

ALS Association Funded Research Attracts \$42 Million in Private Funding

QurAlis, a biotech company focused on developing targeted therapeutics for ALS and a recipient of a \$250,000 funding grant from The ALS Association in 2019, recently announced that it had raised \$42 million in a Series A venture capital financing round to advance its research into ALS treatments. The private investment round brings the total amount raised by QurAlis to \$50.5 million.

“The great support of our existing and new investors from the US, Europe and Japan underscores the international nature of our mission,” said Kasper Roet, Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer of QurAlis. “We plan to use this funding to continue advancing ALS and FTD therapies for patients around the world who are in critical need of effective treatments.”

One of the processes affected by ALS is the clearance of damaged proteins from the cell. This waste clearance process is known as autophagy. In QurAlis’ autophagy program, the company is working on developing a drug that would bring the waste clearance pathways back to normal functioning levels. The company is working on a chemical compound to test potency in a cellular model of ALS and anticipates reaching clinical trials in about 2 years. Daniel Elbaum, Ph.D., is principal investigator on the project.

The follow-on funding QurAlis has received validates the Association’s initial support for this research and underscores the importance of identifying promising research early.

“When we fund a project, we do so with the intention that other larger funders, such as the federal government or the private sector, will be able to carry the work forward. This strategy works,” said Kuldip Dave, Ph.D., vice president of research at The ALS Association.

Independent research has shown that researchers funded by The ALS Association have successfully leveraged that support into follow-on funding

from government and private-sector donors. One of the key strategies developed by the ALS Association is to identify opportunities to make research dollars and grants go further, helping to expand the number of projects worthy of advancement.