

# Lessons from VISTA: New Strategies to Address an Important Immune Checkpoint

November 21, 2022



## Guest Speaker:

Robert Schreiber, Ph.D.

Andrew M. and Jane M. Distinguished Professor of Pathology and Immunology; Professor, Molecular Microbiology; and Director of the Bursky Center for Human Immunology and Immunotherapy Programs at the Washington University School of Medicine. He is also co-leader of the Tumor Immunology Program of Washington University's Siteman Comprehensive Cancer Center, an Associate Director of the Scientific Advisory Board to the Cancer Research Institute and Co-editor-in-Chief of the journal Cancer Immunology Research. Schreiber obtained his PhD in Immunology/Biochemistry at the State University of New York in Buffalo, New York, and received his postdoctoral training at The Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, California. Sensei IOAB Member.

## Sensei Presenters:

John Celebi

Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Robert Pierce

Chief R&D Officer

Dr. Ron Weitzman

Interim CMO

Dr. Edward van der Horst

SVP, TMAb Antibody Development

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# Agenda

**John Celebi**

*President & Chief Executive Officer, Sensei Bio*

Welcome/TMAb Mission

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**Robert Schreiber, Ph.D.**

*Professor, Washington University School of Medicine  
Member, Sensei Immuno-Oncology Advisory Board*

VISTA Biology

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**Edward van der Horst, Ph.D.**

*SVP, TMAb Antibody Development, Sensei Bio*

SNS-101 Overview & Preclinical Data Review

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**Robert Pierce, M.D.**

*Chief R&D Officer, Sensio Bio*

SNS-101 Translational Medicine & Clinical Development Plan

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**Ron Weitzman, M.D.**

*Interim Chief Medical Officer, Sensei Bio*

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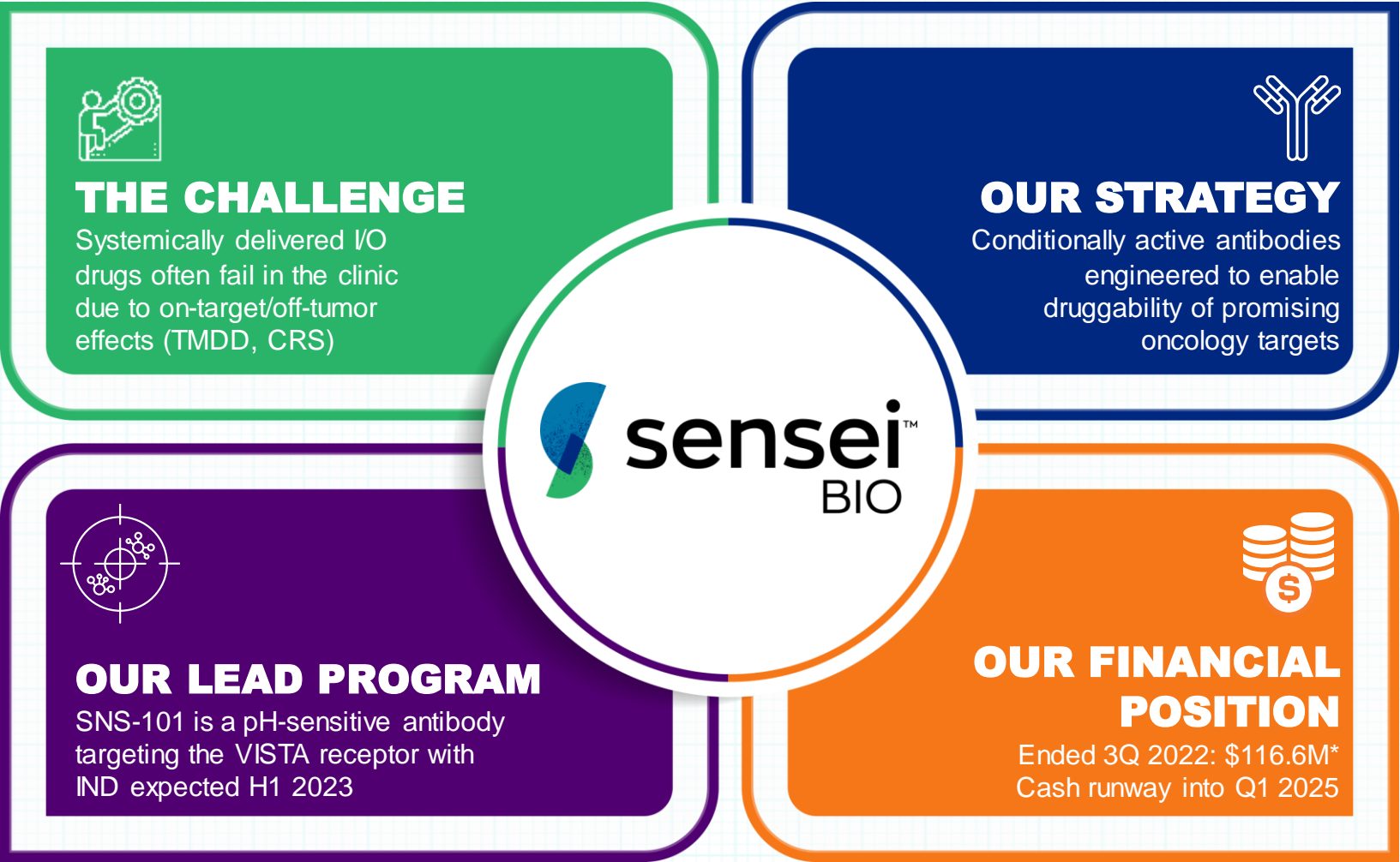
**Neil Canavan**

*MD, KOL Network, LifeSci Advisors*

Fireside Chat

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# Engineered Selectivity to Extend the Reach of Immuno-oncology Agents



\*Consists of cash, cash equivalents and marketable securities

# Lack of Selectivity is a Major Obstacle to CI Innovation

Industry Problem	Sensei's Solution
<p><b>Conventional antibodies target immune checkpoints that are highly expressed in normal tissues, resulting in:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dose-limiting toxicities due to on-target/off-tumor action</li><li>Pharmacological sink effect requires higher and more frequent dosing</li><li>Suboptimal activity due to poor PK and dose-limiting toxicities</li></ul>	<p><b>Conditionally active antibodies are selectively targeted to the tumor microenvironment, potentially providing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Little or no toxicity due to selective on-target/on-tumor action</li><li>Lower and less frequent doses by avoiding normal tissue binding</li><li>Powerful activity selectively focused on the tumor microenvironment</li></ul>

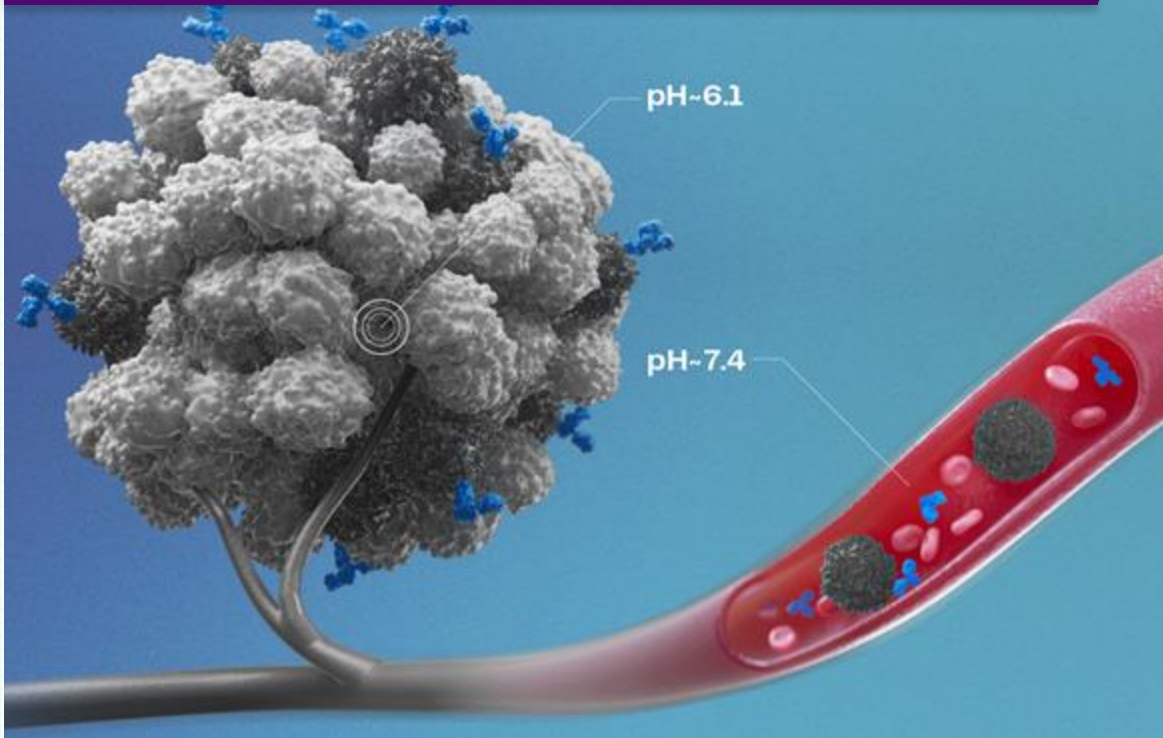
Only one new checkpoint inhibitor has been approved since the original CTLA-4 and PD-1/PD-L1 group



# pH-sensitive Antibodies Have Potential to Selectively Bind Their Targets in the Low-pH Tumor Microenvironment

## TMAb Platform

The tumor microenvironment of pH ~6 is lower than physiological pH of 7.4



Sensei's technology identifies pH-sensitive antibodies designed to bind only at the tumor

- Exploits the tumor microenvironment using pH-selective properties
- Intended to alleviate undesirable properties:
  - Dose-limiting toxicities due to on-target/off-tumor binding
  - Higher and more frequent dosing due to poor pharmacokinetics (Target-mediated Drug Disposition (TMDD))
- Bolsters specific activities
- Goal is to unlock previously undruggable immune targets

**Robert Schreiber, Ph.D.**

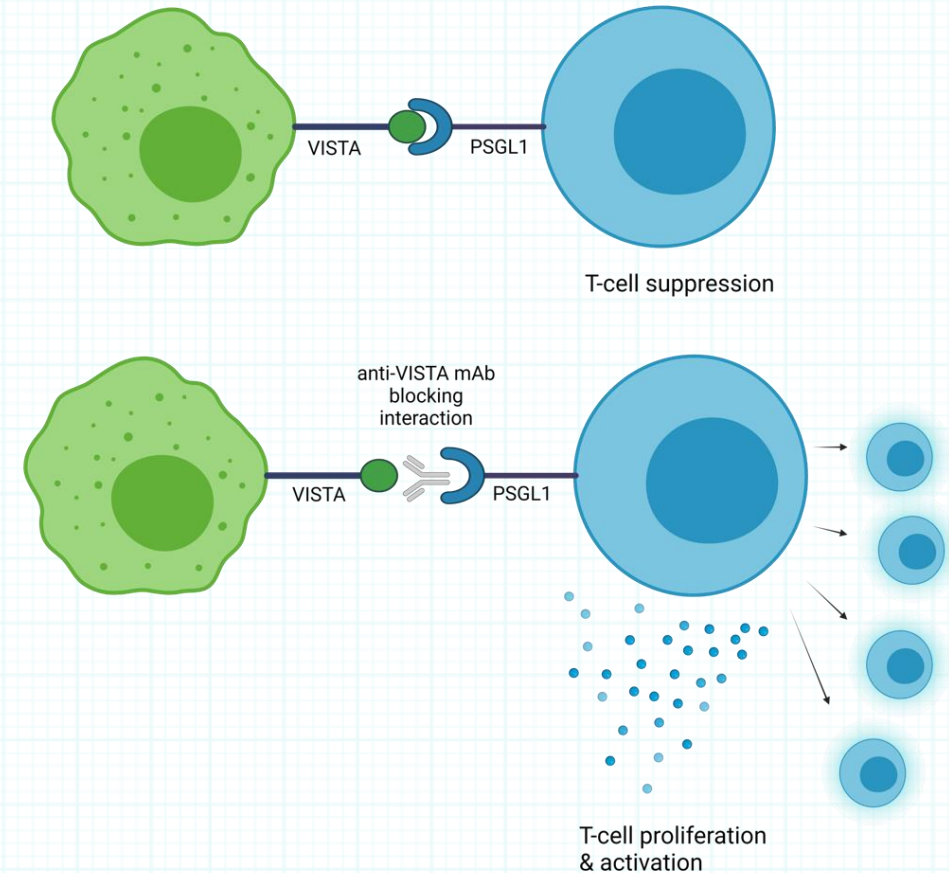
VISTA Biology

VISTA (B7-H5) is recognized an important immune checkpoint and B7 family member that is expressed on myeloid cells, a hub of immunosuppressive activity, and is activated via binding to its receptor on T-cells (PSGL-1) at sub-physiologic pH

