Montara Therapeutics to Develop Novel Treatments Using the BrainOnly™ Platform with Grant from The Michael J. Fox Foundation

- Montara Therapeutics awarded $3.3 million non-dilutive MJFF grant to develop BrainOnly™ Parkinson's therapy targeting LRRK2, a genetically validated target with major drug development challenges.
- New collaboration to use Montara's BrainOnly platform to create a next-generation brain-selective LRRK2 inhibitor that avoids the irreversible toxicity from unselective peripheral activity.

SAN FRANCISCO, May 21, 2025 – Montara Therapeutics, a biotech company pioneering brain-selective therapies for central nervous system (CNS) diseases, today announced it has received a research grant from The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research (MJFF), in addition to joining MJFF's LRRK2 Investigative Therapeutics Exchange (LITE) program, which supports the development of new therapies that target LRRK2 while also advancing progress toward new LRRK2-relevant clinical biomarkers.

As part of MJFF's strategic research agenda to help drug developers validate new findings in Parkinson's biology and enable novel therapeutic approaches, this latest funding will support Montara's BrainOnly platform, which seeks to increase the therapeutic index of CNS drugs and enable higher, more effective dosing of CNS-targeted therapies. To achieve this, each BrainOnly product is a two-molecule combination of a brain-penetrant drug with a universal peripheral blocker that is designed to block the brain-penetrant drug's activity in the periphery, creating brain-specific pharmacology. Montara believes this approach will address major safety and tolerability challenges in the treatment of various neurological diseases, including Parkinson's disease.

As part of the collaboration, Montara will develop and design a wholly-owned next-generation BrainOnly LRRK2 inhibitor drug candidate that is paired with Montara's peripheral blocker to mitigate the adverse effects that can occur when LRRK2 is inhibited in peripheral tissues and organs, such as damage to the lung and kidney. LRRK2 is recognized as the most common cause of inherited Parkinson's disease. However, no new therapy targeting this protein has succeeded in late-stage clinical trials and reached the market.

“MJFF’s network and expertise make them a wonderful partner to our mission of developing BrainOnly™ therapies that selectively target the CNS while blocking harmful peripheral effects—in this case, enabling and accelerating the development of new therapies for Parkinson’s,” said Nicholas T. Hertz, Ph.D., Founder and CEO of Montara. “Montara is proud to be counted among the select number of industry collaborators in the LITE program and is looking forward to working with the steering committee—consisting of MJFF staff and key advisors with drug discovery and LRRK2 biology expertise—and receiving vital support toward developing the next generation of Parkinson’s disease treatments.”

“The LITE initiative seeks to provide opportunities for better understanding Parkinson's and treating it,” said Dario Alessi, PhD, Director of the MRC Protein Phosphorylation Unit at the University of Dundee and LITE principal investigator. “We welcome Montara to the initiative and are excited to explore how the Company’s BrainOnly platform could unlock the enormous potential of LRRK2-targeted therapies in a way that mitigates adverse effects.”

“I’m excited to see Montara partnering with The Michael J. Fox Foundation through the LITE program,” said Miratul Muqit, Professor of Experimental Neurology at Dundee and a member of Montara’s Scientific Advisory Board. “This team has an impressive track record in the Parkinson’s space, having advanced a potentially disease-modifying treatment at Mitokinin, and is really well positioned to replicate this success with the BrainOnly™ platform and its promise for LRRK2-targeted therapy.”

About Montara Therapeutics
Montara Therapeutics is a preclinical-stage biopharmaceutical company pursuing novel approaches to develop safer and more efficacious treatments for neurological diseases. Montara’s BrainOnly™ platform enables brain-specific pharmacology by leveraging existing and novel chemical warheads, restricting deleterious on-target / off-tissue peripheral activity. BrainOnly holds the potential to drug numerous targets previously considered undruggable, greatly expanding the therapeutic options for patients in need of these therapies. Montara is supported by an outstanding group of investors, including founding investor SV Health Investors’ Dementia Discovery Fund, Two Bear Capital, KdT Ventures, Dolby Family Ventures, and BEVC. For more information, visit montaratx.com.

About the LRRK2 Investigative Therapeutics Exchange (LITE) Program
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research (MJFF) launched LITE in 2024 to pave the way for new therapeutic approaches for LRRK2, connect companies that are developing LRRK2-targeting therapies with pharma and biotech opinion leaders,

and provide preclinical and clinical resources to establish best practices for advancing LRRK2 targeted therapeutics. Mutations in the LRRK2 gene linked to Parkinson's disease were first discovered in 2004 and are now understood to be the most common cause of inherited PD. Built on MJFF's dedication to open science, LITE fosters international collaboration across more than 30 academic and clinical centers and more than a dozen companies. The initiative is governed by an active steering committee consisting of MJFF staff and field leaders and is implemented by the University of Dundee in the United Kingdom. The LITE program also will benefit from collaboration with the Aligning Science Across Parkinson's (ASAP) initiative-supported programs including the Collaborative Research Network (CRN), the Parkinson's Progression Markers Initiative (PPMI) and the Global Parkinson's Genetics Program (GP2). Learn more here.

Media Contact:
Janine McCargo
6 Degrees
jmccargo@6degreespr.com