

Reimagining cancer treatment

PEPTOMYC



### Making the impossible, possible

Dr Soucek was advised by many people not to progress beyond the proof of concept for her strategy of targeting Myc protein to mount a universal attack on cancer.

In addition to the high costs involved, as a scientist, with no experience of the complex steps involved in progressing a product to market, Dr Soucek faced difficulties securing the support she needed to start a business.

On average, it costs **€2.3 billion** to bring a medicine to market.<sup>[3]</sup>

### Joining the EIT Health community – becoming an entrepreneur

Dr Soucek's tenacity and passion for fighting cancer led her to EIT Health. She attended a series of programmes that helped her gain the vital financial and business support she needed for her new start-up, Peptomyc.

Access to EIT Health's vast network meant Dr Soucek also received bespoke advice from internationally renowned consultants and had the opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with other founders of other start-ups, equipping her with the knowledge she needed to progress and test her theory.

"Our mentors have followed us and have changed every time we needed a different expert perspective and that has been fantastic" – **Dr Laura Soucek**

### Paving the way for others

Peptomyc is now completing the industrial production of their medicine and is planning to start clinical trials in patients in 2020.

Dr Soucek and her team were the first researchers to show that inhibiting Myc was feasible and has a therapeutic impact against cancer without damaging normal tissues.<sup>[2]</sup>

The research has since paved the way for many more groups around the world who are now developing their own Myc inhibitors.<sup>[5]</sup>

"I don't feel alone anymore. I have support from EIT Health and we have investors in the company that believe in the project." – **Dr Laura Soucek**

## spotlight

**Cancer is the cause of every fourth death in Europe<sup>[1]</sup> and is one of the greatest challenges facing our world.**

EIT Health is committed to supporting entrepreneurs such as Dr Soucek and start-ups like Peptomyc to develop improved patient-oriented strategies for combating cancer. EIT Health supports and equips the most promising scientists with the skill-set and acumen to accelerate their life-changing ideas into solutions. The EIT Health network creates an environment where breakthroughs like Dr Soucek's can progress and become a possibility.

### Dr Laura Soucek's story

As a student, Dr Laura Soucek focused her studies on a protein called Myc, which plays an important role in cancer cells' survival and proliferation. She believed attacking it could lead to a potential therapy for many different types of cancer. However, her peers met her theory with scepticism. As Myc was also shared by healthy cells and was difficult to target, Dr Soucek was told that her idea was too risky, impossible, even.

When she finally managed to prove that inhibiting Myc was possible,<sup>[2]</sup> Dr Soucek lacked the necessary funding to start a business and further develop her solution. On average, it costs €2.3 billion to bring a medicine to market.<sup>[3]</sup> This makes it extremely difficult for anyone other than large companies to fulfil the necessary research, development and market access requirements.

Fortunately, her drive to continue with this potentially transformative idea, despite the challenges, led her to the EIT Health community.

Being part of the EIT Health community meant Dr Soucek was able to access a vast network of support, which provided her with funding and helped her gain the business acumen she needed to advance into clinical testing.

Dr Laura Soucek has become a leading figure in the Myc field, publishing in top scientific journals such as Nature and Science Translational Medicine.<sup>[2] [4]</sup> Her ground-breaking research could lead to a medicine suitable for treating many different types of cancers.<sup>[4]</sup>

#### TEAM:

DR. LAURA SOUCEK, DR. MARIE-EVE BEAULIEU, DR. MANUELA NIEWEL, M.D., and Peptomyc Research Team.



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[1] Eurostat Statistics Explained. Causes of death statistics. [online] Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Causes\\_of\\_death\\_statistics](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Causes_of_death_statistics) [Accessed 23 Oct. 2019].

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