

AGENUS INC
Form 424B5
February 06, 2014
Table of Contents

Filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(5)
Registration No. 333-185657

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

(To Prospectus dated January 10, 2013)

19,335,653 Shares

Agenus Inc.

Common Stock

We are offering 19,335,653 shares of our common stock, par value \$0.01 per share. We will receive all of the net proceeds from this offering.

Our common stock is quoted on the Nasdaq Capital Market (Nasdaq) under the symbol AGEN. On February 4, 2014, the closing sale price of our common stock, as reported by Nasdaq, was \$2.90 per share.

Investing in our common stock involves certain risks. Before purchasing our common stock, please review the information included in, and incorporated by reference into, the Risk Factors caption beginning on page S-8 of this prospectus supplement and page 2 of the accompanying prospectus.

| | Per Share | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Public Offering Price | \$ 2.700 | \$ 52,206,263 |
| Underwriting Discount | \$ 0.162 | \$ 3,132,376 |

| | | |
|----------------------------------|----------|---------------|
| Proceeds, before expenses, to us | \$ 2.538 | \$ 49,073,887 |
|----------------------------------|----------|---------------|

The underwriters may also purchase up to 2,900,347 additional shares of our common stock from us at the public offering price, less the underwriting discount, within 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement to cover over-allotments, if any.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The underwriters expect to deliver the shares to purchasers on or about February 10, 2014.

Sole Book-Running Manager

William Blair

Maxim Group LLC

Lead Manager

H.C. Wainwright & Co., LLC

Co-Manager

MLV & Co.

Co-Manager

February 5, 2014

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Prospectus Supplement

| | Page |
|---|-------------|
| <u>About this Prospectus Supplement</u> | S-ii |
| <u>Summary</u> | S-1 |
| <u>Cautionary Note About Forward-Looking Statements</u> | S-7 |
| <u>Risk Factors</u> | S-8 |
| <u>Use of Proceeds</u> | S-35 |
| <u>Dilution</u> | S-35 |
| <u>Underwriting</u> | S-37 |
| <u>Description of Common Stock</u> | S-40 |
| <u>Legal Matters</u> | S-40 |
| <u>Experts</u> | S-40 |
| <u>Where You Can Find More Information</u> | S-41 |
| <u>Incorporation of Certain Documents by Reference</u> | S-41 |

Prospectus

| | Page |
|---|-------------|
| <u>About this Prospectus</u> | 1 |
| <u>Incorporation of Certain Documents by Reference</u> | 1 |
| <u>Cautionary Note About Forward-Looking Statements</u> | 2 |
| <u>Risk Factors</u> | 2 |
| <u>The Company</u> | 3 |
| <u>Use of Proceeds</u> | 3 |
| <u>Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u> | 4 |
| <u>Dilution</u> | 4 |
| <u>Description of Securities</u> | 4 |
| <u>Description of Capital Stock</u> | 5 |
| <u>Description of Common Stock</u> | 5 |
| <u>Description of Preferred Stock</u> | 7 |
| <u>Description of Warrants</u> | 9 |
| <u>Description of Debt Securities</u> | 13 |
| <u>Description of Units</u> | 20 |
| <u>Legal Ownership and Book-Entry Issuance</u> | 24 |
| <u>Plan of Distribution</u> | 27 |
| <u>Legal Matters</u> | 29 |
| <u>Experts</u> | 29 |
| <u>Where You Can Find More Information</u> | 29 |

Table of Contents

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

This document consists of two parts. The first part is this prospectus supplement, which describes the specific terms of this offering. The second part, the accompanying prospectus, gives more general information, some of which may not apply to this offering. Generally, when we refer only to the prospectus, we are referring to both parts combined. This prospectus supplement may add to, update or change information in the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus.

If information in this prospectus supplement is inconsistent with the accompanying prospectus, you should rely on this prospectus supplement. This prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated into each by reference include important information about us, the shares being offered and other information you should know before investing in our common stock.

You should rely on this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the information incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. We have not, and the underwriters have not, authorized anyone to provide you with information that is in addition to or different from that contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. We are not, and the underwriters are not, offering to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. You should not assume that the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus is accurate as of any date other than as of the date of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus, as the case may be, or in the case of the documents incorporated by reference, the date of such documents regardless of the time of delivery of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus or any sale of our common stock. Our business, financial condition, liquidity, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates.

All references in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus to Agenus, Antigenics, the Company, we, us or our mean Agenus Inc. and its subsidiaries, unless we state otherwise or the context otherwise requires.

Table of Contents

SUMMARY

The following is a summary of selected information contained elsewhere or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. It does not contain all of the information that you should consider before buying our securities. You should read this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus in their entirety, including the information incorporated by reference herein and therein.

The Company

Our Business

We are a biotechnology company working to develop treatments for cancers and infectious diseases. We are focused on immunotherapeutic products based on our core platform technologies with multiple product candidates advancing through the clinic, including several product candidates that have advanced into late-stage clinical trials, including through corporate partners. We assess the development, commercialization and/or partnering strategies with respect to each of our internal product candidates periodically based on several factors, including clinical trial results, competitive positioning, and funding requirements and resources.

Prophage Series Vaccines

Our Prophage Series cancer vaccines are autologous therapies derived from cells extracted from the patient's tumor. As a result, Prophage Series vaccines contain a precise antigenic fingerprint of a patient's particular cancer and are designed to reprogram the body's immune system to target only cells bearing this fingerprint, reducing the risk that powerful anti-cancer agents will target healthy tissue and cause debilitating side effects often associated with chemotherapy and radiation therapy. We believe that in contrast to many other autologous vaccines that are based on cellular preparations, the Prophage series of vaccines is based on a stable protein preparation produced via a relatively simple manufacturing process. Our Prophage Series G vaccines are currently being studied in two different settings of glioblastoma multiforme, or GBM: newly diagnosed and recurrent disease.

In September 2013, we announced the results of a recent analysis from a multiple-center, Phase 2 clinical trial in 46 patients with newly diagnosed GBM treated with Prophage Series G-100 (HSPPC-96) in combination with the current standard of care (radiation and temozolomide) which showed, that, to date, patients treated with Prophage G-100 had a median progression free survival of 17.8 months, with 63% of the patients progression free at 12 months and 20% of patients progression free at 24 months. These results indicate improvement when compared to patients treated with the standard of care alone, for which median progression free survival is 6.9 months. Median overall survival, the primary endpoint of the trial, is 23.3 months to-date and remains durable in patients treated with HSPPC-96. In this study, the 12 month survival rate is 85%, with 50% of patients still alive and being followed, with many surviving beyond the 24 month study period. For the standard of care alone, the median overall survival rate is 14.6 months to-date.

