

Step Pharma secures €2.5 million EIC grant to accelerate development of dencatistat for CTPS2 null gynaecological tumours

- Blended finance award also includes up to €10 million in equity investment from the EIC
- Step Pharma's lead product, dencatistat, expected to begin evaluation in phase 1b expansion cohorts for CTPS2 null ovarian and endometrial cancers later in 2026

Saint-Genis-Pouilly, France, 19 February 2026 – Step Pharma (“the Company”), the global leader in CTPS1 inhibition for targeted cancer treatment, today announces that it has been awarded a blended finance grant from the European Innovation Council (EIC) under the EIC Accelerator programme. The funding consists of a €2.5 million grant and potentially up to €10 million in equity investment to support the advancement of Step Pharma's first-in-class, highly selective, orally bioavailable CTPS1 inhibitor, dencatistat, in CTPS2 null ovarian and endometrial cancers.

All cancers are dependent on a ready supply of CTP for proliferation, the production of which is catalysed by two isoenzymes, CTPS1 and CTPS2. Loss of CTPS2 in cancer cells creates a synthetic lethal dependency on CTPS1; selective CTPS1 inhibition kills CTPS2 null cancer cells whilst sparing normal tissues. Step Pharma's highly selective CTPS1 inhibitor, dencatistat, has the potential to deliver efficacy without toxicity.

Dencatistat is currently being evaluated in a phase 1a dose escalation study in patients with solid tumours. This will be followed by safety expansion cohorts in patients with CTPS2 null cancers, including ovarian and endometrial where the prevalence of CTPS2 loss is 15-20%. These expansion cohorts are expected to start enrolling in 2026, with an additional cohort in CTPS2 null lung cancer also planned.

Andrew Parker, Chief Executive Officer, Step Pharma, commented: *“Being selected for an EIC Accelerator award is an important validation of our precision oncology approach targeting the synthetic lethal dependency on CTPS1 in CTPS2 null solid tumours. Building on strong momentum across our three clinical programmes, this award will enable us to advance dencatistat into expansion cohorts in ovarian and endometrial cancer, gynaecological indications where initiatives such as the EIC Accelerator can play a key role in improving outcomes. We look forward to working with the EIC as we continue to drive a step change in the way cancer is treated.”*

The EIC Accelerator award follows a period of significant clinical and corporate progress for Step Pharma, including the completion of a [€38 million Series C financing](#) in October 2025 led by V-Bio Ventures, the [appointment of Dr Karen Smith](#) as Chief Medical Officer, and the initiation of the Company's third clinical programme for dencatistat in [essential thrombocythaemia \(ET\)](#). Dencatistat is also being evaluated in a phase 1/2 clinical trial for adult patients with relapsed/refractory T or B cell lymphoma, and received [US FDA orphan drug designation](#) for the treatment of T cell lymphoma in May 2025.

The EIC Accelerator supports breakthrough innovations with the potential to create new markets or disrupt existing ones, through combined grant and equity investments. Step Pharma's blended finance award will fund pivotal activities including:

- Expansion of dencatistat phase 1b trial into CTPS2 null ovarian and endometrial cancer cohorts; and



- Preparation for phase 2 studies in gynaecological cancers including drug manufacture and pivotal toxicology studies.

The support also includes access to EIC Business Acceleration Services, providing strategic guidance, networking opportunities, and investor connections.

-Ends-

About Step Pharma

Step Pharma's goal is to bring about a step change in how cancer is treated with targeted therapies that kill cancer cells and leave healthy cells unharmed. The Company is the world leader in CTPS1 inhibition, a new approach with the potential to yield highly selective, safe and effective treatments for both blood cancers and solid tumours.

Step Pharma was founded in 2014 by Kurma Partners, the Imagine Institute and Sygnature Discovery, based on the scientific discoveries of Prof. Alain Fischer and Dr Sylvain Latour. Step Pharma is based in Saint-Genis-Pouilly, France, and is supported by a strong syndicate of investors including Kurma Partners, V-Bio Ventures, Bpifrance (Fonds Biothérapies Innovantes et Maladies Rares and InnoBio2 Fund), Pontifax, Hadean Ventures, Sunstone Life Science Ventures, Inserm Transfert Initiative, Idinvest, Sygnature Discovery and the Imagine Institute.

More information on the company can be found at www.step-ph.com.

About the EIC Accelerator Programme

Part of the EU's Horizon Europe Research and Innovation Programme, the EIC Accelerator offers support to start-ups and SMEs that have innovative, game-changing products, services or business models that could create new markets or disrupt existing ones in Europe and worldwide.

In addition, EIC-selected companies also receive coaching, mentoring, access to investors and corporates, among other opportunities.

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