



MICure wins Venture Challenge Spring 2012

25,000 euro for innovative therapy for melanoma

Maarsse, June 8, 2012

The Dutch Life Sciences SME Event proved to be a successful day, in particular for life science venture MICure. The start-up company was named the winner of the Venture Challenge Spring 2012 and took home 25,000 euro to further develop their venture. MICure is developing an effective treatment for melanoma, the most deadly form of cancer.

All six teams participating in the Venture Challenge were each granted 1 minute to pitch their business plan during the Dutch Life Sciences SME Event on June 8 in Maarsse. The start-up companies were varied, ranging from accurate computer planning for surgeons, biogas production from manure, to food analysis services. The jury, consisting of investors and experienced biotech entrepreneurs, criticized both their pitch and business plan. MICure did best, the jury judged. Their focus is clear and the product is easy to comprehend, jury Chairman Carine van den Brink said. 'They knew how to present their venture and were able to give convincing answers to questions the jury had. Their first results in mouse models are very promising.'

MICure aims to develop a better therapy for melanoma, a deadly form of skin cancer. 'In the US every hour someone dies from melanoma; there is no effective treatment available for advanced stages of the disease', CEO Rosalie Luiten said. 'MIC therapy is patient-friendly and consists of two creams and an injection. It's effective, has little side effects, is widely applicable and can be produced at low costs', she numerates the benefits of their product. The venture already obtained preclinical proof of concept in mouse models, which also showed protection against recurrence of the disease in the long term. The start-up company believes the therapy can make the difference to the many melanoma patients worldwide by improving their quality of life and hopefully offer a cure for the disease.

'Obviously we had hoped to win, but certainly did not expect it. Some others had strong concepts too and it's difficult to compare such different plans', Luiten said afterwards. The team, which also includes Esther Tijn, Sanne Stembert, Marije Marsman and Rick Versteegh, was exalted with their achievement. 'It's fantastic. It's very motivating and a great acknowledgment that we're on the right track.' Luiten is happy they took up the challenge. 'It's a unique opportunity to get coached by such experienced people. The workshops are very intensive and you learn a lot, also from your fellow contestants. The whole process will make you achieve more; we certainly did', she laughed. 'Although I still have a hard time believing it. I might wake up tomorrow and think: is this real?'

About the Venture Challenge

The Venture Challenge offers advice and coaching on essential elements for setting up a life sciences business. In two 3-day workshops, participating teams are continuously challenged by the facilitators and each other to streamline their business plan and improve their pitch. The team with the best business plan and pitch is awarded 25,000 euro to further develop their venture.

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