In addition to the Phase 2 trial in patients with newly diagnosed GBM, the Cancer Therapy Evaluation Program of the National Cancer Institute, or NCI, is supporting a randomized Phase 2 clinical trial of the Prophage G-200 vaccine in combination with bevacizumab (Avastin®) in approximately 222 patients with surgically resectable, recurrent GBM. Patients have already been randomized into this trial and active recruitment is underway at multiple centers in the United States. The study is being sponsored by the Alliance for Clinical Trials in Oncology, a cooperative group of the NCI. We believe that this trial is the largest brain tumor trial ever funded by the NCI and the largest vaccine study ever conducted with bevacizumab. The study is designed to compare efficacy of the Prophage G-200 vaccine administered with bevacizumab either concomitantly or at

S-1

Table of Contents

progression, versus treatment with bevacizumab alone. The primary endpoint is overall survival. This study design is supported in part by previous research indicating a potential synergistic effect between the mechanisms of action behind both Prophage G-200 and bevacizumab.

In December 2013, results published from a Phase 2 study in recurrent GBM patients demonstrated that more than 90% of the patients treated with Prophage Series G-200 were alive at six months after surgery and 30% were alive at twelve months. Additionally, the median overall survival was approximately eleven months. This compares favorably to the expected median survival for recurrent GBM patients of three to nine months. The primary objective of this multi-center, single arm Phase 2 trial was to assess the survival rate at six months. The data was published in a manuscript in *Neuro-Oncology*, the official journal of the Society of Neuro-Oncology.

In January 2014, we announced the initiation of an investigator-sponsored, randomized Phase 2 clinical trial of the Prophage vaccine in combination with ipilimumab in patients with stage III and IV metastatic melanoma. This study, which is sponsored by Dr. Jorge Quesada at the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston, is designed to evaluate the safety, feasibility and immunogenicity of the combination of the Prophage vaccine and ipilimumab with or without low-dose cyclophosphamide in approximately 25 patients. This study represents the first time that one of our Prophage Series cancer vaccines has been evaluated in the clinic in combination with a checkpoint inhibitor antibody.

HerpV

HerpV, a recombinant, synthetic vaccine containing multiple antigens derived from the herpes simplex 2 virus, is currently in a Phase 2 clinical trial, and we believe it is one of the most clinically-advanced therapeutic vaccines for the treatment of genital herpes in clinical development. Combining our heat shock protein technology and our QS-21 Stimulon adjuvant, HerpV represents a potential new approach to the treatment of genital herpes. Rather than attempting to suppress the virus, which is what antivirals do, HerpV has the potential to enable the individual's own immune system to stop the virus from causing and transmitting disease without chronic treatment.

The published results of a Phase 1 study show that HerpV administered with our QS-21 Stimulon adjuvant was associated with a significant induction of both CD4+ and CD8+ cellular immune responses. We believe that this is the first instance of a herpes vaccine candidate eliciting both CD4 and CD8 cellular immunity in human subjects. In November 2013, we released top line results from a Phase 2, randomized, double blind, multicenter clinical trial of HerpV in HSV-2 positive genital herpes patients. The Phase 2 trial met its primary endpoint. The primary analysis, which looked at viral shedding after the initial three injections, shows that patients who received HerpV had a statistically significant reduction in viral shedding. This study was designed to determine the biological efficacy of HerpV on genital viral shedding after three injections of the vaccine. The majority of subjects in the study have received a booster injection of HerpV that was given six months after the first vaccination followed by determination of genital viral shedding for an additional 45-day period. We anticipate final study results, after booster injection, during the first half of 2014.

QS-21 Stimulon adjuvant

Our QS-21 Stimulon® vaccine adjuvant is a saponin extracted from the bark of the Quillaja saponaria tree, also known as the Soapbark, an evergreen tree native to warm temperate central Chile. QS-21 Stimulon has become a key component in the development of investigational preventive vaccine formulations across a wide variety of infectious diseases, including several investigational therapeutic vaccines intended to treat cancer and degenerative disorders. QS-21 Stimulon has been widely studied and approximately 50,000 patients have received vaccines containing the adjuvant. QS-21 Stimulon is currently being studied in 21 vaccine indications, which include GlaxoSmithKline's Phase

3 vaccine programs for RTS,S for malaria, MAGE-A3 cancer

S-2

Table of Contents

immunotherapeutic for non-small cell lung cancer and melanoma and HZ/su for shingles. In addition, Janssen Alzheimer Immunotherapy's QS-21 Stimulon adjuvant-containing vaccine candidate is in Phase 2 trials for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease. If any of our partners' products containing QS-21 Stimulon successfully completes clinical development and receives approval for commercial sale, we are generally entitled to receive royalties for 10 years after commercial launch, with some exceptions.

Pending Acquisition

On January 10, 2014, we entered into an agreement to acquire 4-Antibody AG (4-AB) pursuant to the terms of a share exchange agreement (the Exchange Agreement). We refer to our pending acquisition of the business of 4-AB as the Acquisition. Under the terms of the Exchange Agreement, we will pay the stockholders of 4-AB at closing a number of shares of our common stock having a fair market value (based on the average closing price of our common stock on the Nasdaq for the 30 trading days prior to the closing) of \$10 million. In addition, if, prior to the fifth anniversary of the closing, the ten-day market capitalization of Agenus exceeds \$300 million, we will pay the former stockholders of 4-AB an additional \$20 million, at our option in cash or shares of our common stock; and, if prior to the tenth anniversary, the 30-day market capitalization of Agenus exceeds each of \$750 million and \$1 billion, we will pay the former stockholders of 4-AB an additional \$10 million in each instance, at our option in cash or shares of our common stock. Finally, in the event that, prior to March 31, 2014, we enter into a commercial collaboration or licensing agreement relating to the application of the 4-Antibody Retrocyte Display technology to a target of interest identified by the parties, the former stockholders of 4-AB will be entitled to receive 20% of the first \$5 million of upfront cash consideration and 50% of any upfront cash consideration in excess of \$5 million. The Company has agreed to assume certain 4-AB liabilities, including approximately \$1 million of obligations relating to transaction-related payments and certain 4-AB indebtedness totaling approximately \$500,000, which may be settled in shares of our common stock.

For a discussion of the terms and conditions of the Exchange Agreement, please refer to our Current Report on Form 8-K filed on January 13, 2014 and incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, including the full text of the Exchange Agreement, which is attached thereto as Exhibit 2.1.

4-AB is a privately held Swiss company. 4-AB has developed a fully-human antibody drug-discovery and optimization technology platform which it is utilizing to generate a novel pipeline of antibody therapeutic candidates. 4-AB's proprietary discovery engine, Retrocyte Display, generates high quality therapeutic antibody drug candidates quickly using a high-throughput approach incorporating full-length IgG format human antibody libraries expressed in mammalian B-lineage cells. 4-AB has checkpoint antibody programs targeting GITR, OX40, CTLA-4, PD-1, TIM-3 and LAG-3. 4-AB has facilities in Basel, Switzerland and Jena, Germany.

