Press Release

QUANTRO Therapeutics secures key Austrian research grant to build its AI-powered drug discovery platform

Austrian Research Promotion Agency FFG awards funding to QUANTRO to develop and implement ASCEND, an integrated artificial intelligence platform for transcription factor drug discovery

Vienna, Austria, 3 November 2026: QUANTRO Therapeutics GmbH, a pioneer in the discovery of transcription factor targeting therapies, announced today that the company received a 12-month, non-dilutive research grant awarded by the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (*Forschungsförderungsgesellschaft,* FFG) to support the development of ASCEND, its AI-driven medicinal chemistry platform underpinning the company's drug discovery pipeline. ASCEND couples QUANTRO's capability to leverage its proprietary time-resolved transcriptomic data with state-of-the-art molecular modelling and in-house AI/ML tools to support hit generation and optimization in drug discovery projects targeting transcription factors. The grant will accelerate the build-out of integrated capabilities to advance QUANTRO's drug discovery pipeline and establish versatile workflows for the optimization of small molecule modulators and degraders, such as covalent molecules and molecular glues.

Michael Bauer, CEO of QUANTRO, commented: "*We are grateful for the support of the FFG, which represents an important independent endorsement of QUANTRO's strategy. This non-dilutive funding enables us to build ASCEND into a fully operational, AI-driven discovery platform, accelerating our pipeline. QUANTRO has a unique and proprietary capability to produce highly precise, time-resolved functional transcriptomic data, overcoming the limitations of historical methods and taking corresponding AI/ML applications to new levels. Developing and operating ASCEND on local infrastructure here in Vienna strengthens technological progress made in Austria, supports our long-term competitiveness, and reinforces the country's excellent track record in scientific and technological innovation. With QUANTRO, we are combining technology leadership in transcriptomics with innovation in computational drug discovery*."

Drug discovery remains challenging, with attrition rates approaching 90% from target identification to IND submission. AI-derived technologies offer the potential to reduce costs and development timelines by up to 50%. ASCEND aims to bring these capabilities in-house, strengthening QUANTRO's ability to discover drugs targeting historically "undruggable" transcription factors. Of the approx. 1,600 transcription factors encoded in the human genome, around 300 are directly implicated in disease, highlighting the platform's potential to advance transcriptional drug discovery at scale.

Although first applied in oncology, ASCEND is therapeutic-area agnostic by design: its architecture is built around transcription factor biology rather than any single indication, enabling expansion into other disease areas as relevant biological data are generated or acquired. Future development may also incorporate modalities such as molecular glue degraders, peptides and macrocycles. While individual technologies comparable to ASCEND's modules are already in use, QUANTRO is not aware of another platform combining them specifically for transcription factor drug discovery. ASCEND will operate primarily on local, physical infrastructure, reducing reliance on providers outside Europe.

Pascal Benderitter, Head of Medicinal Chemistry at QUANTRO, added: "*This grant marks an important step in QUANTRO's next phase of growth, enabling us to leverage our unique proprietary transcriptomics data and state-of-the-art technologies to discover drugs targeting transcription factors. Combined with our time-resolved transcriptomics technology, ASCEND will accelerate the advancement of our therapeutic pipeline towards the selection of preclinical candidates for early clinical development.*"

About QUANTRO Therapeutics

QUANTRO Therapeutics is a transcriptomic Drug Discovery and R&D company focused on building a highly innovative pipeline of modulators, inhibitors or degraders of transcription factors, regulators of gene expression and cell signaling targets involved in cancer, with potential applications across additional therapeutic disorders such as inflammation disorders. QUANTRO's transcriptomic discovery platform uses a novel and proprietary time-resolved gene expression profiling technology to target gene transcription factors previously considered un-druggable.

QUANTRO's technology is uniquely positioned to quantify changes in gene expression over time with unprecedented precision and sensitivity, overcoming the deficiencies of conventional transcriptomic readouts that capture only steady-state RNA abundance without information on transcriptional activity and dynamics.

QUANTRO was founded in 2019 as a spin-out from the prestigious research institutes IMBA and IMP in Vienna, Austria. Since 2020, the company has been supported by Boehringer Ingelheim Venture Fund (BIVF) and Evotec as seed investors. In total, EUR 11 million was earned in milestone-driven tranches in 2020 and 2023, complemented by undisclosed proceeds from a strategic collaboration on selected oncology targets with Boehringer Ingelheim Oncology.

Please find more information on our website at www.quantro-tx.com or on LinkedIn.

The ASCEND project is funded by the FFG. The FFG is Austria's central national funding agency for applied research and development. For more information, visit www.ffg.at.

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