



Kahimmune Therapeutics signs exclusive licensing agreement with Gustave Roussy and SATT Paris-Saclay

- **Newly created spin-off of Gustave Roussy and SATT Paris-Saclay specializing in immuno-oncology will exploit hidden genome, also known as dark genome or non-coding genome**
- **It intends to develop a first vaccine candidate against colorectal cancer and pancreatic cancer**

Avignon, France, February 2, 2026 – Kahimmune Therapeutics, a biotechnology company developing next-generation immuno-oncology therapies, today announces the signing of an exclusive licensing agreement with Gustave Roussy, the European leader in oncology, and SATT Paris-Saclay, experts in technology transfer.

Created at the end of 2025, Kahimmune draws on the latest discoveries in immunology relating to the dark genome. Non-coding RNAs represent 98% of our DNA, yet we currently know very little about them. The 2024 Nobel Prize in Medicine was awarded to researchers in this field, which is getting more traction.

The technology transfer agreement signed by Gustave Roussy and SATT Paris-Saclay grants Kahimmune an exclusive license over the core technology of its Kahinomics™ platform and the first neoantigens derived from it, known as Kahigens™. This innovative platform enables the discovery of novel tumor-specific antigens inside the dark genome, which are safer and more effective.

Kahimmune intends to develop shared mRNA cancer vaccines which will use these neoantigens. The purpose of these companion vaccines is to improve patient survival and quality of life. They will be combined with cancer treatments to optimize them, making them safer and more effective. The company's first vaccine candidate will target colorectal cancer and pancreatic cancer.

"Creating Kahimmune further demonstrates our capacity to enhance the leading scientific work coming out of public cancer research," said Christophe Javaud, executive director of the Technology Transfer Office at Gustave Roussy Transfert. "This approach is particularly innovative because it explores the cancer immunopeptidome¹ in developing next-generation immuno-oncology therapies."

Kahimmune uses technologies that stem from research undertaken by Dr. Sébastien Apcher, a researcher at Inserm (the French National Institute of Health and Medical Research) and group leader of the Non-conventional Epitopes Cancer Immune Responses unit at Gustave Roussy. For more than 15 years, he has been studying an original antigen source model – Pioneer Translation Products (PTPs) – which play a role in anti-tumor immune responses.

¹ Most of the cells in the body present protein fragments (including those derived from pathogens) on their surface due to MHC class I molecules. These peptides are usually referred to as immunopeptides and their appearance on immune cells affects immunity.

"SATT Paris-Saclay is extremely proud of having funded and supported this immuno-oncology innovation project, which addresses a major clinical need, since 2017. The creation of the Kahimmune Therapeutics start-up marks a crucial step in furthering the development of this innovation and making it available to patients," said Kenza Belhaj, director of Life Sciences Investments at SATT Paris-Saclay.

According to the WHO, colorectal cancer is currently the third most diagnosed cancer and the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths worldwide, with 1.9 million new cases and 900,000 deaths a year. These figures are likely to grow by [more than 70% and 90% respectively by 2050](#). As for pancreatic cancer, it is ranked 13th in the most diagnosed cancers, with more than 510,000 new cases a year. It has an extremely poor outcome and represents the 6th leading cause of cancer-related deaths, with more than 467,000 deaths a year. Here too, projections indicate [growth of more than 65% and 70% respectively by 2050](#).

"Kahimmune targets cancers that are unfortunately extremely common, aggressive and fast growing. The exclusive transfer agreement with Gustave Roussy and SATT Paris-Saclay enables us to enter this market with solid R&D assets and a significant competitive advantage," added Philippe Villain-Guillot, Kahimmune founder and CEO. "A seed funding round is already underway. Longer term, we aim to license the assets in our pipeline or create partnerships with pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies interested in our approach."

About Gustave Roussy

Ranked as the leading French and European Cancer Centre and fourth in the world, Gustave Roussy is a centre with comprehensive expertise and is devoted entirely to patients suffering with cancer. The Institute is a founding member of the Paris Saclay Cancer Cluster. It is a source of diagnostic and therapeutic advances. It caters to almost 52,000 patients per year, including close to 3,000 children and teenagers, and its approach is one that integrates research, patient care and teaching. It is specialized in the treatment of rare cancers and complex tumors and it treats all cancers in patients of any age. Its care is personalized and combines the most advanced medical methods with an appreciation of the patient's human requirements. In addition to the quality of treatment offered, the physical, psychological and social aspects of the patient's life are respected. 4,000 professionals work on its two campuses: Villejuif and Chevilly-Larue. Gustave Roussy brings together the skills that are essential for the highest quality research in oncology: 32% of patients treated are included in clinical studies.

For further information: <http://www.gustaveroussy.fr/en>, [X](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [Bluesky](#).

About SATT Paris-Saclay

SATT Paris-Saclay, supported by its shareholders (Paris-Saclay University, CNRS, Institut Polytechnique de Paris, Bpifrance), develops the competitiveness of companies through innovation, by promoting the technologies, skills and expertise of the 16,000 researchers in the 300 laboratories of the Paris-Saclay Cluster. Its core business is the maturation of innovation on a technological, legal and economic level. SATT Paris-Saclay works closely with companies to carry out jointly developed maturation projects and to develop innovation services. It offers industry operating licenses for mature technologies. SATT Paris-Saclay is a member of the SATT Network.

Since 2014: €58 million invested in commercialization, more than 180 innovative projects funded and 43 start-ups created.

www.satt-paris-saclay.fr

About Kahimmune Therapeutics

Kahimmune Therapeutics is a pioneering biotechnology company that is re-exploring the cancer immunopeptidome to develop next-generation immuno-oncology therapies. By drawing on major discoveries relating to the dark genome – or non-coding genome – Kahimmune identifies exclusive new antigens, called Kahigens™, to design companion, shared cancer vaccines for use in combination with other therapies. A Gustave Roussy and SATT Paris-Saclay spin-off, the company combines a proprietary platform, Kahinomics™, with an exclusive intellectual property portfolio, to develop a strong pipeline targeting high incidence cancers, such as pancreatic and colorectal tumors. It is supported by Impulse, the French inter-university incubator, and is a member of the Eurobiomed competitiveness cluster.

Kahimmune Therapeutics, created in late 2025 and based in Avignon, France, has been established by an experienced founding team alongside strategic partnerships, with the aim of transforming cancer treatment through bold innovation in immunotherapy.

www.kahimmune.com

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