We expect our acquisition of 4-AB to close in February 2014; however, the Acquisition is subject to various closing conditions, and no assurance can be given that the Acquisition will be completed by the end of February 2014 or at all. This offering is not contingent upon the closing of the Acquisition.

Liquidity and Capital Resources

As of September 30, 2013, we had cash and cash equivalents of \$30.2 million. Based upon our current operating plans, and assuming the Acquisition is completed in February 2014, we anticipate that our operating expenses for 2014 will be in the range of \$30 million to \$40 million. Our current cash balance, together with the anticipated proceeds of this offering, is expected to satisfy our liquidity requirements through the first half of 2015. Subject to market and other conditions, we may seek additional funding through public or private financings of equity or debt securities, but such financing may not be available on acceptable terms, or at all. In addition, the terms of such financings may result in, among other things, dilution for stockholders or the incurrence of indebtedness that may

impact our ability to make capital expenditures or incur additional debt. We

S-3

Table of Contents

may also seek additional funds through arrangements with collaborators or other third parties, or through project financing. These arrangements would generally require us to relinquish or encumber rights to some of our technologies or product candidates, and we may not be able to enter into such arrangements on acceptable terms, if at all. If we are unable to obtain additional funding on a timely basis, we may be required to curtail or terminate some or all of our product development programs or to scale back, suspend or terminate our business operations.

Risk Factors

Our business is subject to substantial risk. Please carefully consider the Risk Factors beginning on page S-8 of this prospectus supplement and page 2 of the accompanying prospectus and other information included and incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, including the risk factors incorporated by reference from our filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the SEC, for a discussion of the factors you should consider carefully before deciding to purchase these securities. Additional risks and uncertainties not presently known to us or that we currently deem immaterial may also impair our business operations. You should be able to bear a complete loss of your investment.

Corporate Information

Our principal executive office is located at 3 Forbes Road, Lexington, MA, 02421, and our telephone number is (781) 674-4400. Our website address is www.agenusbio.com. **Information contained on our website is not a part of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus.**

Table of Contents**The Offering**

*The following summary contains basic information about our common stock and the offering and is not intended to be complete. It does not contain all the information that may be important to you. For a more complete understanding of our common stock, you should read the sections entitled *Description of Common Stock* in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus.*

| | |
|--|--|
| Common Stock Offered by us | 19,335,653 shares |
| Common Stock to be outstanding immediately after the Offering | 54,564,065 shares ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾ |
| Over-allotment Option | We have granted the underwriters an option to purchase up to 2,900,347 shares of our common stock at a price of \$2.70 per share solely to cover over-allotments, if any. This option is exercisable, in whole or in part, for a period of 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement. |
| Use of Proceeds | We intend to use the net proceeds from this offering for general corporate purposes, which may include transition and integration costs related to the Acquisition, working capital, capital expenditures, research and development expenditures, clinical trial expenditures, acquisitions of additional companies or technologies and investments. This offering is not contingent upon closing of the Acquisition. See <i>Use of Proceeds</i> . |
| Risk Factors | Your investment in our common stock involves substantial risks. You should consider the <i>Risk Factors</i> beginning on page S-8 of this prospectus supplement and page 2 of the accompanying prospectus and incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, including the risk factors incorporated by reference from our Current Report on Form 8-K filed on February 4, 2014. |
| Nasdaq Symbol | AGEN |

(1) Based on 35,228,412 shares of our common stock outstanding as of September 30, 2013 and does not include:

Edgar Filing: AGENUS INC - Form 424B5

3,642,712 shares issuable upon the exercise of outstanding warrants with a weighted-average exercise price of \$11.53 per share;

4,164,965 shares issuable upon the exercise of outstanding stock options with a weighted-average exercise price of \$5.74 per share;

147,413 nonvested shares;

333,333 shares issuable upon the conversion of our outstanding shares of Series A-1 Convertible Preferred Stock;

150,078 shares available under our Employee Stock Purchase Plan; and

118,788 shares issuable under our Directors' Deferred Compensation Plan.

S-5

Table of Contents

Except as otherwise indicated, all information in this prospectus supplement assumes no exercise by the underwriters of their over-allotment option.

- (2) Upon the closing of the Acquisition, we will pay the stockholders of 4-AB a number of shares of our common stock having a fair market value (based on the average closing price of our common stock on the Nasdaq for the 30 trading days prior to the closing) of \$10 million. If closing of the Acquisition would have occurred on the date of this prospectus supplement, the number of shares issued to stockholders of 4-AB would have been 3,361,345. In addition, we may be obligated in the future to pay certain contingent milestones payments to the stockholders of 4-AB, payable at our election in cash or shares of our common stock, that may exceed \$40 million. See Summary The Company Pending Acquisition.

Table of Contents

CAUTIONARY NOTE ABOUT FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein and other written and oral statements we make from time to time contain certain forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. You can identify these forward-looking statements by the fact they use words such as could, expect, anticipate, estimate, target, may, project, guidance, intend, plan, believe, will, potential, opportunity, future, terms of similar meaning and expression in connection with any discussion of future operating or financial performance. You can also identify forward-looking statements by the fact that they do not relate strictly to historical or current facts. Such forward-looking statements are based on current expectations and involve inherent risks and uncertainties, including factors that could delay, divert or change any of them, and could cause actual outcomes to differ materially from current expectations. These statements are likely to relate to, among other things, our business strategy, our research and development, our product development efforts, our ability to commercialize our product candidates, the activities of our licensees, our prospects for initiating partnerships or collaborations, our ability to successfully complete and integrate our pending acquisition of 4-AB, the timing of the introduction of products, the effect of new accounting pronouncements, uncertainty regarding our future operating results and our profitability, anticipated sources of funds as well as our plans, objectives, expectations and intentions.

Although we believe we have been prudent in our plans and assumptions, no assurance can be given that any goal or plan set forth in forward-looking statements can be achieved and readers are cautioned not to place undue reliance on such statements, which speak only as of the date made. We undertake no obligation to release publicly any revisions to forward-looking statements as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

We have included more detailed descriptions of these risks and uncertainties and other risks and uncertainties applicable to our business that we believe could cause actual results to differ materially from any forward-looking statement in the Risk Factors sections of this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein including, but not limited to, the risk factors incorporated by reference from our filings with the SEC. We encourage you to read those descriptions carefully. We caution investors not to place significant reliance on forward-looking statements; such statements need to be evaluated in light of all the information contained and incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. Furthermore, the statements speak only as of the date of each document, and we undertake no obligation to update or revise these statements.

Oncophage[®] and Stimulon[®] are registered trademarks of Agenus Inc. and its subsidiaries. All rights reserved.

