorius assumes no liability for updating such statements in light of new information or future events. This is a translation of the original German-language press release. Sartorius shall not assume any liability for the correctness of this translation. The original German press release is the legally binding version.

### **About Exosomes and Curexsys**

Exosomes are extracellular, nanoscale vesicles that are actively secreted from cells to transfer information to neighbouring cells and distant tissues. Exosomes carry information of secreting to receiving cells utilising proteins, nucleic acids and metabolites. MSC-derived exosomes function as paracrine mediators that limit inflammation, reprogram immune cells, and activate endogenous repair pathways, recapitulating to a large extent the therapeutic effects of parental MSCs. Exosomes hold potential as diagnostics, as therapeutics and cosmeceuticals. More than 100 clinical trials involving exosomes are currently ongoing, demonstrating their broad therapeutic potential. Curexsys is a Goettingen, Germany-based start-up company founded by molecular biologist Dr Jens Gruber and the biochemist and serial entrepreneur Dr Herbert Stadler. With a scalable and semi-automated proprietary system for traceless immune-affinity cell sorting, Curexsys aims to become the leading supplier for clinical grade exosomes in regenerative medicine and anti-aging therapies.

### **About Evotec and iPSC**

Induced pluripotent stem cells (also known as iPS cells or iPSCs) are a type of pluripotent stem cell that can be generated directly from adult cells. Pluripotent stem cells hold great promise in the field of regenerative medicine. Because they can propagate indefinitely, as well as give rise to every other cell type in the body

(such as neurons, heart, pancreatic and liver cells), they represent a single source of cells that could be used to replace those lost to damage or disease. Evotec has built an industrialised iPSC infrastructure that represents one of the largest and most sophisticated iPSC platforms in the industry. Evotec's iPSC platform has been developed over the last years with the goal to industrialise iPSC-based drug screening in terms of throughput, reproducibility and robustness to reach the highest industrial standards, and to use iPSC-based cells in cell therapy approaches via the Company's proprietary EVOcells platform.

### **About Sartorius**

The Sartorius Group is a leading international partner of life science research and the biopharmaceutical industry. With innovative laboratory instruments and consumables, the Group's Lab Products & Services Division concentrates on serving the needs of laboratories performing research and quality control at pharma and biopharma companies and those of academic research institutes. The Bioprocess Solutions Division with its broad product portfolio focusing on single-use solutions helps customers to manufacture biotech medications and vaccines safely and efficiently. The Group has been annually growing by double digits on average and has been regularly expanding its portfolio by acquisitions of complementary technologies. In fiscal 2019, the company earned sales revenue of some 1.83 billion euros. At the end of 2019, more than 9,000 people were employed at the Group's approximately 60 manufacturing and sales sites, serving customers around the globe.

### **About Evotec**

Evotec is a drug discovery alliance and development partnership company focused on rapidly progressing innovative product approaches with leading pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, academics, patient advocacy groups and venture capitalists. We operate worldwide and our more than 3,400 employees provide the highest quality stand-alone and integrated drug discovery and development solutions. We cover all activities from target-to-clinic to meet the industry's need for innovation and efficiency in drug discovery and development (EVT Execute). The Company has established a unique position by assembling top-class scientific experts and integrating state-of-the-art technologies as well as substantial experience and expertise in key therapeutic areas including neuronal diseases, diabetes and complications of diabetes, pain and inflammation, oncology, infectious diseases, respiratory diseases, fibrosis, rare diseases and women's health. On this basis, Evotec has built a broad and deep pipeline of more than 100 co-owned product opportunities at clinical, pre-clinical and discovery stages (EVT Innovate). Evotec has established multiple long-term alliances with partners including Bayer, Boehringer Ingelheim, Bristol Myers Squibb, CHDI, Novartis, Novo Nordisk, Pfizer, Sanofi, Takeda, UCB and others. For additional information please go to [www.evotec.com](http://www.evotec.com) and follow us on Twitter @Evotec.

### **Contact**

Petra Kirchhoff  
Head of Corporate Communications and Investor Relations  
+49 (0)551.308.3684  
[petra.kirchhoff@sartorius.com](mailto:petra.kirchhoff@sartorius.com)  
[www.sartorius.com](http://www.sartorius.com)

Follow Sartorius on [Twitter](#) @Sartorius\_Group and on [LinkedIn](#).