



## **Normunity announces \$65 million Series A financing to expand the frontier of precision immuno-oncology with immune normalizer therapies**

*Company's medicines target unprecedented mechanisms that free the body's normal immunity against cancer*

*Immuno-oncology discovery engine based on ongoing academic-biotech research from the Lieping Chen lab at Yale School of Medicine*

*First pipeline programs focused on novel mechanisms of tumor T-cell exclusion*

Boston, Mass., and West Haven, Conn. – October 25, 2022 – [Normunity, Inc.](#), a biotechnology company creating novel precision anti-cancer immunotherapies, today announced its launch and Series A financing of \$65 million. The Series A was led by Canaan Ventures and included participation by Sanofi Ventures, Taiho Ventures and Osage University Partners. Normunity's new class of agents, called immune normalizers, target previously undiscovered mechanisms of immune disruption in cancer. The company's pipeline is drawn from the ongoing and interactive academic-biotech research taking place at Yale School of Medicine, leveraging proprietary discovery platforms from the lab of Dr. Lieping Chen, an immuno-oncology luminary who identified PD-L1 (B7-H1) among other seminal contributions to the field.

“The normal immune system is a powerful anti-cancer force, and effective immune-stimulating strategies can result in long-lasting cancer remissions, even cures. Yet, today's immunotherapies don't capitalize on the full anti-cancer potential of the normal immune system, and most cancer patients do not respond to available treatment options. This leaves an untapped immune biology that we have begun to uncover,” said Lieping Chen, MD, PhD, scientific founder of Normunity and UTC Professor in Cancer Research and Professor of Immunobiology, of Dermatology and of Medicine (Medical Oncology) at Yale School of Medicine. “Working together with Normunity, we are finding previously hidden mechanisms of tumor-dependent immune disruption and we aim to usher in a new era of drug discovery for precision immuno-oncology with medicines that normalize immune function.”

The Series A financing will enable Normunity to advance its emerging pipeline of immune normalizers into the clinic. The company's initial pipeline programs target mechanisms that drive the exclusion of T cells into immune-sensitive tumors and aim to deliver an active and effective immune system into 'cold' tumors. Proceeds from the financing will also be used to build on multiple discovery platforms in the Lieping Chen lab to pursue additional mechanisms that block normal anti-cancer immunity.

“It is so clear to everyone involved in launching Normunity that there is remarkable potential to translate the Lieping Chen lab's leading-edge discoveries into breakthrough cancer immunotherapies. We have built the right team and the right seamless collaboration between Normunity and the Lieping Chen lab to rapidly cultivate scientific discovery, jointly share expertise, and advance a novel class of drugs that can potentially set a new standard in the immuno-oncology landscape,” said Tim Shannon, MD, General Partner at Canaan Ventures and Chair of Normunity's Board of Directors.

The company's unique model is a collaborative and iterative workflow between the Lieping Chen lab and Normunity to identify novel immuno-oncology mechanisms through proprietary platforms, interrogate

and validate the emerging targets together pre-clinically and clinically. This academic-biotech alliance leverages world-class scientists with deeply experienced drug designers and developers in a new way.

“Normunity is leading the way in establishing a new roadmap for I-O drug discovery with a simple and powerful premise: to free the immune system to work with maximal potential against cancer. With our scientific approach, we are pioneering novel mechanisms where there is unexplored potential for new medicines. With our R&D model, we have established a first-of-a-kind collaboration with the Lieping Chen lab that has already been prolific in identifying and validating novel targets,” said Rachel Humphrey, MD, founding Chief Executive Officer. “We have strong momentum advancing our pipeline of immune normalizers as we translate groundbreaking biology into life-changing medicines for cancer patients.”

### **Leadership in immuno-oncology**

Leading the academic-biotech teams that are harnessing the potential of the Lieping Chen lab’s proprietary platforms and Normunity’s drug development are Rachel Humphrey, MD, Normunity’s Chief Executive Officer, and Lieping Chen, MD, PhD, whose lab is responsible for many important discoveries in immuno-oncology pathways.

Among his seminal contributions to the field of immuno-oncology, Dr. Chen played an integral role in the discovery of the PD-1/PD-L1 pathway and its immune-suppressive functions. His lab performed foundational work that led to the invention of anti-PD-1/PD-L1 antibody therapy. In addition, he was deeply involved in the first-in-human trial for Opdivo® (nivolumab), and invented PD-L1 clinical measurement tools. Dr. Humphrey has 25 years of experience with a focus in oncology, including leading the development of the cancer immunotherapies Yervoy® (ipilimumab) at BMS and Imfinzi® (durvalumab) at AstraZeneca, as well as the tyrosine kinase inhibitor Nexavar® (sorafenib) at Bayer. Her biotech leadership roles include CMO at Black Diamond Therapeutics, CytomX and Mirati, and independent Board of Director positions at CytomX, Xilio, Pyxis and Sporos.

The Normunity team brings together experienced drug development leaders with decades of experience in novel drug discovery and clinical advancement of novel cancer and immuno-oncology drugs who have played key roles in the development of more than 30 distinct approved drugs.

### **About Normunity**

Normunity, Inc., is a biotechnology company creating a new class of precision immuno-oncology medicines, called immune normalizers, that target novel mechanisms that free the body’s normal immunity against cancer. Based on an ongoing, interactive academic-biotech partnership with the lab of Dr. Lieping Chen at Yale School of Medicine, Normunity is targeting newly-discovered mechanisms of immune disruption in cancer based on proprietary discovery platforms that elucidate the complex interactions between human cancer and the immune system. The company is advancing an emerging pipeline of immune normalizers, including initial drug programs that target mechanisms that drive the exclusion of T-cells from immune-sensitive tumors and other mechanisms that are barriers to normal immune function in cancer. Normunity is located in Boston, Mass. and West Haven, Conn. For more information, please visit [www.normunity.com](http://www.normunity.com).

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