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CHEYNEY, PENNSYLVANIA, UNITED STATES, September 14, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Navrogen Awarded a National Cancer Institute Grant to Develop Next-Generation Rituximab With Enhanced Therapeutic Effects in Immuno-suppressed Tumors

Cheyney, PA, September 14, 2020 -- Navrogen, Inc., a biopharmaceutical company specialized in developing therapies for cancer and immune-related disorders, announced today that it has been awarded a National Cancer Institute (NCI) R03 Grant to support its NAV-006 program involving the development of a next-generation rituximab that is refractory to the immuno-suppressive effects of the tumor microenvironment.

Follicular lymphoma (FL) is characterized by proliferation of neoplastic B cells, with 15,000 new cases a year in the USA. CD20 is a protein expressed on malignant FL cells and is the target of the commercially approved monoclonal antibody, rituximab. Rituximab markedly improves progression-free survival and overall survival of FL patients. However, studies have shown that some patients have an immune-suppressed tumor microenvironment that reduces the efficacy of rituximab treatment.

Navrogen has employed its proprietary Humoral Immuno Oncology (HIO) technology to identify the factors reducing rituximab's therapeutic effects against immuno-suppressed tumors. Navrogen will utilize the NCI grant support (1R03CA241784) to apply its block-removed immunoglobulin technology (BRITE) to create a next-generation rituximab that is refractory to the immuno-suppressive effects of the tumor microenvironment.

"I am delighted by the NCI's endorsement of the NAV-006 program" said Dr. Luigi Grasso, Ph.D., co-founder and Chief Scientific Officer of Navrogen. "Humoral Immuno Oncology (HIO) is an understudied field and it is encouraging that the scientists in the peer-review panel who reviewed our proposal understood the significance of our discovery and the solutions that we have planned to deploy."

Navrogen will complete the tasks outlined in the awarded grant, and upon successful

optimization will seek strategic partners to support later stages of development of the HIO-refractory rituximab.

About Navrogen™ Inc.

Navrogen is a biotechnology company focused on the discovery of tumor produced Humoral Immuno Oncology (HIO)-factors that are associated with cancer prognosis and therapeutic response of immune-mediated anti-cancer therapies. The company's mission is to develop diagnostic assays that can identify patients whose tumors produce HIO-factors to advise physicians on therapeutic options as well as develop first-in-class agents that can overcome their immuno-suppressive effects by employing its proprietary screening and engineering technologies. For more information, please visit www.navrogen.com.

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