Press release

201 Therapeutics receives CHF 150,000 from Venture Kick to develop targeted treatments for liver cancer

St.Gallen/Zurich/Lausanne, November 13, 2026 — The University of Basel spin-off 201 Therapeutics has obtained CHF 150,000 from Venture Kick to advance a new generation of targeted therapies for liver cancer. By developing drugs that act directly on cancer cells, the biotech startup aims to improve treatment effectiveness and offer new options to patients who currently have limited prospects for lasting benefits.

Liver cancer remains difficult to treat, with many patients responding poorly to existing therapies or experiencing only temporary benefits. Despite advances in immunotherapy, there remains a significant need for new therapies with distinct mechanisms of action, particularly for patients whose disease progresses after existing treatments.

201 Therapeutics is developing a new class of small-molecule drugs designed to target liver cancer cells directly. Its approach builds on a unique collection of miniature tumor models grown from patient biopsies, allowing researchers to test potential treatments on human cancer cells from the earliest stages of drug discovery. The company has identified two proprietary compound series demonstrating potent anticancer activity and high selectivity compared with non-malignant liver cells, providing a promising foundation for further preclinical development.

Liver cancer is the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths worldwide, accounting for over 750,000 deaths annually. With a substantial global market for liver cancer therapeutics, there is significant commercial potential for innovative treatment approaches. 201 Therapeutics aims to address this opportunity by developing differentiated drug candidates and exploring strategic partnerships and collaborations to support their future development and commercialization.

The CHF 150,000 from Venture Kick will support the optimization of 201 Therapeutics' lead compounds and the generation of preclinical efficacy data in animal models. These studies represent important milestones toward selecting a development candidate and preparing for future investment and pharmaceutical partnerships.

The team brings together CEO Sandro Nuciforo, CTO Fredrik Trulsson, CMO Markus Heim, and Head of Chemistry Emmanuel Meyer, combining expertise in cancer research, clinical medicine, and drug development.

“Venture Kick challenged us to think beyond the science. The program helped us translate years of liver cancer research into a clear development and commercial strategy and identify the key milestones needed to attract investors and pharmaceutical partners,” highlighted CEO and Co-Founder and CEO Sandro Nuciforo.



CMO Markus Heim, CEO Sandro Nuciforo, and Head of Chemistry Emmanuel Meyer

201 Therapeutics' profile on Venture Kick

About Venture Kick
The Venture Kick philanthropic initiative provides more than 1 million in seed funding to Swiss startups and offers a well-structured entrepreneurial path toward building a winning business. Startups pitch to Venture Kick juries in three stages to obtain CHF 150,000, gain direct feedback, and access a network of 250 international investors. Winners of Venture Kick are eligible for an InnoBooster grant of CHF 150,000 and an additional CHF 850,000 investment from the Kickfund.

Since its launch in 2007, Venture Kick has supported 1,286 Swiss startup projects with CHF 103 million from private donors. Thanks to financial support, coaching, and networking with investors, this initiative has led to the emergence of 1,000+ thriving startup companies and the creation of 16,100+ jobs. Venture Kick alumni companies have attracted investments of CHF 10.2 billion and represent 66 companies ranked in the Top100 Swiss Startups in 2025 (https://www.top100startups.swiss).

Venture Kick is an initiative by the Kick Foundation, supported by a private consortium and operated by Venturelab. The supporting foundations and private philanthropic partners include Gebert Rüf Stiftung, Ernst Göhner Stiftung, Fondation ALCEA, Hauser-Stiftung, André Hoffmann, Hansjörg Wyss, Martin Haefner, Fondation ProTechno, ESA BIC Switzerland, Swisscom, Lichtsteiner Foundation, and Deep Tech Nation Switzerland Foundation.

Find more information on venturekick.ch, with all startup projects supported by Venture Kick, and follow the success stories of our startups on LinkedIn.

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