NEWS RELEASE

NextRNA Therapeutics Expands Executive Team with Appointment of Jesse Smith, PhD as Chief Scientific Officer

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- Dr. Smith brings over 20 years of drug discovery and development experience and leadership with a focus on first-in-class targeted small molecule medicines
- Dr. Smith will lead NextRNA's R&D strategy as the company continues to pioneer lncRNAs as a new class of therapeutic targets, with an initial focus on oncology and neuroscience

BOSTON--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- NextRNA Therapeutics, a biotechnology company focused on developing transformative medicines to address long non-coding RNA (lncRNA)-driven diseases, today announced the appointment of Jesse Smith, Ph.D., as Chief Scientific Officer (CSO). Dr. Smith brings to NextRNA over 20 years of drug discovery and development experience with a deep focus on advancing first-in-class targeted small molecule therapies. lncRNAs represent a vast class of therapeutic targets that recruit RNA-binding proteins (RBPs) to drive pathological processes across diseases. NextRNA's focus on disrupting lncRNA-RBP interactions with small molecules represents an innovative approach to develop a new class of therapeutic agents.

"We're delighted to welcome Dr. Jesse Smith, a seasoned small molecule discovery and development pioneer, to lead our scientific organization as CSO," said Dominique Verhelle, Ph.D., MBA, NextRNA Co-Founder and CEO. "There is increasing evidence that lncRNAs are implicated in the pathogenesis of a broad spectrum of diseases. With our unique platform and capabilities, we are well positioned to discover new lncRNA targets and develop transformative medicines for patients. I look forward to Jesse's stewardship of both our internal programs in oncology and neuroscience as well as our current and future partnered programs across a breath of therapeutic areas."

Dr. Smith commented, “I’m excited to join NextRNA, working with Dominique and the entire team as the company continues to entrench its position as a leader in the rapidly emerging lncRNA space. NextRNA’s therapeutic approach, centered on inhibiting the function of lncRNAs with small molecules, has the potential to address multiple high unmet diseases. I’m so impressed by the team’s progress in a very short time, building and validating its proprietary platform, advancing initial oncology and neuroscience programs, and securing a key pharma partnership. I look forward to continuing this momentum as we maximize the promise of NextRNA’s approach in the months and years to come.”

NextRNA recently **announced** a multi-year strategic partnership collaboration and license agreement with Bayer to develop small molecule therapeutics targeting lncRNAs in oncology.

Prior to joining NextRNA, Dr. Smith was the CSO at Civetta Therapeutics, a Deerfield-backed company that was focused on drugging Beta Propeller proteins for therapeutic intervention in oncology and other diseases. Previously, Dr. Smith was Senior Vice President of Translational Biology at Remix Therapeutics, a Cambridge, Mass.-based biotech focused on drugging RNA processing to target drivers of human disease. Dr. Smith helped initiate Remix’s first-in-class MYB mRNA degrader program, which is currently in early oncology clinical trials. Dr. Smith spent a decade in epigenetic drug discovery, most notably as Vice President of Biology at Epizyme Pharmaceuticals, where he made important contributions to the first-in-class EZH2 inhibitor, Tazverik® and to the first two arginine methyltransferase inhibitors to enter clinical development. Dr. Smith earned a Ph.D. in molecular cancer biology and cell biology from Duke University.

About NextRNA Therapeutics

NextRNA is a biotechnology company focused on developing transformative medicines to address long non-coding RNA (lncRNA)-driven diseases, with a primary focus on oncology and neuroscience. Dysregulated lncRNAs recruit RNA-binding proteins (RBPs) to drive pathological processes across disease areas. Our therapeutic approach centers on inhibiting the function of lncRNAs by disrupting the interaction between lncRNAs and RBPs with small molecules. NextRNA’s strategy is uniquely differentiated in that it offers optionality to target the lncRNA or the RBP side of the interaction. Our team is driven by a common passion to advance pioneering science that impacts patients.

For more information, visit us at **https://www.nextrnatx.com** and follow us on **LinkedIn**.

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