Table of Contents

RISK FACTORS

*Investing in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. You should carefully review the risks and uncertainties described below, in the accompanying prospectus and in the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein including, but not limited to, the risks included in our Current Report on Form 8-K filed on February 4, 2014. The risks described in these documents are not the only ones we face, but those that we currently consider to be material. There may be other unknown or unpredictable economic, business, competitive, regulatory or other factors that could have material adverse effects on our future results. Past financial performance may not be a reliable indicator of future performance and historical trends should not be used to anticipate results or trends in future periods. Please also read carefully the section above entitled *Cautionary Note About Forward-Looking Statements*.*

Risks Related to the Acquisition

We may fail to consummate the Acquisition.

This offering is not contingent upon the closing of the Acquisition. Our ability to consummate the Acquisition is subject to various closing conditions. Changes in the terms of the Acquisition will have no effect on your rights as a purchaser of our common stock. Although certain information included in this prospectus supplement generally assumes consummation of the Acquisition, we cannot assure you that the Acquisition will occur.

The Exchange Agreement contains certain termination rights for both Agenus and 4-AB, including (i) if the closing does not occur by February 28, 2014 through no fault of the terminating party, (ii) as a result of a governmental or court order preventing the closing, (iii) by a party if the other party has breached representations, warranties or covenants made in the Exchange Agreement and (iv) by the shareholders of 4-AB in the event of a sale or bankruptcy of Agenus or if our shares are delisted from trading on the Nasdaq prior to closing; and the Exchange Agreement further provides that, upon termination, Agenus and the shareholders of 4-AB shall remain liable for any breaches of the Exchange Agreement occurring prior to such termination. However, no termination fees will be payable by either party in the event of a termination of the Exchange Agreement. Currently, the transactions contemplated by the Exchange Agreement are expected to be completed in February 2014. If we fail to close the Acquisition, depending on circumstances, we could be subject to litigation, including claims for damages.

We have incurred and will continue to incur significant transaction costs in connection with the Acquisition.

We have incurred and will continue to incur substantial legal, accounting, financial advisory and/or other costs and our management has devoted considerable time and effort in connection with the Acquisition. If the Acquisition is not completed, we will bear certain fees and expenses associated with the Acquisition without realizing the anticipated benefits of the Acquisition. These and other fees and expenses may be significant and could have an adverse impact on our operating results.

We may fail to realize the benefits we expect to realize as a result of the Acquisition.

The success of the Acquisition will depend, in part, on our ability to realize the anticipated synergies, business opportunities and growth prospects from combining the businesses of Agenus and 4-AB. We may never realize these anticipated synergies, business opportunities and growth prospects. Integrating operations will be complex and will require significant efforts and expenditures on the part of both Agenus and 4-AB. Employees might leave or be terminated because of the Acquisition. Our management might have its attention diverted while trying to integrate operations and corporate and administrative infrastructures. We might experience increased competition that limits our ability to expand our business, and we might not be able to capitalize on expected business opportunities,

including maintaining current collaboration relationships and advancing the development

S-8

Table of Contents

of the 4-AB technologies. We may experience difficulties reconciling 4-AB's system of financial reporting, which has been based upon International Financial Reporting Standards, or IFRS, for small and medium-sized entities, with U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, or U.S. GAAP. Moreover, assumptions underlying estimates of expected cost savings as a result of the Acquisition may be inaccurate, and general industry and business conditions might deteriorate. If any of these factors limit our ability to integrate the operations of Agenus and 4-AB successfully or on a timely basis, or to develop the business opportunities that we expect to realize from the Acquisition, the expectations of future results of operations, including certain cost savings and synergies expected to result from the Acquisition, might not be met.

In addition, Agenus and 4-AB have operated and, until the completion of the Acquisition, will continue to operate, independently. It is possible that the integration process could result in the loss of key employees, the disruption of each company's ongoing businesses, tax costs or inefficiencies, or inconsistencies in standards, controls, information technology systems, procedures and policies, any of which could adversely affect our ability to maintain relationships with partners, employees or other third parties or our ability to achieve the anticipated benefits of the Acquisition or could reduce our earnings.

The Acquisition could cause disruptions in the business of 4-AB, which could have an adverse effect on our businesses and financial results.

The announcement and pendency of the Acquisition could cause disruptions in the businesses of 4-AB and Agenus. Specifically:

4-AB's current and prospective employees might experience uncertainty about their future roles with us following completion of the Acquisition, which might adversely affect our ability to retain key managers and other employees;

relationships with 4-AB's collaboration partners may become uncertain as a result of our acquiring ownership of 4-AB; and

the attention of our and 4-AB's management might be directed toward the completion of the Acquisition. ***4-AB is a privately held company, and is not subject to public reporting requirements, and, as a result, you may not have the information necessary to evaluate the company's business and financial results.***

4-AB is a privately held company organized under the laws of Switzerland. As such, it has not been subject to financial reporting requirements applicable to public companies, and is not required to prepare and publish audited financial statements in accordance with U.S. GAAP. To date, 4-AB's financial results have been prepared in accordance with IFRS for small and medium-sized entities. Upon closing of the Acquisition, we will be required to reconcile the 4-AB financial statements to U.S. GAAP, which may result in certain adjustments. Financial statements of 4-AB on either a standalone basis or on a combined pro forma basis with us will not be available for you to evaluate and consider until after the closing of the Acquisition. As a result, you may not have available to you sufficient information to evaluate the combined business and financial results of the Acquisition.

Although we have conducted a diligence review of 4-AB, there may be aspects of its business or financial results that may not be well understood by us until we consummate the Acquisition and proceed to integrate 4-AB's operations.

Among other matters, although we do not anticipate that we will incur or assume any liabilities or obligations out of the ordinary course of business in connection with the Acquisition (other than approximately \$1 million of obligations relating to transaction-related payments and certain 4-AB indebtedness totaling approximately \$500,000, all of which may be settled in shares of our common stock), we may determine that unknown or unanticipated material liabilities exist after we have taken ownership of 4-AB.

S-9

Table of Contents

The issuance of shares of our common stock in the Acquisition would dilute the interest held by our stockholders prior to the Acquisition.

If the Acquisition is completed, we will issue shares of our common stock to the shareholders of 4-AB at closing having a fair market value of \$10,000,000 (based on the average closing price of our common stock on the Nasdaq for the 30 trading days prior to the closing). If closing of the Acquisition would have occurred on the date of this prospectus supplement, the number of shares issued to stockholders of 4-AB would have been 3,361,345. In addition, we may be obligated in the future to pay certain contingent milestones payments, payable at our election in cash or shares of our common stock, that may exceed \$40 million. See Summary The Company Pending Acquisition. The issuance of shares of our common stock in connection with the Acquisition would cause a reduction in the relative percentage interest of our current stockholders in the ownership of our common stock and could have the effect of depressing the market price of our common stock.