# VISTA: A promising immune checkpoint target expressed predominantly on myeloid cells

- VISTA (V-domain Ig-containing Suppressor of T cell Activation VISTA), also known as B7-H5 or PD-1H is a B7 family member protein with homology to PD-L1
- VISTA suppresses T cell activation<sup>1</sup>
- Highly expressed on myeloid cells including macrophages and neutrophils; NK cells, T-regs and exhausted T cells have been reported to express VISTA<sup>2</sup>
- VISTA expression appears to be upregulated by hypoxia with a HIF1 $\alpha$  site identified in VISTA's promoter
- Inhibition of VISTA may “convert” myeloid cells to a proinflammatory/immune activating state; VISTA may “reverse signal” and play a role in enforcing myeloid immunosuppressive program
- Excellent therapeutic combinability with CTLA-4 or PD-1/PD-L1 T cell checkpoints<sup>3</sup>

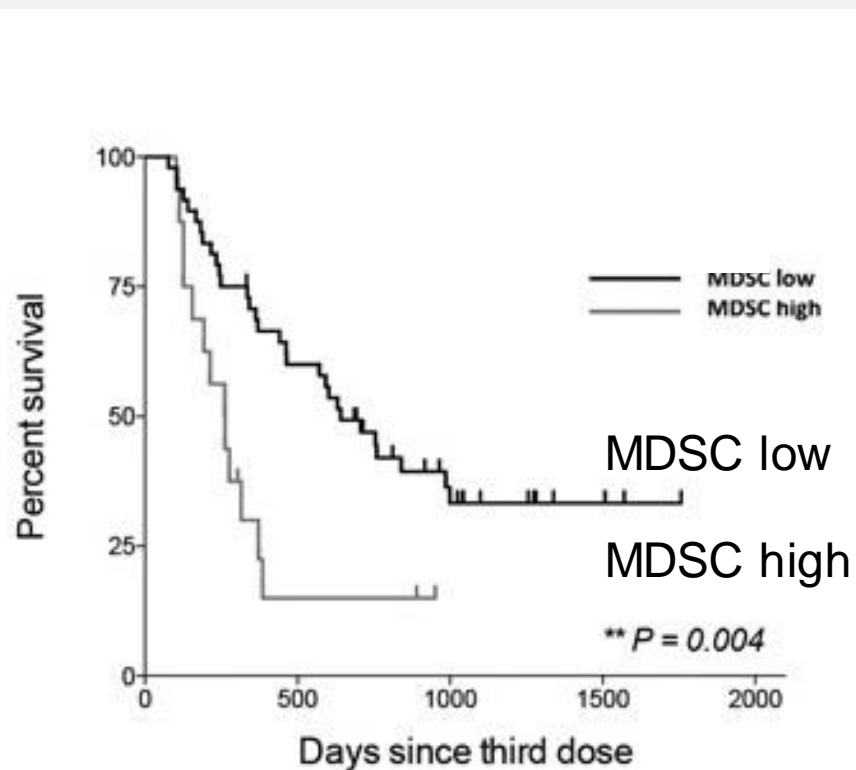
## VISTA is a Negative Regulator of T cell Function



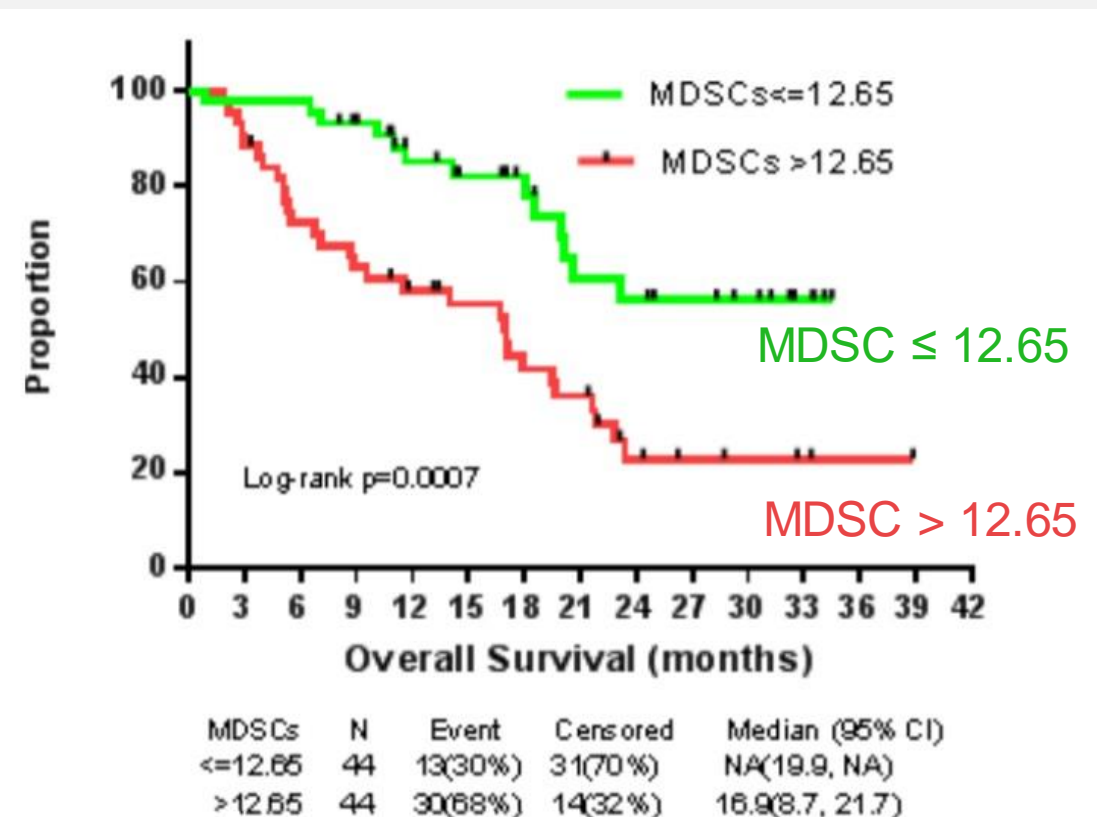


# Patients with High Circulating Myeloid Cells Have Shown Lower Overall Survival When Treated with Checkpoint Blockade

## Ipilimumab-treated Melanoma Patients



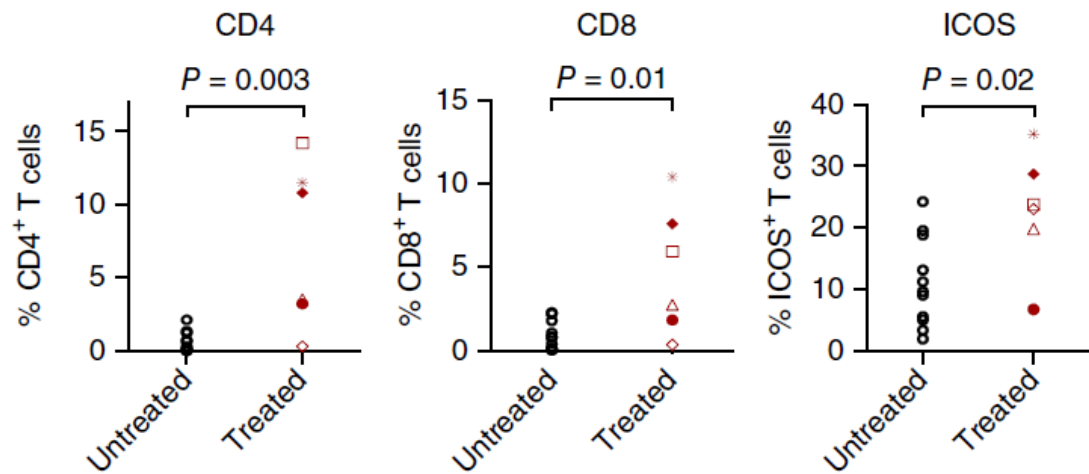
## Nivolumab-treated Melanoma Patients



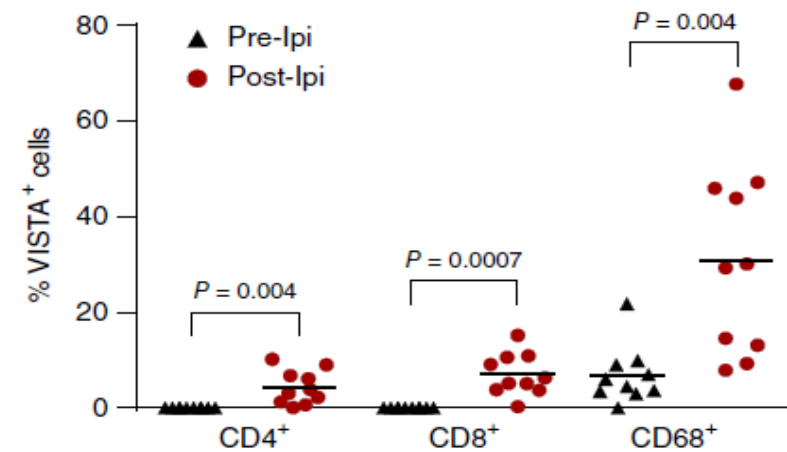
# VISTA Checkpoint May Be an Important Resistance Mechanism to Checkpoint Blockade

## Can targeting VISTA augment T-cell checkpoint blockade in refractory tumors?

Prostate Immune Cell Infiltrates Increase Following Ipilumimab Treatment



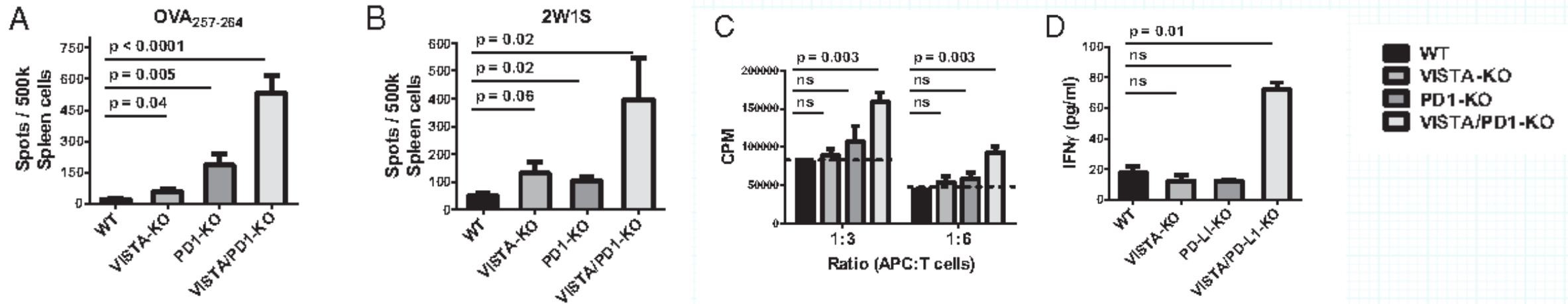
VISTA Increases on Prostate Immune Cell Infiltrates Following Ipilumimab Treatment



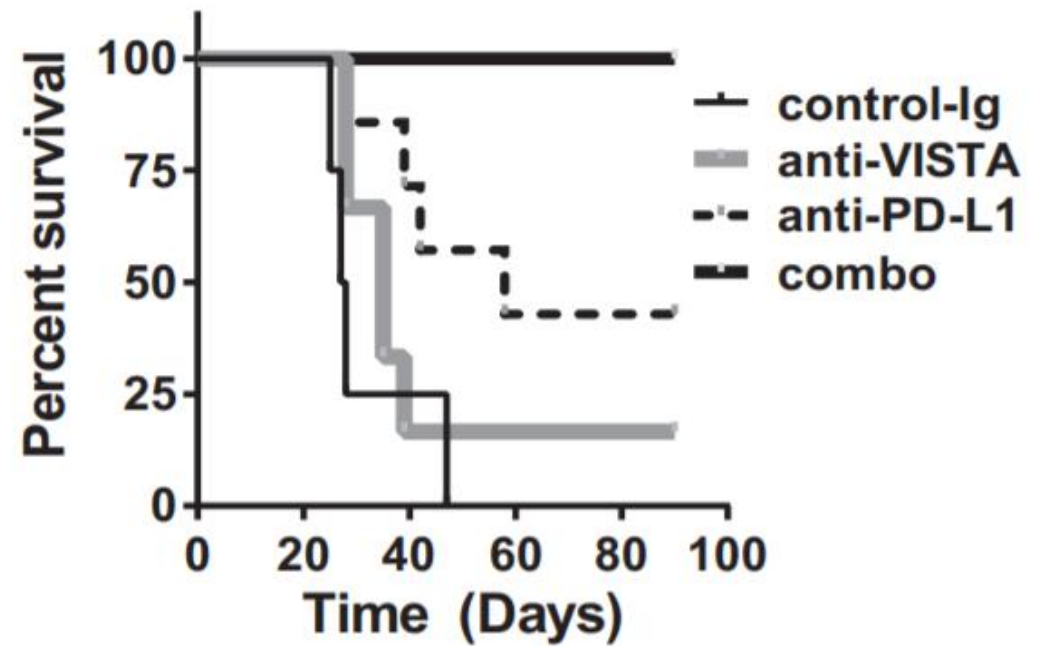
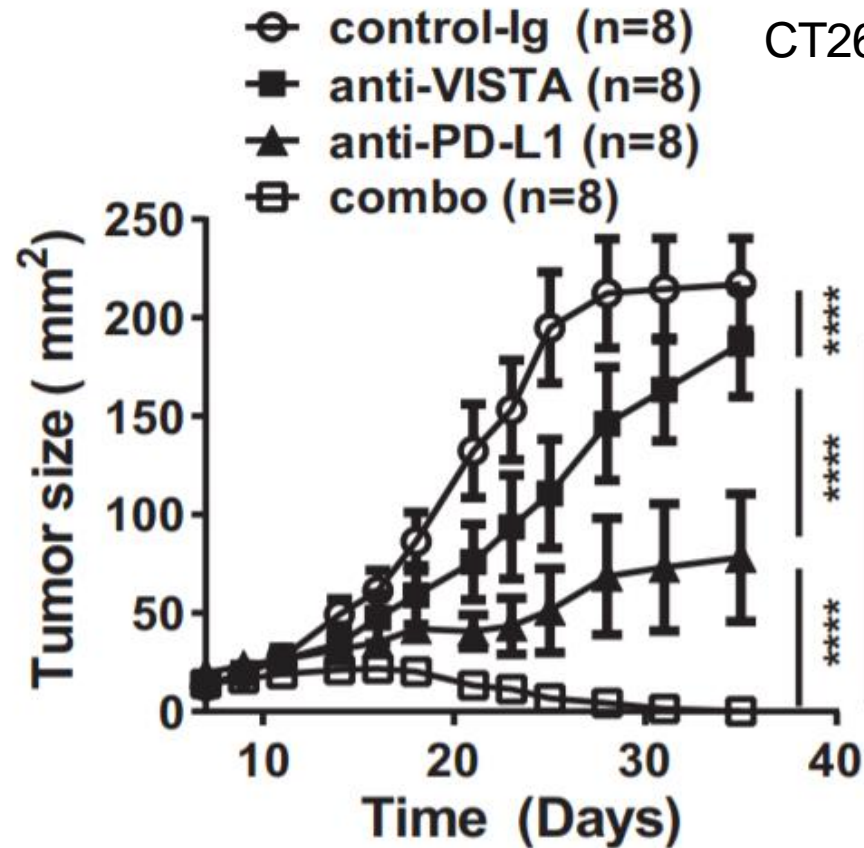
# Blocking PD-1 and VISTA together leads to a synergistic increase in antigen-specific T cell responses in Vaccine Models

