



Visara Expands Ophthalmology Pipeline with Exclusive License for Investigational Nerve Growth Factor Therapy for Neurotrophic Keratitis

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Visara secures exclusive worldwide rights, excluding Greater China, from Wuhan Hiteck Biological Pharma to develop and commercialize HT006.2.2

Visara plans to develop HT006.2.2 as VIS-102, its second clinical-stage program, expanding the Company's ophthalmology portfolio beyond retinal vascular disease into ocular surface disease

HT006.2.2 is designed to offer a more convenient treatment option for patients with neurotrophic keratitis

ROCKVILLE, Md., Oct. 13, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Visara, Inc. ("Visara" or the "Company"), a majority-owned ophthalmology subsidiary of NovaBridge Biosciences ("NovaBridge") (NASDAQ: NBP), today announced that it has entered into an exclusive license agreement (the "License Agreement") with Wuhan Hiteck Biological Pharma Co., Ltd. ("Hiteck") for the development and commercialization of VIS-102 (HT006.2.2), an investigational next-generation modified recombinant human nerve growth factor (rhNGF) therapy designed to restore corneal health in patients with neurotrophic keratitis (NK).

In NK, damage to the corneal nerves impairs the eye's ability to heal. This can lead to persistent epithelial defects, corneal ulceration and permanent vision loss. VIS-102 is designed to restore corneal health with a more convenient treatment option for patients. In addition to formulation optimization, it incorporates targeted modifications to the NGF amino acid sequence intended to improve resistance to enzymatic degradation and maintain stability under refrigeration. These changes allow VIS-102 to potentially be supplied in ready-to-use, single-dose units. This design may reduce the storage, shipping, handling and administration burden associated with current treatments for NK.

"Patients with neurotrophic keratitis face a serious, sight-threatening disease, and the practical demands of treatment can place a significant burden on patients and their caregivers," said Jeffrey Nau, Ph.D., M.M.S., President and Chief Executive Officer of Visara. "VIS-102 was designed to address that directly. We believe its molecular architecture and refrigerated, ready-to-use format could simplify care for patients and providers. VIS-102 is a compelling addition to our pipeline as we build a company addressing unmet needs across the front and back of the eye."

"The expansion of Visara's pipeline illustrates how we are applying the NovaBridge model to build focused franchises around differentiated innovation," said Srishti Gupta, M.D., M.P.P., Chief Executive Officer of NovaBridge. "With VIS-102, Visara expands beyond retinal disease into a second area of significant unmet need. We believe this is an important step in building Visara into a broader ophthalmology company and demonstrates the repeatability of the NovaBridge approach to creating long-term value."

The program has demonstrated encouraging early clinical activity to date, further supporting Visara's decision to expand into NK through the in-licensing of VIS-102. Phase 1b data in a population of Chinese subjects with severe NK showed that in the highest dose cohort of VIS-102, after a single 8-week course, subjects achieved 50% complete corneal healing, whereas 14% of those in the vehicle control group had complete corneal healing at Week 4. In the study, those on vehicle then crossed over to active treatment from Week 5 to Week 8 and achieved 43% complete corneal healing after a 4-week course of VIS-102. Treatment related ocular adverse events were all mild and consistent with trials of rhNGF. No subjects withdrew or discontinued the study due to a related adverse event. The study will continue an expansion phase to evaluate the highest dose at both 6 times daily and 3 times daily 8-week regimens in Chinese patients with NK.

The License Agreement expands Visara's pipeline beyond its tetravalent VEGF-A × ANG-2 peptibody (VIS-101) being developed for neovascular retinal diseases and represents an important step in its evolution into a diversified ophthalmology company. VIS-102 complements Visara's existing focus on retinal vascular diseases by extending its portfolio into neuroprotection and the treatment of rare ocular surface disease.

Under the terms of the License Agreement, Visara will receive exclusive rights to develop and commercialize VIS-102 worldwide excluding Greater China. Hiteck will receive an up-front payment as well as potential development, regulatory and commercial milestone payments and tiered royalties on net sales.

About VIS-102

VIS-102 is an investigational, next-generation modified recombinant human nerve growth factor therapy being developed for the treatment of neurotrophic keratitis. VIS-102 incorporates modifications to the human nerve growth factor amino acid sequence intended to increase resistance to enzymatic degradation and support stability at refrigerated temperatures. It is designed to be

supplied in ready-to-use, single-dose units, potentially simplifying storage, distribution and patient administration.