Failure to complete the Acquisition could adversely affect our stock price, future business, and financial results.

As a public company, we were required to announce the Acquisition prior to the actual closing of the transaction. As discussed above, completion of the Acquisition is subject to the satisfaction of various conditions on the part of both parties. There is no assurance that either we or 4-AB will satisfy these conditions. Failure to complete the Acquisition could prevent us from realizing the anticipated benefits that we might derive from our ownership of 4-AB. We would also remain liable for significant transaction costs, including legal, accounting and related fees. In addition, the market price of our common stock may reflect various market assumptions as to whether the transaction will occur. Consequently, the completion of, or failure to complete, the Acquisition could result in a significant change in the market price of our common stock.

Additional Risks Related to this Offering

You will experience immediate and substantial dilution in the net tangible book value per share of the common stock you purchase.

Since the price per share of our common stock being offered is substantially higher than the net tangible book value per share of our common stock, you will suffer substantial dilution in the net tangible book value of the common stock you purchase in this offering. Based on the public offering price of \$2.70 per share, if you purchase units in this offering, you will suffer immediate and substantial dilution of \$1.91 per share in the net tangible book value of the common stock. See the section entitled Dilution below for a more detailed discussion of the dilution you will incur if you purchase common stock in this offering.

You may experience future dilution as a result of future equity offerings and exercise of outstanding options and nonvested warrants.

In order to raise additional capital, we may in the future offer additional shares of our common stock or other securities convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock. We cannot assure you that we will be able to sell shares or other securities in any other offering at a price per share that is equal to or greater than the price per share paid by investors in this offering, and investors purchasing shares or other securities in the future could have rights superior to existing stockholders. The price per share at which we sell additional shares of our common stock or other securities convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock in future transactions may be higher or lower than the price per share in this offering. As of September 30, 2013, 1,083,734 shares of common stock were reserved for future issuance under our stock option plan. As of that date, there were also options outstanding to purchase 4,164,965 shares of our common stock and warrants outstanding to purchase 3,642,712 shares of our common stock. You will

incur dilution upon exercise of any outstanding stock options or warrants. In addition, as described above, we will be obligated to issue shares of our common stock upon the closing of the Acquisition and, at our election, upon the achievement of certain milestone events in the future.

S-10

Table of Contents

Risks Related to our Business

If we incur operating losses for longer than we expect, or we are not able to raise additional capital, we may be unable to continue our operations, or we may become insolvent.

Our net losses for the nine months ended September 30, 2013, and for the years ended December 31, 2012, 2011, and 2010, were \$24.3 million, \$11.3 million, \$23.3 million, and \$21.9 million, respectively. We expect to incur additional losses over the next several years as we continue research and clinical development of our technologies and pursue partnering opportunities, regulatory strategies, commercialization, and related activities, and such losses may increase as a result of our acquisition of 4-AB. Furthermore, our ability to generate cash from operations is dependent on the success of our licensees and collaborative partners, as well as the likelihood and timing of new strategic licensing and partnering relationships and/or successful development and commercialization of vaccines containing QS-21 Stimulon, our Prophage Series vaccines and our other product candidates. From our inception through September 30, 2013, we have incurred net losses totaling \$643.3 million.

On September 30, 2013, we had \$30.2 million in cash and cash equivalents. We believe that, based on our current plans and activities, our working capital resources at September 30, 2013, plus anticipated proceeds from this offering and potential proceeds from license, supply, and collaborative agreements will be sufficient to satisfy our liquidity requirements through the first half of 2015. We expect to attempt to raise additional funds in advance of depleting our funds although additional funding may not be available on favorable terms, or at all. For the nine months ended September 30, 2013, our average monthly cash used in operating activities was approximately \$1.6 million.

We have financed our operations primarily through the sale of equity and debt securities. In order to finance future operations, we will be required to raise additional funds in the capital markets, through arrangements with collaborative partners, or from other sources. Additional financing may not be available on favorable terms, or at all. If we are unable to raise additional funds when we need them or if we incur operating losses for longer than we expect, we may not be able to continue some or all of our operations, or we may become insolvent. We also may be forced to license or sell technologies to others under agreements that allocate to third parties substantial portions of the potential value of these technologies.

There are a number of factors that will influence our future capital requirements, including, without limitation, the following:

the number and characteristics of the product candidates we pursue;

the scope, progress, results and costs of researching and developing our future product candidates, and conducting preclinical and clinical trials;

the timing of, and the costs involved in, obtaining regulatory approvals for our and our licensees' product candidates;

the cost of manufacturing;

our ability to establish and maintain strategic partnerships, licensing or other arrangements and the financial terms of such agreements;

the costs involved in preparing, filing, prosecuting, maintaining, defending and enforcing our intellectual property rights;

the costs associated with any successful commercial operations; and

the timing, receipt and amount of sales of, or royalties on, our future products, if any.

General economic conditions in the United States economy and abroad may have a material adverse effect on our liquidity and financial condition, particularly if our ability to raise additional funds is impaired. The ability of potential patients and/or health care payers to pay for our products could also be adversely impacted,

Table of Contents

thereby limiting our potential revenue. In addition, any negative impacts from any deterioration in the credit markets on our collaborative partners could limit potential revenue from our product candidates.

We have significant debt, and we may not be able to make interest or principal payments when due.

In April 2013 we exchanged our 8% senior secured convertible notes due August 2014 (the 2006 Notes), including accrued and unpaid interest, for \$10.0 million in cash, 2,500,000 shares of our common stock, a revenue interest in certain QS-21 Stimulon partnered programs and a royalty interest in HerpV. The \$10.0 million cash payment was financed by entering into a Loan and Security Agreement with Silicon Valley Bank for a \$5.0 million loan that bears interest at 6.75% annually (the SVB Loan), and a Note Purchase Agreement with various investors to issue senior subordinated notes in the aggregate principal amount of \$5.0 million with annual interest at 10% (the Subordinated Notes). The SVB Loan is payable in equal monthly installments of approximately \$278,000 due monthly beginning November 2013 and ending in April 2015. The Subordinated Notes are due in April 2015.

Our ability to satisfy our obligations under this indebtedness will depend upon our future performance, which is subject to many factors, including the factors identified in this Risk Factors section and other factors beyond our control. If we are not able to generate sufficient cash flow from operations in the future to service our indebtedness, we may be required, among other things, to:

seek additional financing in the debt or equity markets;

refinance or restructure all or a portion of our indebtedness;

sell, out-license, or otherwise dispose of assets; and/or

reduce or delay planned expenditures on research and development and/or commercialization activities. Such measures might not be sufficient to enable us to make principal and interest payments. In addition, any such financing, refinancing, or sale of assets might not be available on economically favorable terms, if at all.