## Immune-checkpoint proteins VISTA and PD-1 nonredundantly regulate murine T-cell responses

Jun Liu<sup>a,b</sup>, Ying Yuan<sup>a,1</sup>, Wenna Chen<sup>a</sup>, Juan Putra<sup>c</sup>, Arief A. Suriawinata<sup>c</sup>, Austin D. Schenk<sup>d</sup>, Halli E. Miller<sup>a</sup>, Indira Guleria<sup>e</sup>, Richard J. Barth<sup>d</sup>, Yina H. Huang<sup>c</sup>, and Li Wang<sup>a,2</sup>



# VISTA Blockade Synergizes With PD-1/L-1 Pathway Inhibition in a Tumor Model



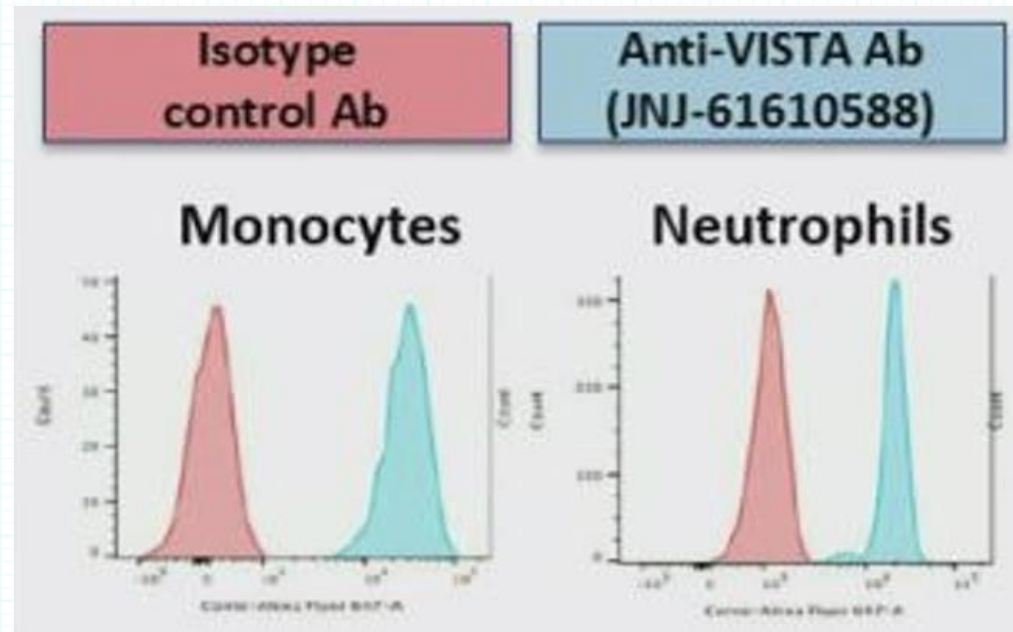
# Why Has VISTA Been a Difficult Target?

Development of successful drugs targeting VISTA inhibition had been stymied in the past due to two major factors:

- **Strong constitutive expression of VISTA on neutrophils and monocytes in the blood**
  - Binding of drugs to VISTA+ cells in the blood at physiologic pH results in target-mediated drug disposition (TMDD) and clearance
  - Binding of mAbs to cells in blood can lead to cellular activation and cytokine release syndrome (CRS), particularly Fc-competent IgG1 antibodies
  - JNJ 61610588, an Fc-competent IgG1 monoclonal antibody, was the first anti-VISTA mAb was tested in the clinic (Phase 1, advanced solid tumors)
    - TMDD was pronounced and CRS was noted at subtherapeutic doses, including a grade 3 CRS at 0.3 mg/kg<sup>1</sup>
    - Development was halted by JNJ; this antibody is now licensed to Curis and renamed CI-8893
- **Lack of clarity on the identity of the critical counter-receptor responsible for T cell suppression**
  - Putative interaction partners included VISTA itself (homotypic interaction), VSIG-3, VSIG-8, Syndecan-2, LRIG-1 and PSGL-1
  - Unclear how to select the right “inhibitor” if you don’t know what interaction needs to be blocked
  - From an immunological perspective, PSGL-1 makes sense as it had been previously demonstrated to act as a T cell checkpoint, strongly suppressing T cell activation, concomitantly increasing PD-1 expression and exhaustion

# VISTA is Expressed at High Levels on Human Monocytes and Neutrophils

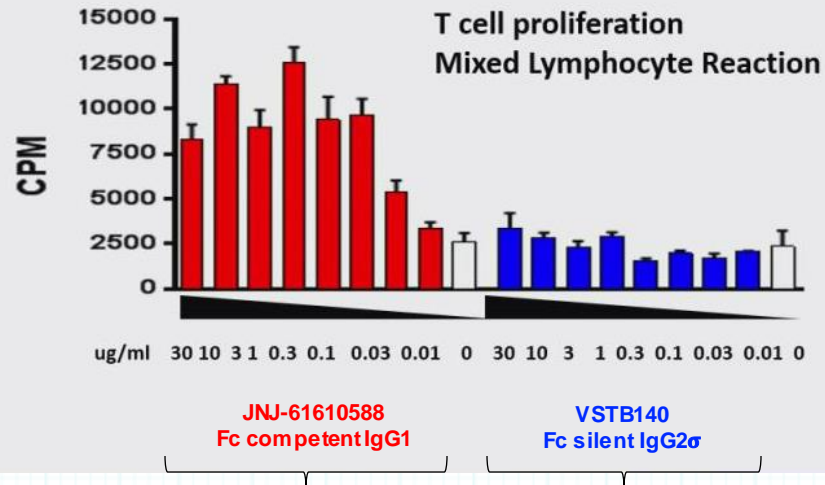
Flow Cytometry Analysis of VISTA Expression on Normal Human Peripheral Immune Cells



# Fc-competent Framework is Required for Optimal Activity of Anti-VISTA Monoclonal Antibodies

## JNJ-61610588 induces T cell proliferation in MLR *in vitro*

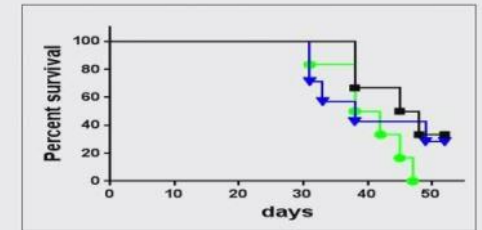
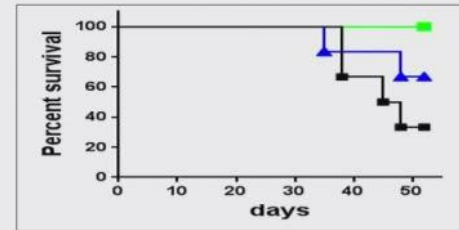
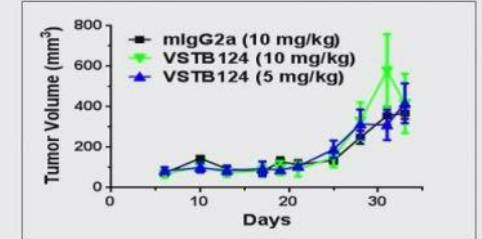
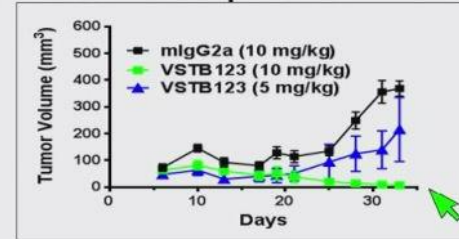
Active Fc is required



## JNJ-61610588 murine surrogate inhibits tumor growth in a syngeneic mouse tumor model

VSTB123 = Fc competent anti-VISTA Ab

VSTB124 = Fc silent version of VSTB123



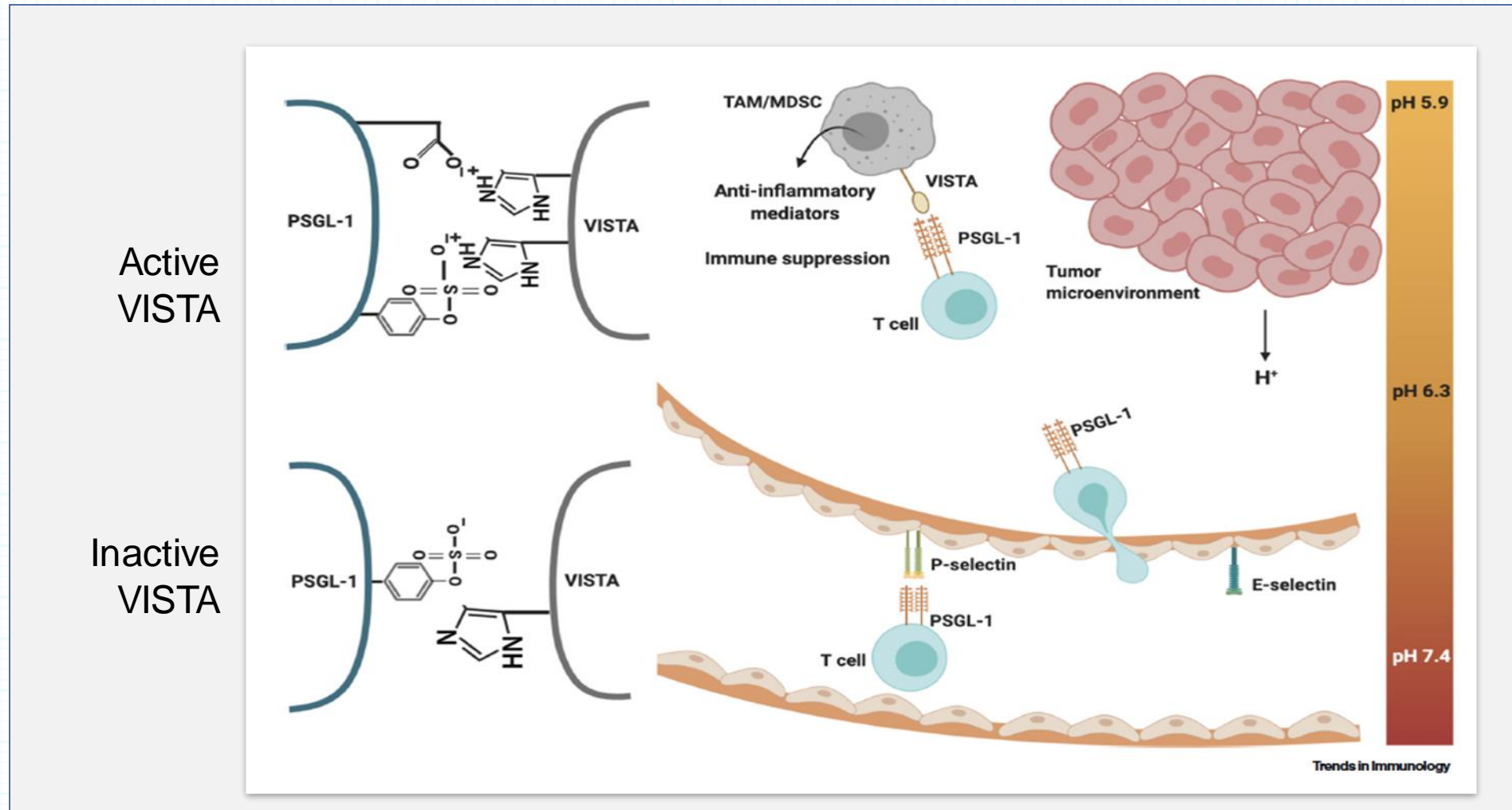
Model: MB49 bladder carcinoma grown in female VISTA KI mice

