

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
REGENTS COMMUNICATION

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Research Agreement between the University of Michigan and Decibel Therapeutics, Inc.

Action Requested: Authorization to enter into Agreement

Preamble:

A statutory conflict of interest situation was identified by the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects while reviewing the Proposal Approval Form which then triggered a review by the Medical School Conflict of Interest Board. A plan for management of the possible risks associated with the conflict of interest was then developed and approved by the Board and agreed to by the parties involved.

This proposed research agreement (“Agreement”) falls under the State of Michigan Conflict of Interest Statute because Professor Gabriel Corfas is an employee of the University of Michigan (“University”), and a partial owner of Decibel Therapeutics, Inc. The law permits such an Agreement provided it is disclosed to the Board of Regents (“Regents”) of the University of Michigan and approved in advance by a 2/3 vote.

Background:

Gabriel Corfas, PhD, a Professor in the Department of Otolaryngology, is the partial owner of a for-profit company called Decibel Therapeutics, Inc. (the “Company”). The Company wishes to fund a project entitled “Assessment of Possible Therapies for Auditory Phenotypes in Chacot-Marie-Tooth Disease (CMT) Using Ntf3” (ORSP #18-PAF02432) in the Department of Otolaryngology under the direction of Dr. Gabriel Corfas. The purpose of this project is to test the impact of CMT on hearing and the potential of Ntf3 as a therapy for auditory neuropathy by: 1) generating histological data that characterizes the inner ear pathology of mouse models of CMT, and 2) replicating previous studies that showed that Ntf3 over-expression treats noise-induced hidden hearing loss.

Agreement Terms:

The terms of the Agreement conform to University policy. The period of performance for the project is approximately one (1) year. The amount of funding support will not exceed \$142,659. Since research projects are often amended, this agreement includes a provision for changes in time and scope. University procedures for approval of these changes will be followed and additional conflict of interest review will be done as appropriate.

Impact of the Agreement:

The Agreement will support an effort by Dr. Corfas to use his expertise and University laboratory, as well as other University resources, to lead the research effort contemplated under the Agreement.

Recommendations:

This matter has been reviewed and approved by the Medical School Conflict of Interest Board. In light of this disclosure and our finding that the Agreement was negotiated in conformance with standard University practices, I recommend that the Board of Regents approve the University's entering into this Agreement with Decibel Therapeutics, Inc.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Jack Hu', is positioned above the printed name.

S. Jack Hu  
Vice President for Research

February 2018