Other than for the year ended December 31, 2012, we have had negative cash flows from operations. The net cash provided by operations of \$1.0 million for the year ended December 31, 2012 primarily resulted from one-time payments received under amended license agreements and therefore our net cash provided by operations for the year ended December 31, 2012 is not indicative of future results. For the nine months ended September 30, 2013 and for the years ended December 31, 2011, and 2010, net cash used in operating activities was \$14.0 million, \$16.2 million, and \$14.8 million, respectively.

Our outstanding debt instruments contain significant restrictive and affirmative covenants.

The SVB Loan is secured by a lien against substantially all of our assets as well as the assets of our subsidiary Antigenics Inc., and contains, among other things, a number of restrictions and covenants that limit our ability to:

incur certain additional indebtedness;

make certain investments;

pay dividends other than dividends required pursuant to pre-existing commitments;

make payments on subordinated indebtedness other than regularly scheduled payments of interest;

create certain liens;

consolidate, merge, sell or otherwise dispose of our assets; and/or

change our line of business.

S-12

Table of Contents

The SVB Loan also specifies a number of events of default (some of which are subject to applicable cure periods), including, among other things:

covenant defaults;

other non-payment defaults;

bankruptcy;

certain penalties and judgments from a governmental authority;

cross-defaults in respect of indebtedness over \$50,000; and

insolvency defaults.

Additionally, any material adverse change with respect to us or our subsidiary Antigenics Inc., constitutes an event of default. Upon the occurrence of an event of default under the SVB Loan, subject to cure periods in certain circumstances, the Lender may declare all amounts outstanding to be immediately due and payable and may foreclose upon our assets that secure the SVB Loan. During the continuance of an event of default which does not accelerate the maturity of the SVB Loan, interest will accrue at a default rate equal to the otherwise applicable rate plus 5%. We may prepay the SVB Loan at any time, in full, subject to certain notice requirements and a prepayment premium equal to 4% of the outstanding principal amount of the SVB Loan.

The Subordinated Notes also include default provisions which allow for the acceleration of the principal payment of the Subordinated Notes in the event we become involved in certain bankruptcy proceedings, become insolvent, fail to make a payment of principal or (after a grace period) interest on the Subordinated Notes, default on other indebtedness with an aggregate principal balance of \$5 million or more if such default has the effect of accelerating the maturity of such indebtedness, or become subject to a legal judgment or similar order for the payment of money in an amount greater than \$5 million if such amount will not be covered by third-party insurance.

If we default on the SVB Loan or the Subordinated Notes and the repayment of such indebtedness is accelerated, our liquidity will be materially and adversely affected.

We may not receive anticipated QS-21 Stimulon revenues from our licensees.

With the exception of our HerpV program, we currently rely upon and expect to continue to rely upon third party licensees, particularly GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) and JANSSEN Alzheimer Immunotherapy (JANSSEN AI), to develop, test, market and manufacture vaccines that utilize our QS-21 Stimulon adjuvant. We expect that we will rely on similar relationships if we develop new adjuvants in our Saponin Platform.

In return for rights to use QS-21 Stimulon, our licensees have generally agreed to pay us license fees, milestone payments and royalties on product sales for a minimum of 10 years after commercial launch, with some exceptions.

As each licensee controls its own product development process, we cannot predict our licensees' requirements for QS-21 Stimulon in the future or to what extent, if any, they will develop vaccines that use QS-21 Stimulon as an adjuvant. Our licensees may initiate or terminate programs containing QS-21 Stimulon at any time. Clinical trials being conducted by our licensees, including those being conducted by GSK and JANSSEN AI, may not be successful. The results of these trials and other factors may cause our licensees to terminate programs containing QS-21 Stimulon. In the event that our licensees develop vaccines using QS-21 Stimulon, there is no guarantee that these products will obtain regulatory approval or, if so approved, will generate significant royalties, if any, or that we will be able to collect royalties in the future. In addition, where we had previously supplied GSK and JANSSEN AI with all their requirements of QS-21 Stimulon, we have amended our agreements so that they are permitted to manufacture their own QS-21 Stimulon. We are unable to predict what amount of QS-21 Stimulon, if any, will be purchased from us by other licensees or collaborators in the future. Any inability to receive anticipated QS-21 Stimulon revenues would have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

Table of Contents

In connection with the exchange of our 2006 Notes, we entered into a Revenue Interests Assignment Agreement with the holders of the 2006 Notes. This agreement granted these holders a contractual right to the proceeds of 20% of our revenue interests from QS-21 Stimulon partnered programs and a 0.5% royalty on net sales of HerpV. Due to uncertainties surrounding the future revenue stream generated from our licensees, we are unable to predict the precise dollar value reduction in revenue that will result from this agreement to pay the 2006 Note holders their share of the proceeds from QS-21 Stimulon and HerpV programs. Any reduction in revenues generated from QS-21 Stimulon could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

Our HerpV therapeutic vaccine candidate is in early stage development and we may not be able to successfully develop this candidate.

Based on the results of our Phase 1 clinical trial of HerpV, which includes QS-21 Stimulon, we advanced this product candidate into a Phase 2 trial that measured the effect of vaccination on viral shedding in individuals infected with HSV-2 (genital herpes). In November 2013, we announced that the Phase 2 trial met its primary endpoint, a statistically significant reduction in viral shedding. Final study results, including booster and immune response data, are expected during the first half of 2014. While our clinical trials to date have yielded positive findings, they were limited in size and scope. There is no guarantee that future clinical trials will be successful or that a reduction in viral shedding will translate into clinical benefit. In addition, we may not have the resources required to advance the vaccine further and even if we do have such resources, the success of future clinical trials will be dependent on, upon other things, maintaining sufficient supply of the required investigational materials, enrolling sufficient patients and the adherence of these patients to the study protocol. Our HerpV development program in general may not be successful or yield a partnering opportunity for us. Furthermore, it is possible that research and discoveries by others will render our product candidate obsolete or noncompetitive.

We may not be able to market and sell vaccines from our Prophage Series.

The probability and timing of submissions and/or approval of Prophage Series vaccines is uncertain.

A Phase 2 trial testing the Prophage Series G-100 vaccine candidate in newly diagnosed glioma has been fully enrolled and patient follow up is ongoing. While early data from this study have been encouraging, these data may not be supported in later follow-up of patients or in subsequent clinical trials. Separately, the Cancer Therapy Evaluation Program of the National Cancer Institute opened patient enrollment in a randomized Phase 2 trial of the Prophage Series G-200 vaccine in combination with Avastin® (bevacizumab) in patients with surgically resectable recurrent glioma. This trial may not be successful, and even if it is successful, the trial is not intended to provide the necessary evidence of efficacy and/or safety to support biologics license application (BLA) filings.