Combination of on-target/off-tumor binding to neutrophils and monocytes in the blood and Fc-mediated myeloid activation likely caused CRS seen with JNJ 61610588 in Phase 1 study

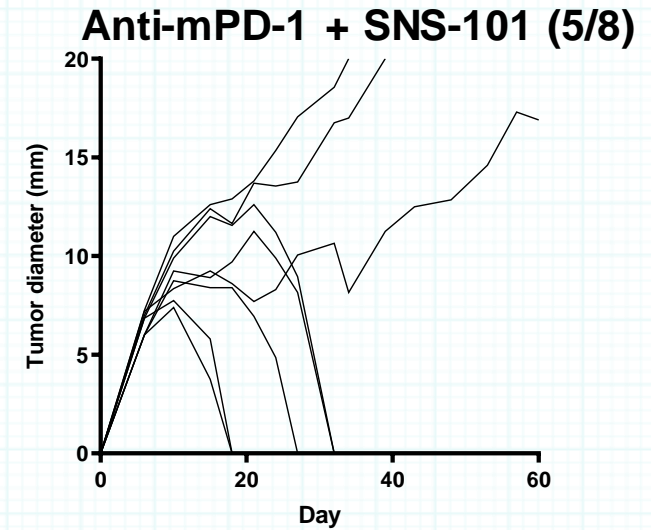
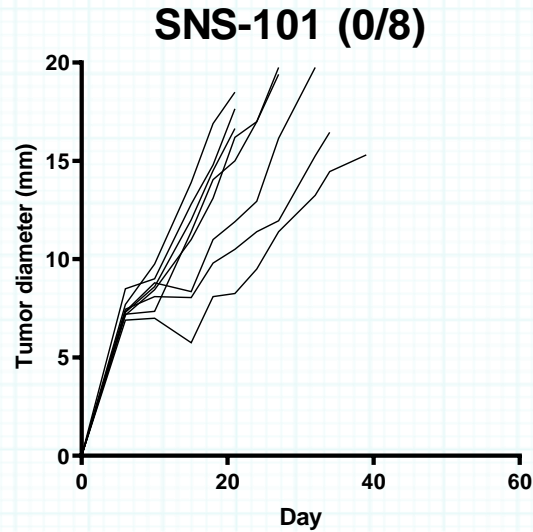
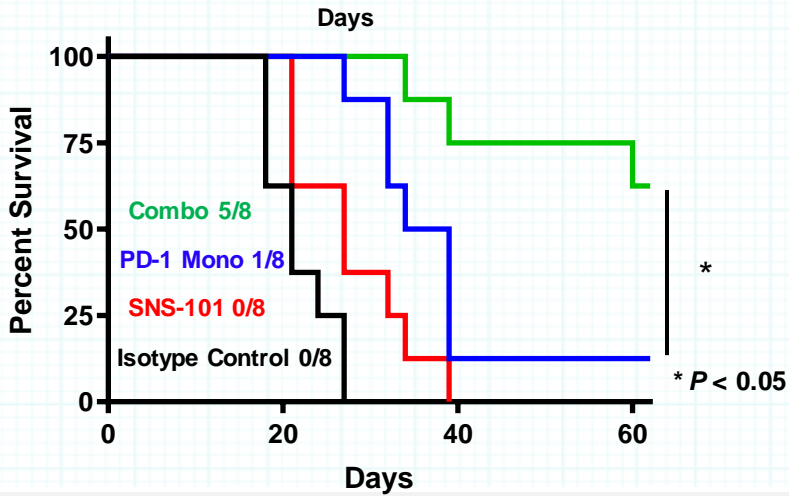
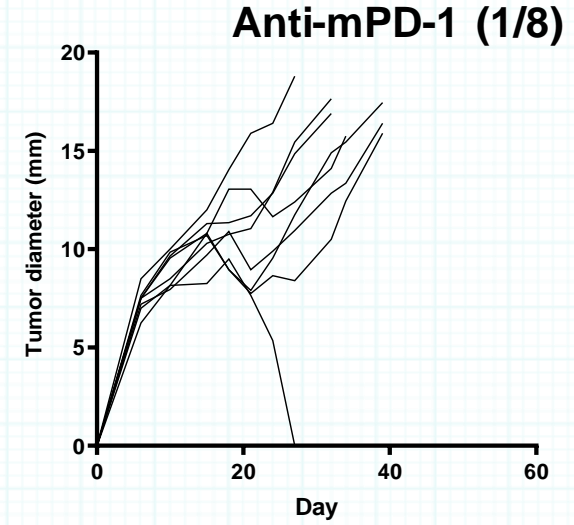
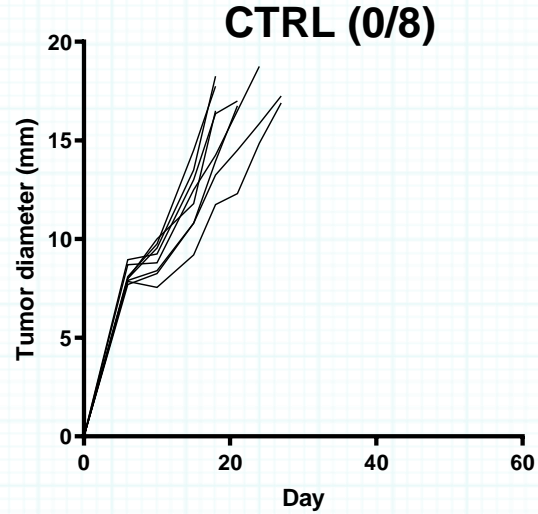
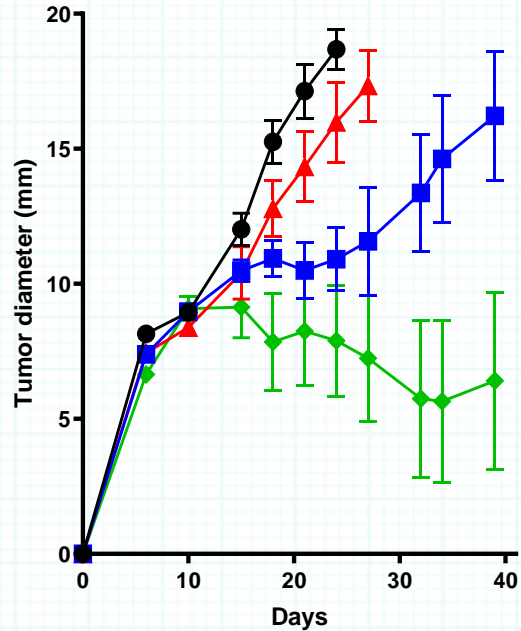




# VISTA binding to the PSGL-1, inhibitory T cell receptor, is pH dependent



# SNS-101 Re-sensitized Anti-PD-1 Insensitive Sarcomas Tumors in 1956 Model in Human VISTA Knock-in Mice



# VISTA Biology – Summary

## Why VISTA Has Been Difficult to Drug Historically

- VISTA is expressed at high levels on monocytes and neutrophils
  - Binding to cells in the blood leads to sub-optimal PK due to target-mediated clearance and on-target/off-tumor toxicity (CRS)
- Engagement of FcγR may be a prerequisite for optimal activity of anti-VISTA antibodies
  - Fc silent antibodies are not effective at T cell proliferation ex vivo or anti-tumor activity in vivo despite picomolar binding affinity to VISTA
  - CRS likely due to binding to blood monocytes and neutrophils, resulting in FcγR-mediated activation
- BUT the VISTA checkpoint itself is only "ON", when VISTA is protonated under low pH conditions and capable of binding PSGL-1
- Opportunity to develop an antibody with high selectivity for the active/protonated form of VISTA versus the inactive form of VISTA in the blood.
  - Johnston, et al (BMS), demonstrated feasibility of this approach
  - Sensei has developed a conditionally-active, pH-dependent antibody (SNS-101)

**Edward van der Horst, Ph.D.**  
SNS-101 Overview & Preclinical Data

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# SNS-101: Selectively Targeting VISTA with a pH-sensitive Antibody

## Key features

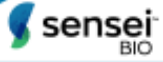
- Selectivity for Active VISTA<sup>pH6</sup> over VISTA<sup>pH7.4</sup>
- Designed to block VISTA's interaction with PSGL-1 and all other T-cell receptors at pH 6.0
- IgG1 format
- Active Fc

	pH 6.0	pH 7.4
Monovalent Affinity (K <sub>D</sub> ) [nM]	0.218	132 (~No binding)

## Development milestones

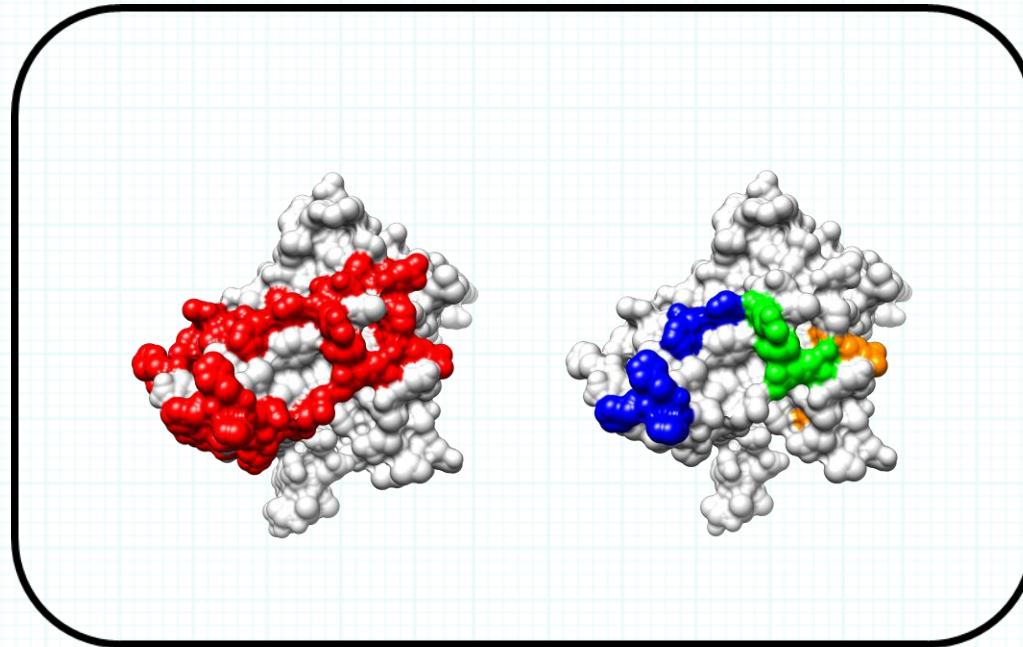
- Preclinical PK, safety and efficacy data presented at conferences throughout 2022
- IND submission planned for 1H23

# SNS-101 Is a Fully Differentiated Anti-VISTA Antibody

	SNS-101 	CI-8993; JNJ-61610588 (J&J/Curis)	K01401-020; W0180 (Pierre Fabre)	HMBD-002 (Hummingbird)	KVA12.1 (Kineta)	VISTA.18 (BMS)	(PMC-309) Pharm Abcine
Inhibit PSGL-1 Binding	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
pH Sensitive Binding	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Fc Active	✓ <small>(IgG1)</small>	✓ <small>(IgG1)</small>	N/A	✗	✓ <small>(IgG1)</small>	✗ <small>(IgG4)</small>	✓ <small>(IgG1)</small>
Stage	Preclinical	Phase 1	Phase 1	Phase 1	Preclinical	Preclinical	Preclinical

