



TheraSonic, a CEA spin-off created end of 2023, closes a fundraising led by the venture studio M2care for the development of a breakthrough technology designed to improve drug delivery into the brain

Paris, Lyon, Villejuif, May 14, 2024 - TheraSonic, a startup founded at the end of 2023 and emerging from CEA, announces a fundraising of €1 million to finance the development of its robotic medical device designed to improve drug delivery in the brain through the use of focused ultrasound.

This fundraising is led by the European venture studio M2care, created on the initiative of Mérieux Développement, specialized in healthtech, and associated with the project for a year in pre-creation. Gustave Roussy Transfert, a company dedicated to innovation and technology transfer, a subsidiary of Gustave Roussy, Europe's leading cancer fighting center, also enters the capital of TheraSonic to enable access to unique clinical expertise to ensure the technological transition to the first patients as quickly as possible.

TheraSonic is a Medtech startup whose ambition is to transform the treatment of neurological diseases by improving drug delivery in the brain. The startup initially addresses brain metastases affecting more than 30,000 new people each year in France. The treatment of brain cancers represents a market of nearly \$4 billion in 2023 and could reach \$7 billion by 2033, driven by the increase in cancer incidence and the improvement of treatments for peripheral tumors.

To meet this strong medical need, TheraSonic is developing a medical robot that allows targeted administration of ultrasound to the brain without surgery or anesthesia during short therapeutic sessions. Combined with the intravenous injection of microbubbles, these focused ultrasounds induce a transient increase in the permeability of the cerebral blood vessels, allowing drugs to access their targets in the brain.

TheraSonic was co-founded by Benoit Larrat and Anthony Novell, who combine nearly 30 years of research on therapeutic ultrasound, respectively at CEA and CNRS, mobilizing more than €3 million on the topic since 2010. These efforts have been recognized through several patents and more than 40 international scientific publications. Over the past three years, the company's project has benefited from CEA's Magellan program for business creation. The founding team is completed by the venture

studio M2care, which brings human support with the involvement of 6 people and a financial investment of more than €900,000.

In autumn 2023, TheraSonic was selected by the Paris-Saclay Cancer Cluster to be supported in its development. As such, TheraSonic benefits from privileged access to the cancer fighting ecosystem (training, expert network, office spaces, clinical trials, etc.).

Benoit Larrat, president and co-founder of TheraSonic, states: *“This first fundraising provides us with the necessary resources to quickly realize the first clinical trial of our technology with the goal of bringing its benefits to patients as soon as possible. In this context, the choice of the venture studio model is relevant as it contributes to the development of the company by bringing complementary expertise to the scientific and medical skills, and allows us to focus our first recruitments on technology.”*

Florence Thueux, president of M2care, declares: *“M2care is proud to co-create and support the TheraSonic project by bringing entrepreneurial skills and funds to TheraSonic. This project is emblematic of the value brought by our venture studio to startups in pre- and post-creation phases to help them develop and move towards seed and Series A financing. We are very pleased to partner with Benoît Larrat, Anthony Novell, CEA Investment, and Gustave Roussy in this ambitious project addressing fundamental health challenges.”*

Laurence Petit, Deputy Director for Innovation, Start-ups, and Investments at CEA, announces: *“We have supported TheraSonic via our Magellan program for 3 years and since its creation through our subsidiary CEA Investment with the help of Supernova Invest teams. We are very pleased to partner with M2care to ensure the continuation and acceleration of this project. It is the first time we are collaborating in this way with a startup studio. Stemming from 14 years of fundamental research in brain imaging at CEA, it showcases a significant breakthrough innovation for the treatment of brain metastases and, eventually, neurological diseases.”*

Christophe Javaud, Executive Director of Gustave Roussy Transfer, adds: *“We are very proud to be among the co-founders of TheraSonic, Benoît Larrat, Anthony Novell, M2care, and CEA Investment, and to be able to support this project as innovative as promising. Our teams are mobilized to enable an upcoming entry into clinical phase, whose results will soon benefit our patients suffering from neurological conditions.”*

About TheraSonic

TheraSonic is a MedTech startup that aims to improve the treatment of neurological diseases, particularly brain cancers, by facilitating drug access to the central nervous system. For this purpose, TheraSonic will evaluate in clinical trials and then bring to market a robotic transcranial ultrasound medical device capable of temporarily and locally permeabilizing the blood-brain barrier. Alongside the clinical validation of its device, TheraSonic is developing partnerships with the pharmaceutical industry from the preclinical stage to demonstrate the added value of the ultrasound approach for different therapeutic classes and medical indications.

For more information: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/therasonic/>

About CEA

CEA illuminates public decision-making and provides concrete scientific and technological solutions to the vital forces (companies and communities) in major areas for society: energy and digital transitions, future health, defense, and global security. As the leading public research organization in the top 100 global innovation players (Clarivate 2024), CEA plays a catalytic and accelerative role in

innovation for French industry. It improves the competitiveness of companies across all sectors through the creation of high-performance, differentiated products and provides innovative solutions to shed light on societal changes. CEA extends this dynamic throughout all regions of France by supporting its local partners in their innovation efforts, thus contributing to the creation of sustainable value and jobs in close proximity to industrial needs. Concurrently, it supports the development of its 250 startups, agile vectors for transferring the know-how and breakthrough technologies from laboratories.

For more information: www.cea.fr

About M2care

M2care is a European venture studio created at the initiative of Mérieux Développement and specialized in HealthTech. Among its reference shareholders are the Institut Mérieux, CEA Investment, and UI Investment. M2care establishes, develops and finances innovative projects at early stages of maturity alongside project leaders. M2care is an essential link connecting academics, investors, and industrialists thanks to its investment capacity and the operational deployment of its team. With an experienced and complementary team of in-residence entrepreneurs, a unique international network, and ad-hoc ecosystems built for each project, M2care enables ideas and technologies born in laboratories to become health products on the market for the improvement of public health and patient benefit.

For more information: www.m2.care

About Gustave Roussy Transfert

Gustave Roussy Transfert is the subsidiary of Gustave Roussy dedicated to innovation and technology transfer. Since its establishment in 2000, Gustave Roussy Transfert ensures the identification, characterization, promotion, and valorization of assets and expertise generated by the scientific and medical community of Gustave Roussy. With its expertise in supporting and developing innovative startups in oncology, Gustave Roussy Transfert has supported over 20 companies since its creation and currently has a dynamic portfolio of 17 holdings.

For more information: www.gustaveroussy.fr

About Gustave Roussy

Ranked first in France, first in Europe, and fourth globally, Gustave Roussy is a global expertise hub entirely dedicated to patients living with cancer. As a founding pillar of the oncology biocluster Paris-Saclay Cancer Cluster, Gustave Roussy is a source of therapeutic innovations and diagnostic advancements. Each year, the Institute welcomes nearly 50,000 patients, including 3,500 children and adolescents, and develops an integrated approach between research, care, and teaching. Expert in rare cancers and complex tumors, Gustave Roussy treats all cancers at all stages of life. It offers its patients personalized care that combines innovation and humanity, taking into account not only treatment but also physical, psychological, and social quality of life. With 4,100 employees spread over two sites, Villejuif and Chevilly-Larue, Gustave Roussy brings together the expertise necessary for high-level cancer research; 40% of the patients treated are included in clinical studies.

For more information and updates from Gustave Roussy: www.gustaveroussy.fr, [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#)

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