



Kither Biotech Raises €18.5 Million Series B and Appoints Dr. Vincent Metzler as Chief Executive Officer

- *Proceeds to support the further development of lead asset KIT2014 in cystic fibrosis through to Phase 1/2A clinical trial*
- *International syndicate of new investors including Claris Ventures, 2 Invest, 3B Future Health Fund and Alef 6, with continued support from existing investors*
- *Appointment of Dr. Metzler as CEO brings extensive international pharmaceutical experience as Kither Biotech accelerates development of its lead candidates*

Turin, Italy, 16 March 2022 – Kither Biotech (“Kither” or “the Company”), a biopharmaceutical company developing novel therapies for rare respiratory diseases, today announces that it has raised €18.5 million in a Series B financing round and has appointed current Board Member Dr. Vincent Metzler as Chief Executive Officer.

Proceeds will be used to fund the clinical development of Kither’s lead product KIT2014, a novel cell-permeable peptide for the treatment of cystic fibrosis (CF) that works to modulate cyclic adenosine monophosphate (cAMP) levels inside cells. cAMP levels are directly associated with the pathogenesis of CF including mucus accumulation, inflammation, and bronchoconstriction. KIT2014 is currently being developed as an add-on to the current standard of care enabling improved efficacy by directly focusing on the most significant ailments of CF patients, delivered directly to the lungs as an inhaled therapy. The Company expects to complete pre-clinical studies in 2022 and begin a Phase 1/2A clinical trial of KIT2014 soon thereafter.

The financing round will also enable Kither to begin expanding and diversifying its pipeline of products for the treatment of rare pulmonary diseases by launching the pre-clinical development of KITCL27, a small molecule PI3K inhibitor pro-drug being developed as a monotherapy for idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis.

The fundraising was co-led by new investors Claris Ventures and 2 Invest, with participation from 3B Future Health Fund and Alef 6. Existing investors CDP Venture Capital SGR, Italian Angels for Growth, Ersel, Club degli Investitori and ACE Venture also joined the financing round. Pietro Puglisi, Partner at Claris Ventures and Heikki Lanckriet, CEO of 4BaseBio will join Kither’s Board of Directors.

Kither also announces today the appointment of Dr. Vincent Metzler as Chief Executive Officer, while current CEO Marco Kevin Malisani transitions to the role of Chief Financial Officer and remains a member of the Board of Directors. Dr. Metzler has served on the Board of Directors of Kither since June 2020, bringing more than 20 years of experience in commercial operations in pharma and biotech. Prior to joining Kither, Dr. Metzler was Vice President, Head of Marketing and Commercial Operations, Europe, at immunotherapy company Atara Biotherapeutics, and a member of the Executive Leadership Team of Wilson Therapeutics, a Swedish biotech clinical-stage company.

The Board of Directors will be chaired by Laura Iris Ferro, early investor in Kither and founder of Gentium, acquired by Jazz Pharmaceuticals for \$1bn.

Dr. Vincent Metzler, CEO at Kither Biotech, commented: *“Kither is committed to developing transformative therapies for patients living with rare pulmonary diseases. The fundraise marks a pivotal moment for the Company as we progress our first product into the clinic and further expand our product pipeline. We are proud to have the support of this high-quality syndicate of investors as we drive forward to our next stage of growth.”*

Pietro Puglisi, Managing Partner at Claris Ventures, and Hansjörg Plaggemars, CEO of 2Invest, said: *“We are thrilled to support Kither Biotech as it prepares to enter the clinic with its lead candidate KIT2014. This is a very exciting time for the Company, and we welcome the appointment of Dr. Vincent Metzler, a highly experienced executive, as CEO. With its high-quality science, expert leadership team, and strong syndicate of investors, Kither Biotech is ideally positioned to accelerate the clinical development of its therapies for the benefit of millions of patients affected by rare respiratory diseases.”*

Heikki Lanckriet, newly appointed Non-executive Director at Kither Biotech said: *“I am excited to join the Kither Biotech board of directors at such an exciting phase. As the team strives to develop innovative therapies for the treatment of cystic Fibrosis and expand its pipeline of treatments for respiratory diseases, I look forward to be supporting the Company’s ambitions alongside such a high-quality syndicate of investors.”*

Marco Kevin Malisani, Co-Founder, CFO and Executive Director at Kither Biotech, added: *“This financing round represents a transformational moment for Kither, further strengthening our shareholder base and our management team. Starting off as an academic spin-off from the University of Torino and Novara we have been able to attract numerous established investors: this is a clear demonstration of our cutting-edge science. I am also pleased to welcome the appointment of Dr. Vincent Metzler as CEO: his extensive international pharmaceutical experience will be invaluable as we accelerate the development of our promising therapeutic candidates.”*

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About Kither Biotech

Kither Biotech is a biopharma company founded by Prof. Alessandra Ghigo, Prof. Emilio Hirsch, Prof. Alberto Bardelli and Marco Kevin Malisani. The company aims to identify and develop new drug candidates for the treatment of rare pulmonary diseases, with specific focus on cystic fibrosis and idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis. Kither Biotech is a spin-off from the University of Turin and actively collaborates with the Molecular Biotechnology Center (University of Turin) and other research centres in the world. The company developed a pipeline of treatments currently under preclinical development, with programs in cystic fibrosis, idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis and other respiratory diseases. [|www.kitherbiotech.com](http://www.kitherbiotech.com)

About KIT2014

KIT2014 is a cell-permeable cAMP modulating peptide that disrupts the interaction of PI3Kgamma with its partner, protein kinase A (PKA), leading to type 3 and 4 phosphodiesterases (PDE3/4) inhibition and, in turn, to enhanced cAMP responses within the cell. KIT2014 is currently being investigated for the

treatment of cystic fibrosis (CF) as an add-on inhalation therapy to the current standard of care, enabling improved efficacy by directly impacting mucus hypersecretion, airway inflammation and bronchoconstriction, the most significant ailments of CF patients. When inhaled, KIT2014 increases cAMP locally in bronchial epithelial cells to promote the opening of CFTR chloride channels, which are key to mucus hydration, while in lung smooth muscle and immune cells cAMP elevation limits bronchoconstriction and neutrophil infiltration. In CF patients, treatment with KIT2014 is believed to restore the function of CFTR mutants by potentiating the effects of CFTR modulators (Ghigo et al., *Science Translational Medicine*, in press).