# SNS-101 Blocks PSGL-1:VISTA Protein Interface

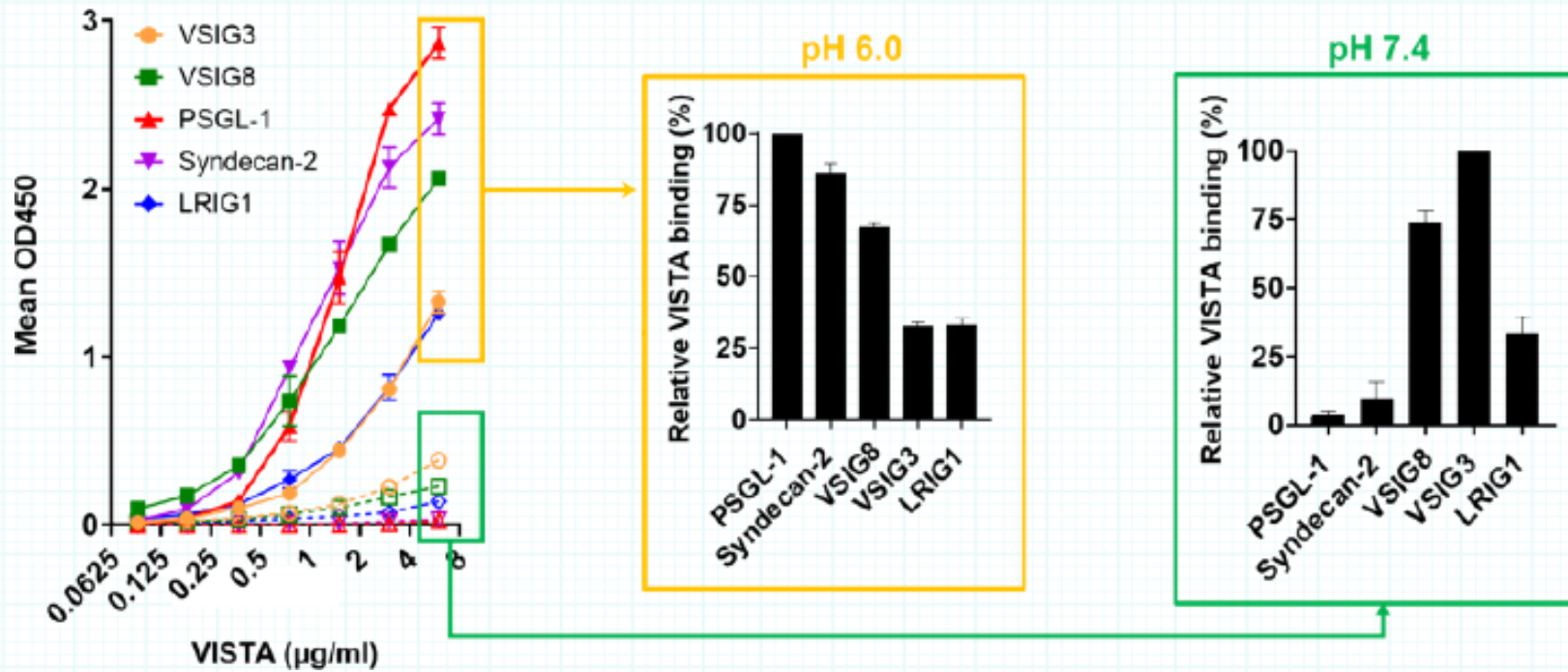
## SNS-101



PSGL-1, VSIG-3, and LRIG-1

- VISTA's extracellular domain is uniquely rich in histidines<sup>1</sup>
- Histidines are protonated at low pH enabling VISTA to distinguish the active (acidic pH) and inactive (neutral pH) PSGL-1 binding interface

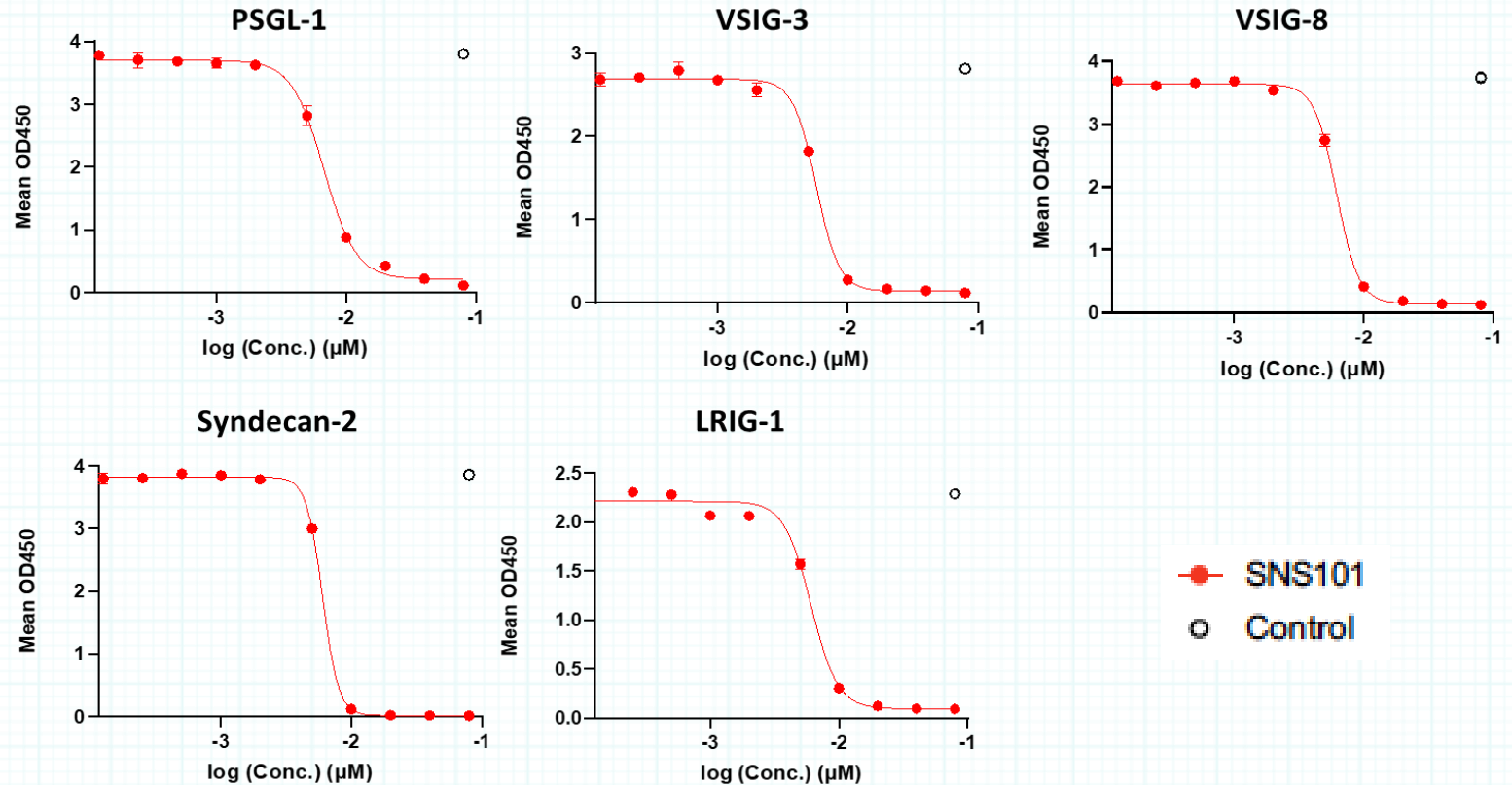
# The VISTA:PSGL-1 Interaction is Selective for low pH



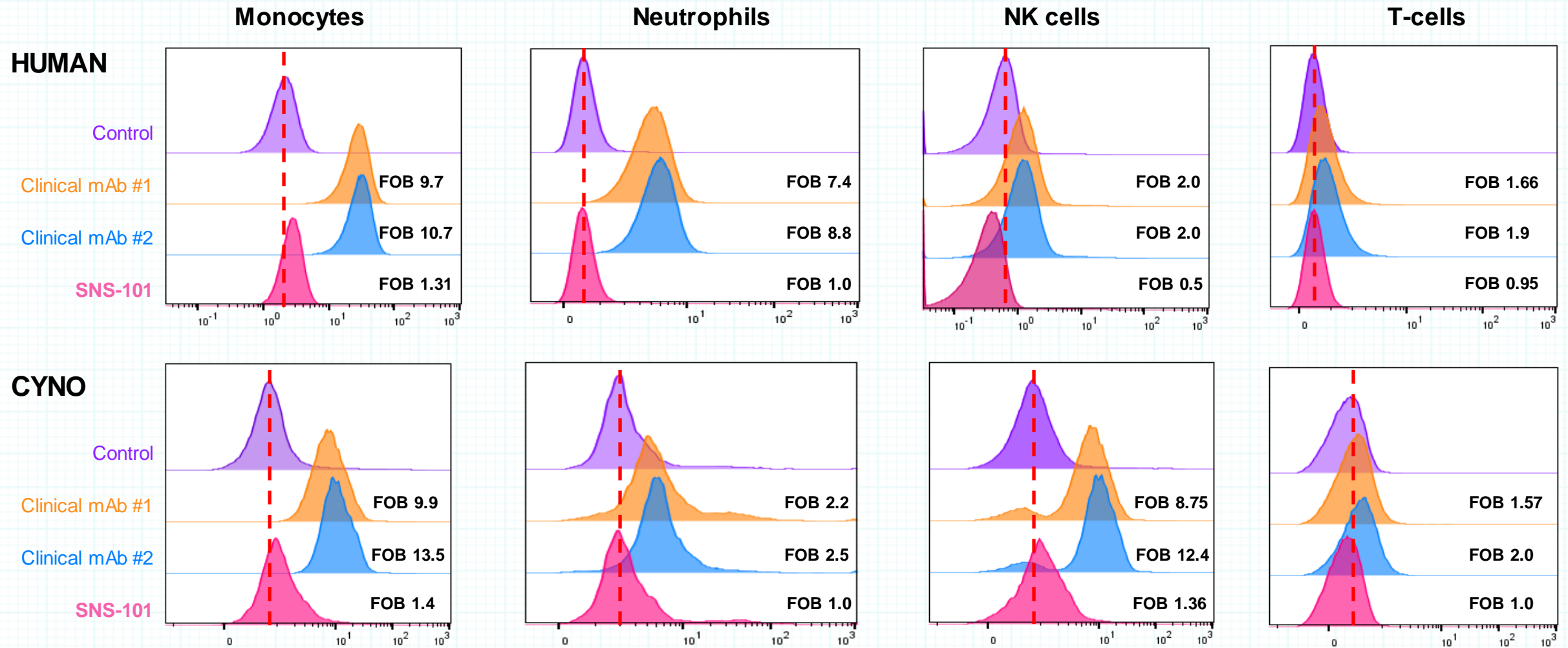


# SNS-101 Strongly Inhibits the VISTA:PSGL-1 Interaction And All Other Potential Binding Partners at pH 6.0 in *In Vitro* Assay

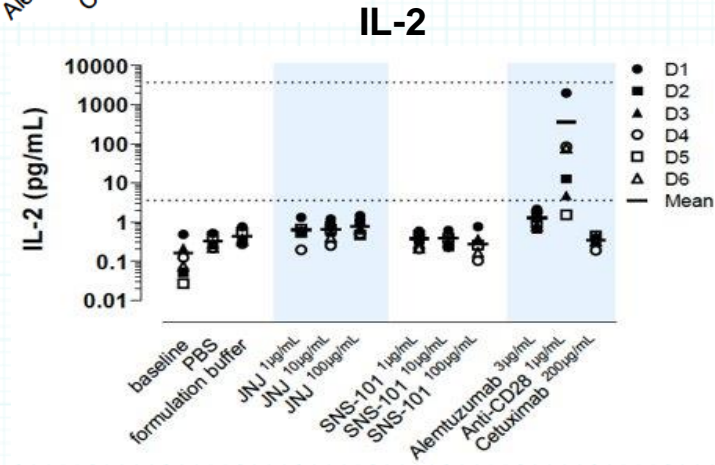
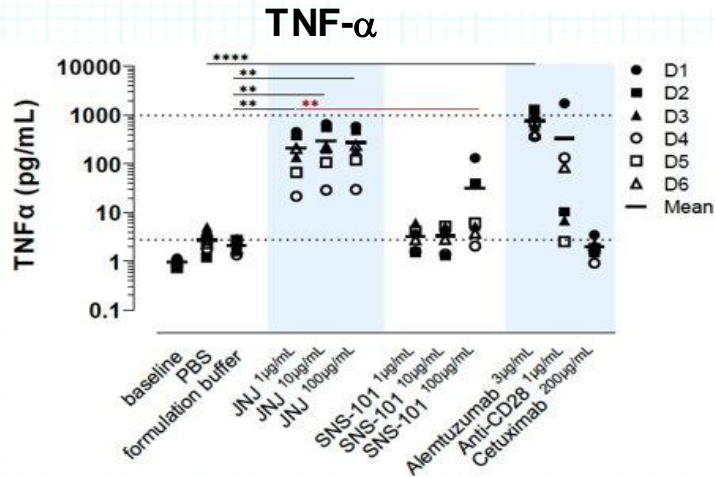
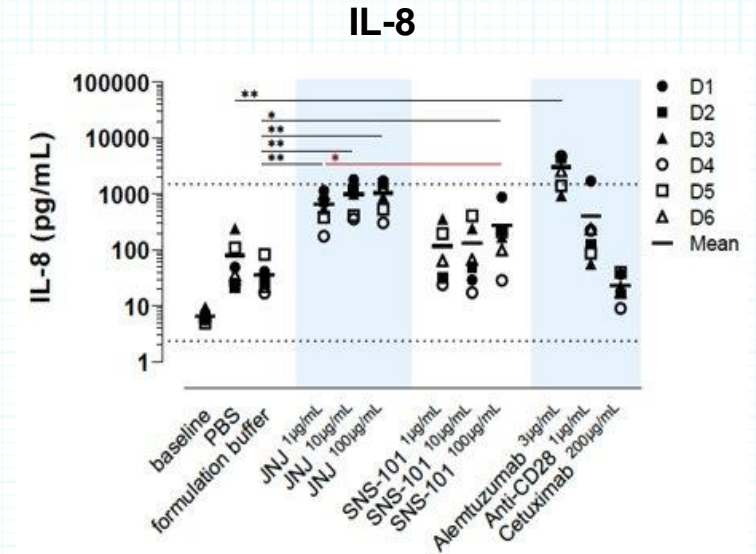
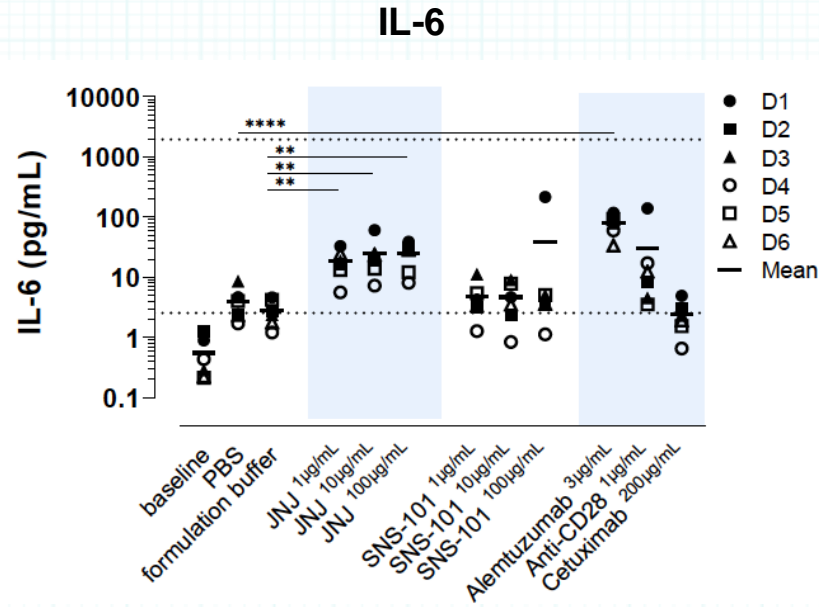
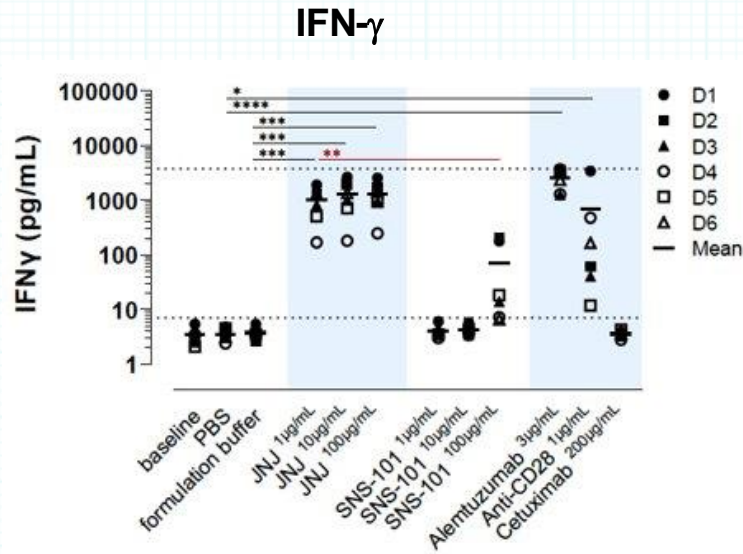
Receptor	IC50 [nM]
PSGL-1	7
VSIG3	6
VSIG8	6
Syndecan-2	6
LRIG1	6



