



Rare Partners supports the Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia (IIT) for the development of an innovative artificial retina

Milan, March 2017 - Rare Partners Srl contributes to financing a project aimed at the development of an innovative artificial retina currently ongoing at the laboratories of the Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia (IIT) in Genoa (Center "Synaptic Neuroscience and Technology") and Milan (Centre "Nanoscience and Technology") in collaboration with the team of ophthalmologists of the Ospedale Sacro Cuore Don Calabria of Negrar (VR).

The prototypes, developed by the laboratories of the two IIT centers led by Prof. Benfenati and Professor Lanzani, are the result of a multidisciplinary approach that exploits a technology based on the use of light-sensitive polymers. The preliminary data obtained in experimental models are very promising and the first safety and efficacy trial in humans could be initiated very soon.

The collaboration with the Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia (IIT) is one of the several activities that Rare Partners has undertaken in the field of Usher syndrome, aimed to advance both the research and the dissemination of information for this rare disease. The initiatives undertaken by Rare Partners in this field are grouped under the general project name "Run4Usher" and constitute one of the main areas of interest of the non-profit company.

According to Marco Prosdocimi, Rare Partners' Managing Director: "We decided to support this program, contributing with a scholarship started at the beginning of 2017. This highly innovative research project could be an alternative to current artificial retinas and may give hope to patients who reach a state of total blindness. "



Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia (IIT)

Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia (IIT) in Genoa is a Foundation governed by Articles 14 et seq of the Italian Civil Code, established by Legislative Decree 269/03, converted by Law no. 326/2003 (Article 4 of the Statute), with the aim to promote excellence in basic and applied research and to promote the development of the national economy.

The construction of IIT's laboratories began in 2006 and ended in 2009.

The research programs aim above all to innovation and to the patents' creation to fund further research and to strengthen the national production system in accordance with national policies and for the progress of science and technology.

Usher syndrome

Usher syndrome is a rare disease that affects both hearing and vision. The major symptoms of Usher syndrome are hearing loss and an eye disorder called retinitis pigmentosa. Retinitis pigmentosa causes night-blindness and a loss of peripheral vision through the progressive degeneration of the retina

For these patients, today, there is no cure or available treatments that could slow the course of the disease

About Rare Partners

Rare Partners is a non profit biopharmaceutical company devoted to the development of new therapies and diagnostics in the field of rare diseases. The company was founded in Milan on March 2010 and registered in Italy as "Impresa Sociale". The basic idea of **Rare Partners** is to match non profit financial resources (public and private) with industrial drug development expertise, provided by the company's organization together with a strong network of consultants.

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