Due to our lack of resources, our ability to perform additional studies may be limited. In addition, studies may take years to complete and may fail to support regulatory filings for many reasons. Our Prophage Series vaccines are a novel class of patient-specific (derived from the patient's own tumor) oncology therapies, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and foreign regulatory agencies, including the European Medicines Agency, which is responsible for product approvals in Europe, and Health Canada, which is responsible for product approvals in Canada, have limited experience in reviewing these types of therapies. Therefore, product candidates derived from the Prophage Series vaccines may experience high development costs and a long regulatory review process, either of which could delay or prevent commercialization efforts.

If we or our licensee are unable to purify heat shock proteins we may have difficulty successfully initiating or completing clinical trials or supporting commercial sales. Even if we or our licensees do successfully complete ongoing or future clinical trials or are successful manufacturing any approved products, we may have difficulty

generating a sizable market or commercial sales.

Our ability to successfully develop and commercialize the Prophage Series vaccines for a particular cancer depends in part on our, and following successful technology transfer to NewVac LLC (NewVac), our licensee

S-14

Table of Contents

for Oncophage in the Russian Federation and certain other CIS countries, its ability to purify heat shock proteins from that type of cancer. If we or NewVac experience difficulties in purifying heat shock proteins for a sufficiently large number of patients in our clinical trials, we may face delays in enrolling sufficient patients and subsequently utilize more internal resources to satisfy enrollment requirements. Manufacturing failures may also lower the probability of a successful analysis of the data from clinical trials and, ultimately, the ability to obtain regulatory approvals and generate commercial sales. Manufacturing difficulties may also adversely affect NewVac's ability to commercialize Oncophage in its licensed territory. We have successfully manufactured product across many different cancer types, however, the success rate per indication has varied. We have evolved our manufacturing processes to better accommodate a wider range of tumor types. Our current manufacturing technologies have been successful in manufacturing product from approximately 92% of the RCC tumors received and approximately 85% of the tumors received from patients enrolled in Phase 2 clinical trials in glioma. In addition, we may encounter problems with other types of cancer or patients as we expand our research. If we cannot overcome these problems, the number of patients or cancer types that our heat shock protein product candidates could treat would be limited. In addition, if we commercialize our heat shock protein product candidates, we may not be able to replicate past manufacturing success rates and we may face claims from patients for whom we are unable to produce a vaccine.

Manufacturing problems or increased demand may cause delays, unanticipated costs, or loss of revenue streams.

If the future clinical or commercial demand for our products or product candidates is substantially greater than we anticipate, our capacity may not be able to meet product demand. In addition, higher manufacturing loads may result in higher manufacturing failure rates as the operation becomes more complex. We currently manufacture our Prophage Series vaccines in our Lexington, MA facility. While we believe we will be able to cover demand in the near term, there is no guarantee that we will be able to meet all future or unanticipated increases in demand, and a failure to do so could adversely affect our business. Such demand may also limit our ability to manufacture product in support of clinical trials, and this could cause a delay or failure in our Prophage Series vaccine development programs. Manufacturing of Prophage Series vaccines is complex, and various factors could cause delays or an inability to supply vaccine. Deviations in the processes controlling manufacture could result in production failures. Furthermore, we have limited manufacturing resources and there is no assurance that we will be able to obtain the necessary resources, timely or at all, to meet any increased demand.

Regulatory bodies may require us to make our manufacturing facility a single product facility. In such an instance, we would no longer have the ability to manufacture products other than Prophage Series vaccines in our current facility.

Except in the case of GSK and JANSSEN AI, we have retained worldwide manufacturing rights for QS-21 Stimulon. We have the right to subcontract manufacturing for QS-21 Stimulon for our other existing and future QS-21 Stimulon manufacturing and supply needs, and we have a supply agreement with a contract manufacturer for the production of QS-21 Stimulon through September 2014. If we are not able to renew this agreement we may not be able to supply QS-21 Stimulon to meet future supply obligations on favorable terms or at all. For example, although GSK is a source of QS-21 Stimulon supply for us, their obligation to supply is for a limited duration, and various factors could impact our decision to exercise this right. In addition, we or our currently contracted suppliers may not have the ability to manufacture commercial grade QS-21 Stimulon.

We currently rely upon and expect to continue to rely upon third parties, potentially including our collaborators or licensees, to produce materials required to support our product candidates, preclinical studies, clinical trials, and commercial efforts. A number of factors could cause production interruptions at our manufacturing facility or at our contract manufacturers or suppliers, including equipment malfunctions, labor or employment retention problems, natural disasters, power outages, terrorist activities, or disruptions in the operations of our suppliers. Alternatively, there is the possibility we may have excess manufacturing capacity if product candidates do not progress as planned.

Table of Contents

There are a limited number of contract manufacturers or suppliers that are capable of manufacturing our product candidates or the materials used in their manufacture. If we are unable to do so ourselves or to arrange for third-party manufacturing or supply of these product candidates or materials, or to do so on commercially reasonable terms, we may not be able to complete development of these product candidates or commercialize them ourselves or through our collaborative partners or licensees. Reliance on third-party manufacturers entails risks to which we would not be subject if we manufactured products ourselves, including reliance on the third party for regulatory compliance, the possibility of breach of the manufacturing agreement by the third party because of factors beyond our control, and the possibility of termination or non-renewal of the agreement by the third party, based on its own business priorities, at a time that is costly or inconvenient for us.

Biopharmaceutical manufacturing is also subject to extensive government regulation. Components of a finished therapeutic product approved for commercial sale or used in late-stage clinical trials must be manufactured in accordance with cGMP. These regulations govern manufacturing processes and procedures (including record keeping) and the implementation and operation of quality systems to control and assure the quality of investigational products and products approved for sale. Our facilities and quality systems and the facilities and quality systems of some or all of our third party contractors must pass a pre-approval inspection for compliance with the applicable regulations as a condition of regulatory approval of product candidates. In addition, facilities are subject to ongoing inspections, and minor changes in manufacturing processes may require additional regulatory approvals, either of which could cause us to incur significant additional costs and lose revenue.

Risks associated with doing business internationally could negatively affect our business.

We have in the past, and may continue to seek, marketing and regulatory approvals of our product candidates in non-U.S. jurisdictions. For example, our Oncophage vaccine is approved for sale in Russia for the treatment of kidney cancer patients at intermediate risk for disease recurrence, and we have partnered with NewVac to commercialize this product in the Russian Federation. In addition, should we complete the Acquisition, we will commence research and development operations in Switzerland and Germany. Various risks associated with foreign operations may impact our success. Possible risks include fluctuations in the value of foreign and domestic currencies, disruptions in the import, export, and transportation of patient tumors and our product, the product and service needs of foreign customers, difficulties in building and managing foreign relationships, the performance of our licensees or collaborators, geopolitical instability, and unexpected regulatory, economic, or political changes in foreign markets. See Risk Factors- Even if we receive marketing approval for our product candidates, such product approvals could be subject to restrictions or withdrawals. Regulatory requirements are subject to change.