# No Significant Binding of SNS-101 to Monocytes, Neutrophils, NK Cells and T-cells in Whole blood at Physiological pH



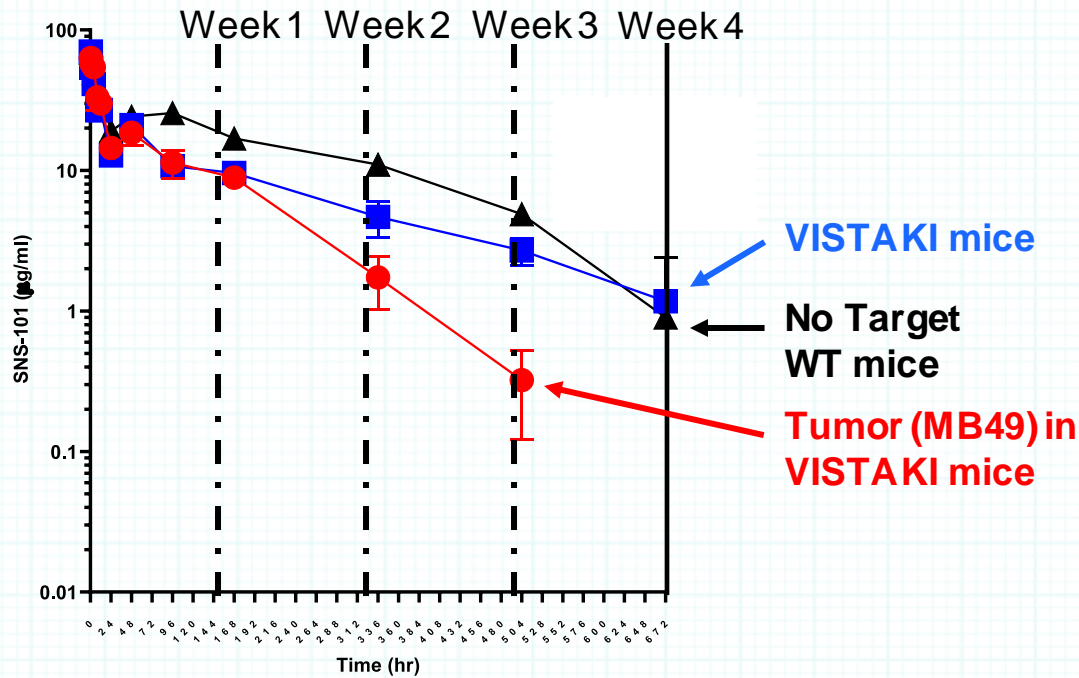
# SNS-101 Induced Substantially Lower Cytokine Release in Whole-blood Assay at Neutral pH Compared to pH-independent VISTA Antibody



Paired Student's t-test,  
Holm-Sidak Post-Hoc  
Analysis,  
\* p<0.05; \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\*  
p<0.001, \*\*\*\* p<0.0001

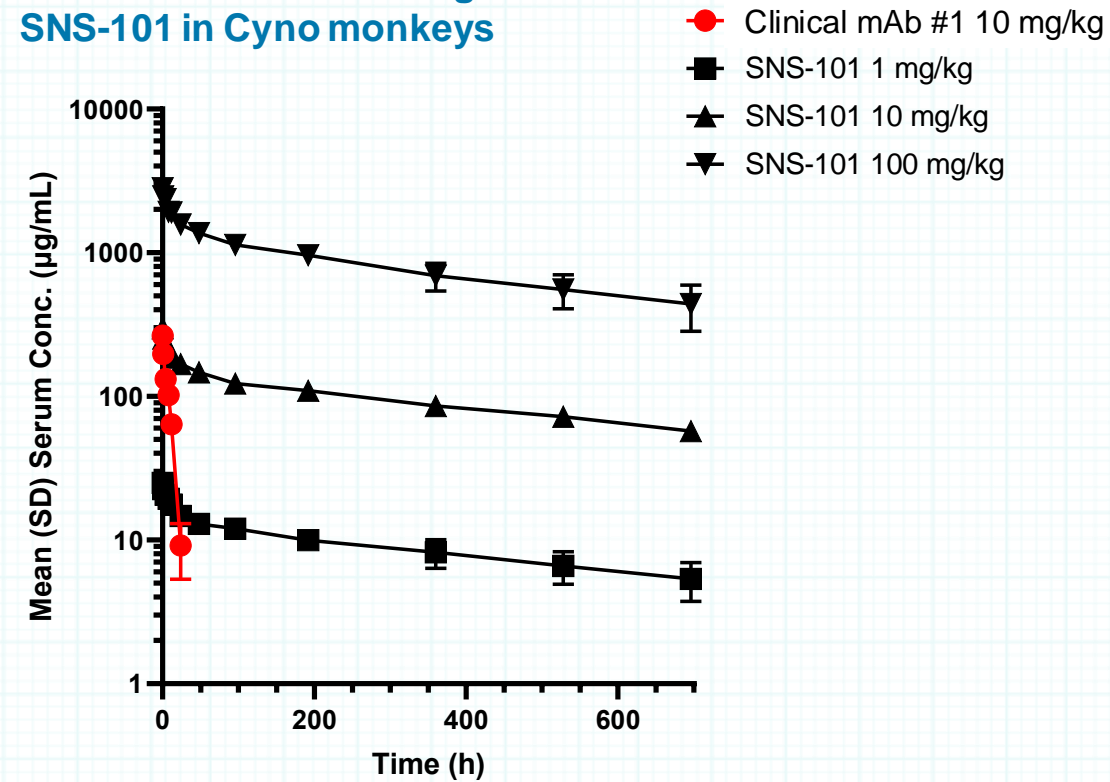
# SNS-101 Has Displayed a Favorable Single-dose PK Profile in Preclinical Studies - *No Significant TMDD in Human VISTA KI Mice or Cyno Monkeys*

Pharmacokinetics of Single Dose 5 mg/kg SNS-101 in VISTA Knock-in Mice



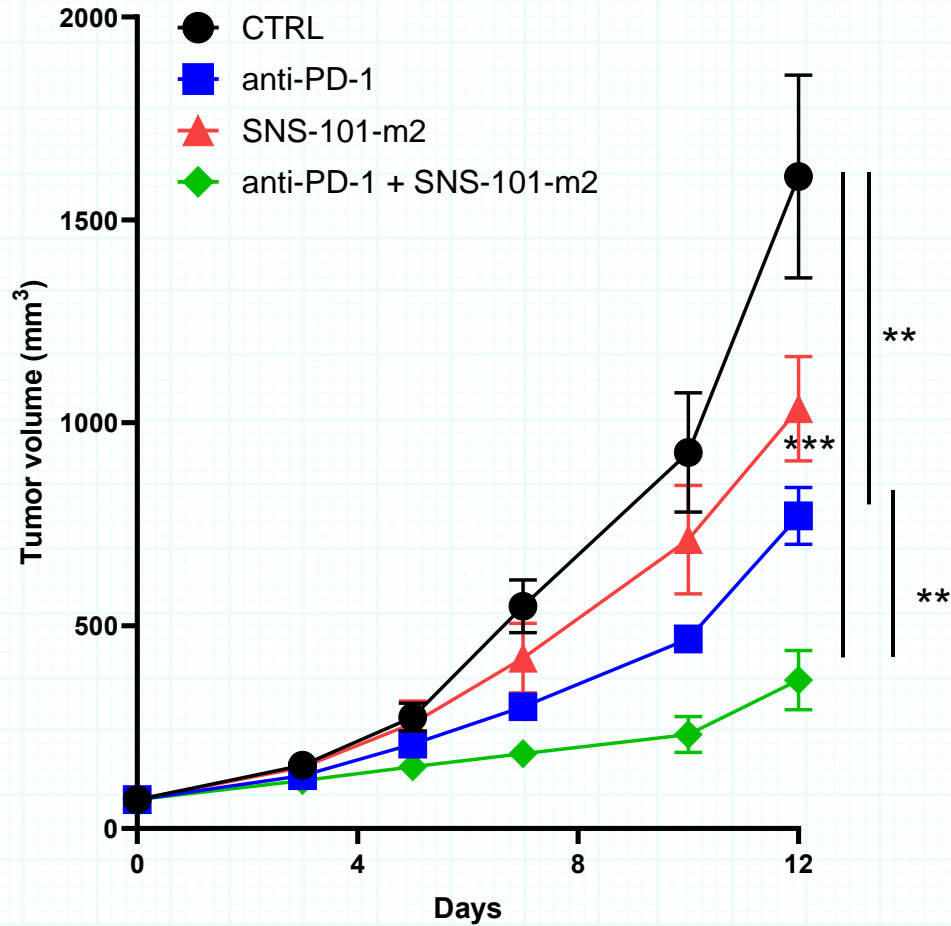
Demonstrated a long mean residence time in the blood, indicating a lack of significant target-mediated drug disposition (TMDD) and clearance in non-malignant tissues

Pharmacokinetics of Single Dose SNS-101 in Cyno monkeys

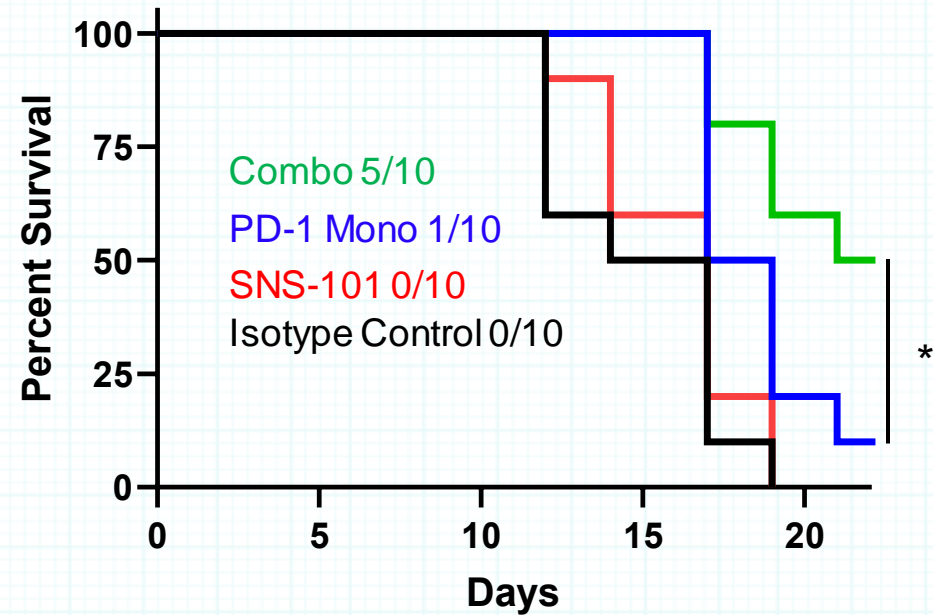


SNS-101 displays linear elimination kinetics unlike a pH-independent anti-VISTA mAb, which demonstrates TMDD and rapid clearance