About Neurotrophic Keratitis

Neurotrophic keratitis is a rare, degenerative disease caused by impaired sensory innervation of the cornea. The resulting loss of corneal sensation and neurotrophic support can impair healing and lead to persistent epithelial defects, corneal ulceration, stromal melting, perforation and permanent vision loss.

About Visara

Visara is a clinical stage biotechnology company dedicated to developing next-generation biologic therapies for ophthalmic diseases affecting both the front and back of the eye. From the cornea to the retina, Visara pursues the full spectrum of ocular disease as vision is irreplaceable, and the unmet need is profound. Visara is a majority-owned ophthalmology subsidiary of NovaBridge Biosciences (NASDAQ: NBP). Its pipeline includes VIS-101, a tetravalent VEGF-A × ANG-2 peptibody being developed for neovascular retinal diseases, and VIS-102, a next-generation modified recombinant human nerve growth factor therapy being developed for neurotrophic keratitis.

About NovaBridge Biosciences

NovaBridge Biosciences ("NovaBridge") (NASDAQ: NBP) is a global biotechnology company advancing a portfolio of therapeutic programs in oncology and ophthalmology. The Company identifies differentiated therapeutic opportunities, generates value-defining clinical evidence, and applies the development, financing and partnering strategy best suited to each program.

NovaBridge's portfolio is led by givastomig, a Claudin 18.2 × 4-1BB bispecific antibody being developed for the potential treatment of gastrointestinal malignancies, and Visara, its majority-owned ophthalmology subsidiary. Through Visara, NovaBridge is building a diversified ophthalmology franchise designed to address unmet needs across diseases of the front and back of the eye.

NovaBridge's objective is to build a sustainable biotechnology company by repeatedly identifying differentiated innovation, advancing it efficiently, and bringing novel therapies to patients through the path best suited to each opportunity.

For more information, please visit www.novabridge.com and follow us on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/novabridge).

Forward Looking Statements

This announcement contains forward-looking statements. These statements are made under the "safe harbor" provisions of the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These forward-looking statements can be identified by terminology such as "will," "expects," "believes," "designed to," "anticipates," "future," "intends," "plans," "potential," "estimates," "confident," and similar terms or the negative thereof. NovaBridge and Visara may also make written or oral forward-looking statements in NovaBridge's periodic reports to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC"), in its annual report to shareholders, in press releases and other written materials and in oral statements made by its officers, directors or employees to third parties. Statements that are not historical facts, including statements about NovaBridge's beliefs and expectations, are forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements in this press release include, without limitation, statements regarding: the anticipated achievement of development, regulatory and commercial milestones under the License Agreement; expected milestone and royalty payments under the License Agreement; the potential benefits of Visara's product candidates, including VIS-102; and the strategy, clinical development, plans, timing, results, safety and efficacy of Visara's drug candidates, including VIS-102. Forward-looking statements involve inherent risks and uncertainties that may cause actual results to differ materially from those contained in these forward-looking statements, including but not limited to the following: NovaBridge's or Visara's ability to demonstrate the safety and efficacy of their drug candidates; the clinical results for their drug candidates, which may or may not support further development or New Drug Application/Biologics License Application approval or eligibility for accelerated approval pathway or receipt of accelerated approval; the content and timing of decisions made by the relevant regulatory authorities, including the FDA, regarding regulatory approval of NovaBridge's or Visara's drug candidates; NovaBridge's or Visara's ability to achieve commercial success for their drug candidates, if approved; NovaBridge's or Visara's ability to obtain and maintain protection of intellectual property for their technology and drugs; NovaBridge's or Visara's reliance on third parties to conduct drug development, manufacturing and other services; NovaBridge's or Visara's limited operating history and their ability to obtain additional funding for operations and to complete the development and commercialization of their drug candidates; the impact of macroeconomic conditions, including inflation, tariffs, volatile interest rates, regulatory uncertainty, potential government shutdowns, volatility in the capital markets, and regional and other global events, including ongoing armed conflicts in different regions of the world; and those risks more fully discussed in the "Risk Factors" section in NovaBridge's annual report on Form 20-F filed with the SEC on April 7, 2026, and amended on June 16, 2026, as well as the discussions of potential risks, uncertainties, and other important factors in NovaBridge's subsequent filings with the SEC. All forward-looking statements are based on information currently available to NovaBridge. NovaBridge undertakes no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events, or otherwise, except as may be required by law.

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