



FastForwardSM

General Fund

This project is funded by the National Multiple Sclerosis Society through Fast Forward, LLC, in order to accelerate the commercial development of MS treatments. The Society and Fast Forward connect university-based MS research with private-sector drug development and fund small biotechnology/pharmaceutical companies to develop innovative new MS therapies and repurpose FDA-approved drugs as new treatments for MS.

<i>Primary Investigator</i>	<i>Project Title</i>	<i>Amount to be Committed</i>
Frank Sieg, PhD CuroNZ Ltd Auckland, New Zealand	Preclinical proof-of-concept studies of a neural regenerative peptide that targets CXCR4	\$540,000 Term – 13 months

About the Company

CuroNZ is a small biotechnology start-up company with exclusive rights to a patent portfolio of Neural Regeneration Peptides (NRPs), identified by Dr. Frank Sieg, one of the company's Directors. The company's plan is to develop a drug candidate to the end of preclinical and Phase I Clinical development with the aim of licensing it or reaching other commercial arrangements to enable partners to take it through clinical development and to market.



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Project Background & Goals

Multiple sclerosis occurs when an immune attack is launched on the brain and spinal cord. Long-term disability may occur when nerve-insulating myelin and the underlying nerve fibers are destroyed. Because the disease-modifying therapies that are currently available for the treatment of MS are only partially effective, there is a clear need for new therapies that promote the protection and regeneration of myelin and nerve fibers.

CuroNZ has a portfolio of Neural Regenerative Peptides (NRPs), small synthetic protein fragments that promote survival and proliferation of immature nerve cells. They have preliminary evidence that the peptide “NRP2945” may help to protect nerve cells from damage, promote their proliferation, and fight inflammation. Now they are studying this peptide in mice with EAE, an MS-like disease. In particular, they are looking at how the peptide is absorbed, any toxic effects, and its particular mechanism of action.

These studies will help to drive research forward on a promising candidate drug that may ultimately be shown capable of protecting the nervous system and restoring function in people with MS.