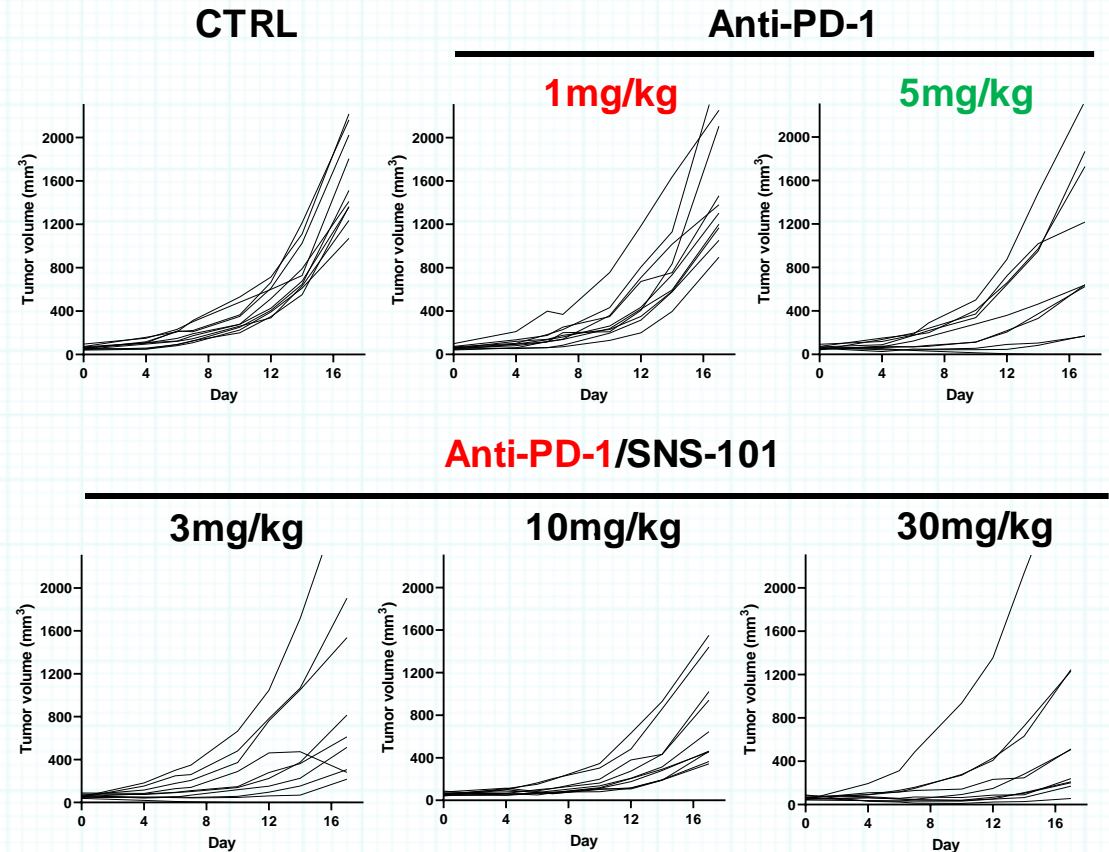
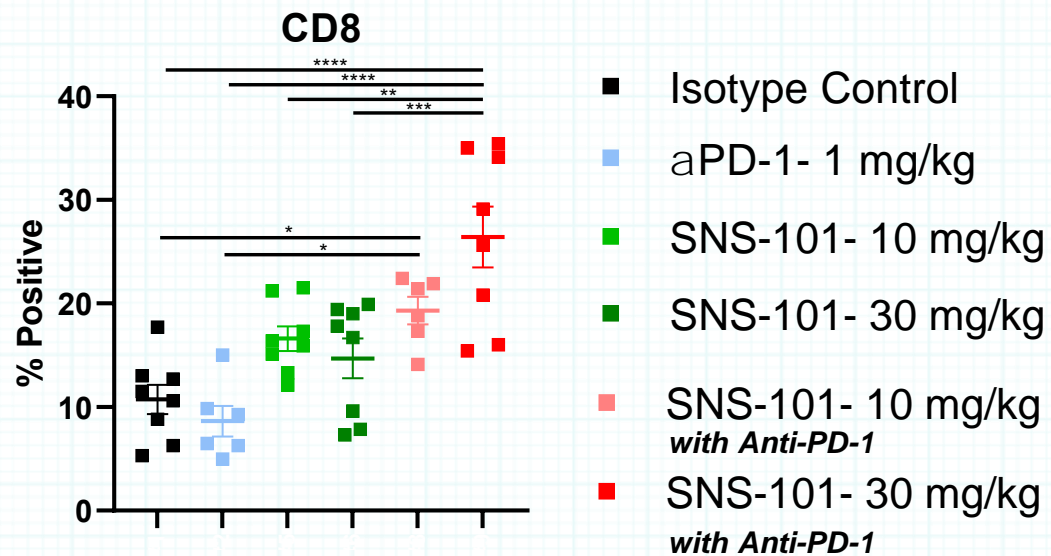
# SNS-101 Demonstrated Strong Combinatorial Activity with Anti-PD-1 in MC38 Model in Human VISTA Knock-in Mice



\*  $P < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $P < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $P < 0.001$



# SNS-101 Demonstrated Increased CD8 T-cells in Combination With Anti-PD-1 in MC38 Tumors *In Vivo*



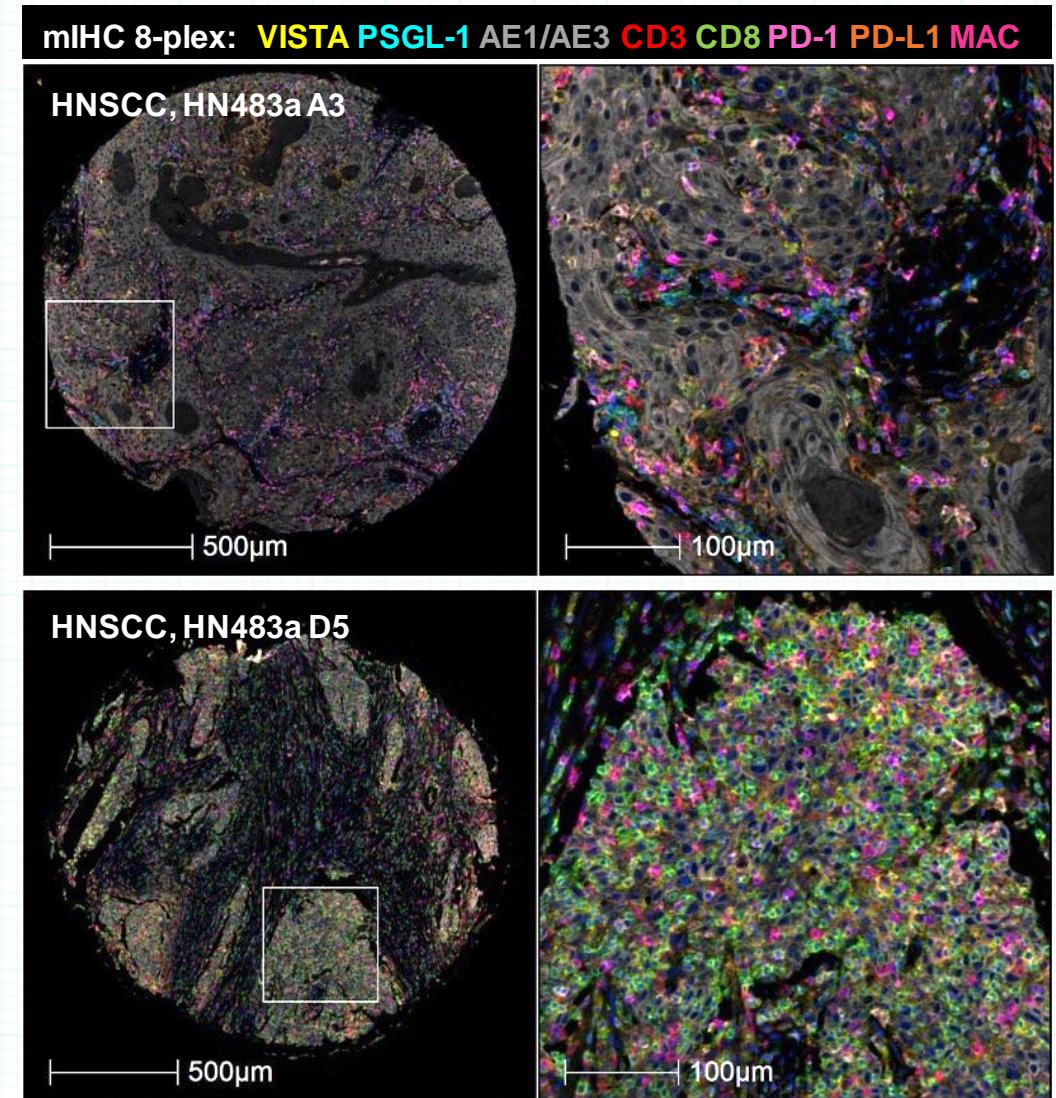
**Robert Pierce, M.D. & Ron Weitzman, M.D.**

**SNS-101 Translational Medicine & Clinical Development Plan**

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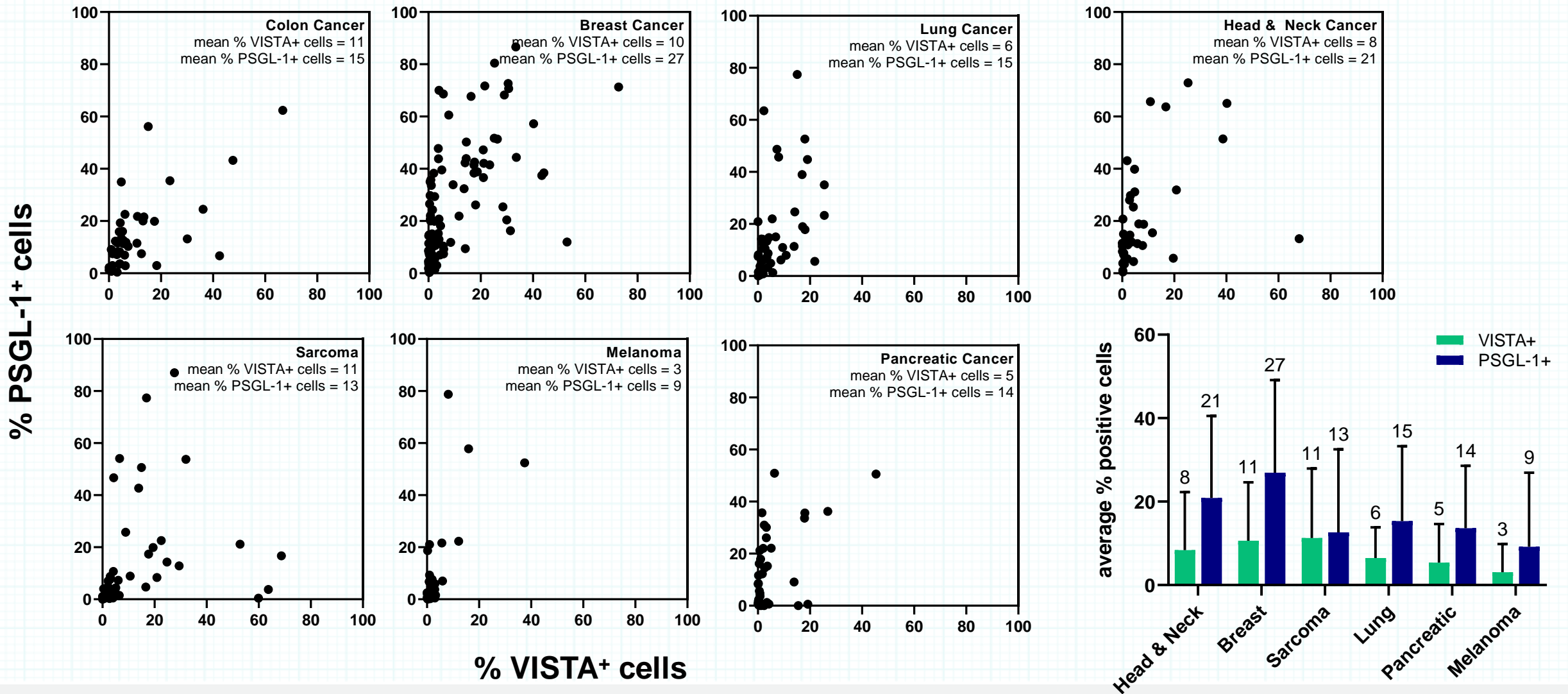
# Multiplex IHC Enables Spatial Mapping of VISTA in the TME

- Quantification of VISTA and PSGL-1 Expression
- Spatially resolve VISTA<sup>+</sup> and PSGL-1<sup>+</sup> within the broader immune-relevant context of the TME
- Spatial resolution of VISTA, PSGL-1 and other candidate immune checkpoints within the TME may reflect critical cell-cell interactions and inhibitory nodes
- VISTA/PSGL-1 **proximity** may reflect engagement of VISTA checkpoint and high probability of response to SNS-101



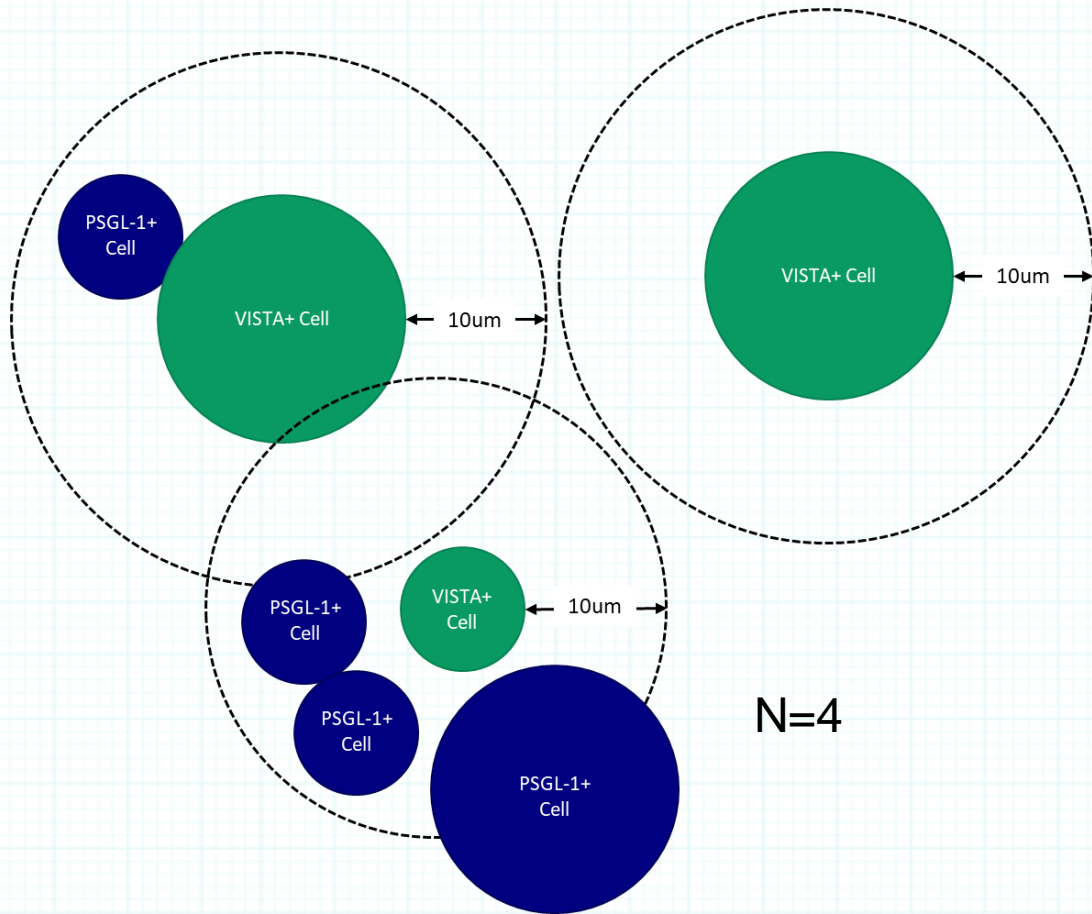


# Quantitative Multiplex Immunohistochemistry Enables Stratification of Tumors with High Expression of VISTA and/or PSGL-1

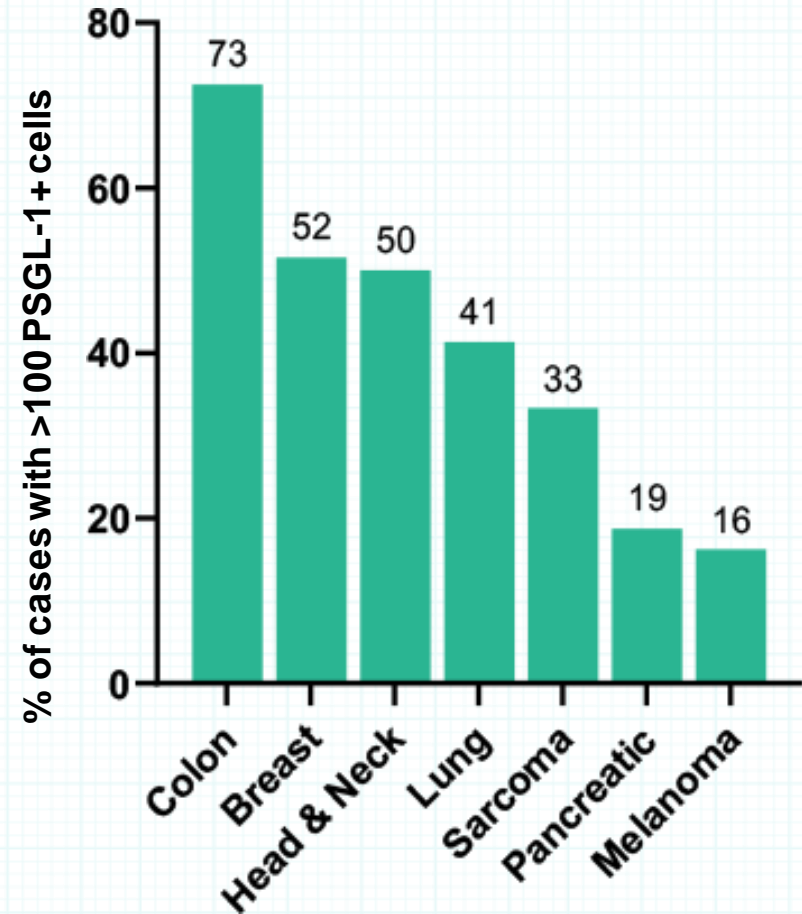


# High VISTA/PSGL-1 Proximity Scores in CRC, Breast, HNSCC and Lung

How we measure spatial proximity



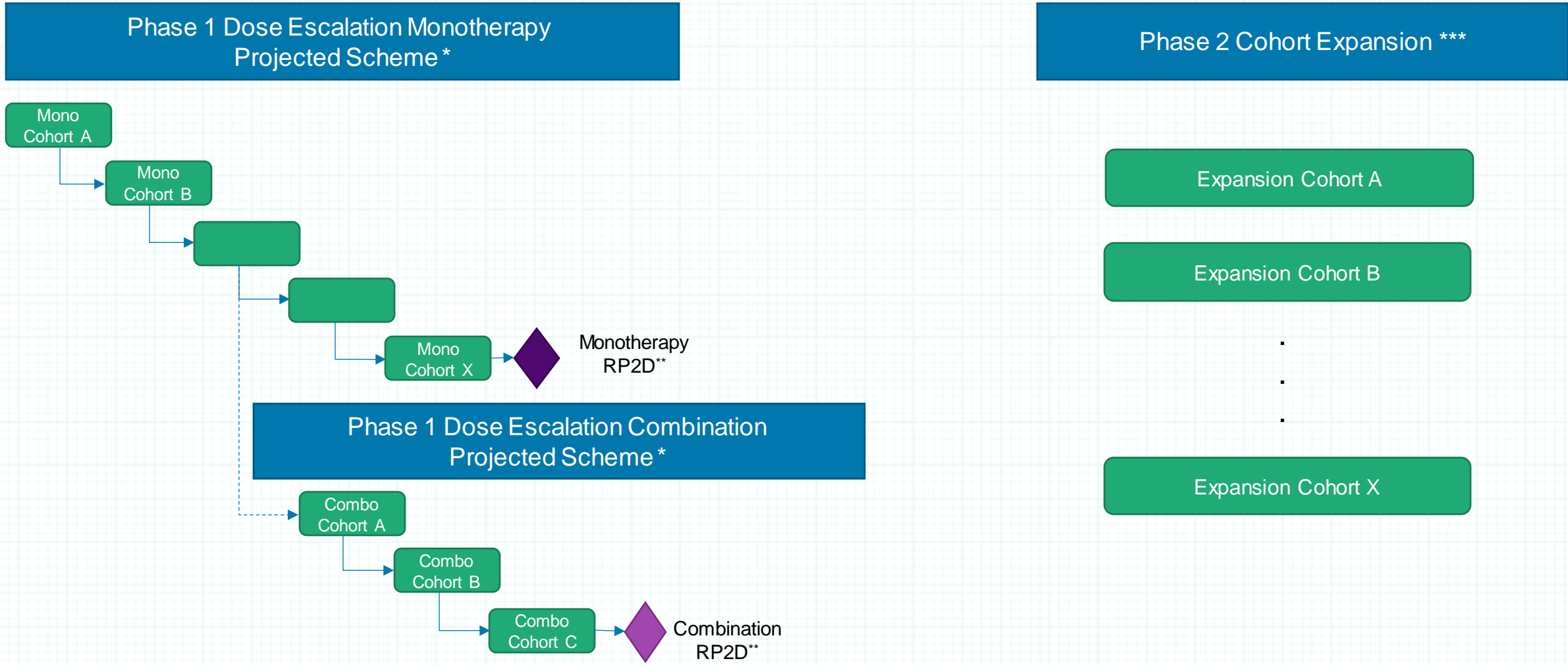
Stratification of tumor types based on mIHC analysis of TMAs



# **SNS-101: Approach for Phase 2 Cohort Identification to Help Identify and Prioritize High Probability-of-Success Expansion Cohorts**

- I. Multiplex immunohistochemistry on patient tumor TMAs using 8-plex assay (VISTA, PSGL-1, PD-L1, PD-1, CD3, CD8, macrophage cocktail (CD68+CD163), tumor marker (pancytokeratin)
  - Expression analysis of VISTA, PSGL-1, PD-1, PD-L1 in broader immune context
  - Proximity analysis (VISTA/PSGL-1 and PD-L1/PD-1)
  - Frequency of VISTA<sup>+</sup> tumor cells across tumor types
  - Distribution of VISTA, PSGL-1 and Proximity Indices across TME phenotypes (e.g. inflamed, immune-excluded, immune-ignored)
  - Acquisition of well-curated, clinical samples with ICI treatment history and outcomes
  - Is VISTA/VISTA-PSGL-1 proximity upregulated in PD-1 non-responders?
  
- II. Multiplex IHC and scRNAseq on multiple preclinical tumor models
  - Does VISTA/PSGL-1 proximity correlate with response to SNS-101?
  - Other potential biomarkers of VISTA/PSGL-1 checkpoint engagement?

# Preliminary SNS-101 Phase 1/2 Study Schematic



\* Phase 1/2 study design is preliminary and subject to change, including based on feedback from the FDA following submission of IND.

\*\* RP2D = Recommended Phase 2 Dose

\*\*\* Tumor types, indication and samples size to be determined based on findings from dose-escalation phase and emerging scientific data; cohorts may run concurrently.

# SNS-101 Responder Hypothesis based on SNS-101 Preclinical and Translational Data

SNS-101 Preclinical/Translational Strengths	Potential Clinical Direction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SNS-101 demonstrated strong combinatorial activity with anti-PD-1 in MC38 model in human VISTA-KI mice</li> <li>In-vivo efficacy profile in combination with PD-1 showed increase tumor-infiltrating CD8 T-cells</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Boosting <math>\alpha</math>PD-1 response in Inflamed/Immunogenic tumor types:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Current Plan:</i> checkpoint inhibitor naïve patients with inflamed solid tumors (e.g., HNSCC), who are responsive to <math>\alpha</math>PD-1 treatment, would receive combination treatment of SNS-101 + <math>\alpha</math>PD-1 and be assessed for a boost in anti-tumor activity</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Immunohistochemistry (IHC) staining VISTA/PSGL-1 proximity assay suggests tumors with high VISTA/PSGL-1 proximity signal Include CRC, Breast, NSCLC and HNSCC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Inducing a response in inflamed, but typically <math>\alpha</math>PD-1 non-responsive tumors</b> (e.g., MSS colon, HR<sup>+</sup> breast) with combination of SNS-101 and <math>\alpha</math>PD-1</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SNS-101 and PD-1 blockade led to enhanced tumor regression in syngeneic 1956 tumors implanted in VISTA-KI mice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b><i>Bona fide</i> <math>\alpha</math>PD-1 refractory patients (e.g., NSCLC):</b> Does treatment with combination treatment of SNS-101 + <math>\alpha</math>PD-1 overcome resistance?</li> </ul>

# Fireside Chat with Neil Canavan

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# Question & Answer Session

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# VISTA Science Symposium

November 21, 2022



## Guest Speaker:

Robert Schreiber, Ph.D.

Andrew M. and Jane M. Distinguished Professor of Pathology and Immunology; Professor, Molecular Microbiology; and Director of the Bursky Center for Human Immunology and Immunotherapy Programs at the Washington University School of Medicine. He is also co-leader of the Tumor Immunology Program of Washington University's Siteman Comprehensive Cancer Center, an Associate Director of the Scientific Advisory Board to the Cancer Research Institute and Co-editor-in-Chief of the journal Cancer Immunology Research. Schreiber obtained his PhD in Immunology/Biochemistry at the State University of New York in Buffalo, New York, and received his postdoctoral training at The Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, California. Sensei IOAB Member.

## Sensei Presenters:

John Celebi

Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Robert Pierce

Chief R&D Officer

Ron Weitzman

Interim CMO

Dr. Edward van der Horst

SVP, TMAb Antibody Development