If we, or our licensees, fail to obtain adequate levels of reimbursement for our product candidates there may be no commercially viable market for these products, or the commercial potential of these products may be significantly limited.

Public and private insurance programs may determine that they will not cover our product candidates or the product candidates of our licensees. Government-sponsored health care systems typically pay a substantial share of health care costs, and they may regulate reimbursement levels of products to control costs. If we or our licensees are unsuccessful in obtaining substantial reimbursement for our product candidates from national or regional funds, we will have to rely on private-pay, which may delay or prevent our launch efforts, because the ability and willingness of patients to pay for our products is unclear.

We, or our licensees, may not be able to obtain health insurance coverage of our product candidates, and if coverage is obtained, it may be substantially delayed, or there may be significant restrictions on the circumstances in which the products would be reimbursed. We are unable to predict what impact any future regulation or third-party payer

initiatives relating to reimbursement will have on our sales.

S-16

Table of Contents

Our competitors in the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries may have superior products, manufacturing capability, selling and marketing expertise and/or financial and other resources.

Our product candidates and the product candidates in development by our collaborative partners may fail because of competition from major pharmaceutical companies and specialized biotechnology companies that market products, or that are engaged in the development of product candidates, directed at cancer, infectious diseases and degenerative disorders. Many of our competitors, including large pharmaceutical companies, have greater financial and human resources and more experience than we do. Our competitors may:

commercialize their product candidates sooner than we commercialize our own;

develop safer or more effective therapeutic drugs or preventive vaccines and other therapeutic products;

implement more effective approaches to sales and marketing and capture some of our potential market share;

establish superior intellectual property positions;

discover technologies that may result in medical insights or breakthroughs, which render our drugs or vaccines obsolete, possibly before they generate any revenue; or

adversely affect our ability to recruit patients for our clinical trials.

There is no guarantee that our products or product candidates will be able to compete with potential future products being developed by our competitors.

Competitive products in our HerpV program include Valtrex (GSK) and Famvir (Novartis), which are small molecule drugs marketed for treatment of genital herpes. Other companies are engaged in research and/or clinical development for vaccines for treatment of genital herpes including Genocea and Vical. AiCuris GmbH is engaged in clinical research of a small molecule drug for treatment of genital herpes and has completed a Phase 2 trial.

We are aware of compounds that claim to be comparable to QS-21 Stimulon that are being used in clinical trials. Several other vaccine adjuvants are in development and could compete with QS-21 Stimulon for inclusion in vaccines in development. These adjuvants include, but are not limited to, oligonucleotides, under development by Pfizer, Idera, Colby, and Dynavax, MF59 under development by Novartis, IC31, under development by Intercell, and MPL, under development by GSK. In the past, we have provided QS-21 Stimulon to other entities under materials transfer arrangements. In at least one instance, it is possible that this material was used unlawfully to develop synthetic formulations and/or derivatives of QS-21. In addition, companies such as Adjuvance Technologies, Inc. CSL Limited, and Novavax, Inc., as well as academic institutions and manufacturers of saponin extracts, are developing saponin adjuvants, including derivatives and synthetic formulations. These sources may be competitive with our ability to do future partnering and licensing deals with QS-21 Stimulon.

We are also aware of a third party that manufactures pre-clinical material purporting to be comparable to QS-21 Stimulon. The claims being made by this third party may create marketplace confusion and have an adverse effect on the goodwill generated by us and our partners with respect to QS-21 Stimulon. Any diminution of this goodwill may have an adverse effect on our ability to commercialize this technology, either alone or with a third party.

In competition with our Prophage Series product candidates, Genentech markets Avastin® and Eisai and Arbor Pharmaceuticals market Gliadel, both for treatment of recurrent glioma. In addition, TVAX Biomedical and Stemline Therapeutics are developing immunotherapy candidates (TVI-Brain-1 and SL-701, respectively) for recurrent glioma. Schering Corporation, a subsidiary of Merck, markets Temodar for treatment of patients with newly diagnosed glioma. Other companies are developing vaccine candidates for the treatment of patients with newly diagnosed glioma, such as Innocell Corp (Immuncell-LC), ImmunoCellular Therapeutics (ICT-107),

S-17

Table of Contents

Northwest Biotherapeutics (DC-Vax), Immatics (IMA-950), Activartis Biotech (GBM-Vax) and Celldex (CDX-110). Celldex is also currently developing a vaccine candidate for recurrent glioma. Other companies may begin such development as well.

As vaccines from our Prophage Series are potentially developed in other indications, they could face additional competition in those indications. In addition, and prior to regulatory approval, our Prophage Series vaccines and all of our other product candidates may compete for access to patients with other products in clinical development, with products approved for use in the indications we are studying, or with off-label use of products in the indications we are studying. We anticipate that we will face increased competition in the future as new companies enter markets we seek to address and scientific developments surrounding immunotherapy and other traditional cancer therapies continue to accelerate.

If we complete the Acquisition, we will have six preclinical checkpoint antibody programs that have been commenced by 4-AB. We are aware of several large companies that have antibody-based products on the market or in clinical development that are directed to the same biological target as some of these programs, including Bristol-Myers Squibb, which markets ipilimumab, an anti-CTLA-4 antibody, and has an anti-PD1 antibody in development, Medimmune, which has anti-CTLA-4, OX-40 and PD1 antibodies in development, Merck and Curetech, which each has an anti-PD1 antibody in development, and Pfizer, which has an anti-CTLA-4 antibody in development.

Our future growth depends on our ability to successfully identify, develop, acquire or in-license products and product candidates; otherwise, we may have limited growth opportunities.

An important part of our business strategy is to continue to develop a pipeline of product candidates by developing, acquiring or in-licensing products, businesses or technologies that we believe are a strategic fit with our existing business. However, these business activities may entail numerous operational and financial risks, including:

difficulty or inability to secure financing to fund development activities for such development, acquisition or in-licensed products or technologies;

incurrence of substantial debt or dilutive issuances of securities to pay for development, acquisition or in-licensing of new products;

disruption of our business and diversion of our management's time and attention;

higher than expected development, acquisition or in-license and integration costs;

exposure to unknown liabilities;

difficulty and cost in combining the operations and personnel of any acquired businesses with our operations and personnel;

inability to retain key employees of any acquired businesses;

difficulty in managing multiple product development programs; and

inability to successfully develop new products or clinical failure.

We have limited resources to identify and execute the development, acquisition or in-licensing of products, businesses and technologies and integrate them into our current infrastructure. We may compete with larger pharmaceutical companies and other competitors in our efforts to establish new collaborations, and/or acquire, in-license, and/or advance new product candidates. These competitors likely will have access to greater financial resources than us and may have greater expertise in identifying and evaluating new opportunities. Moreover, we may devote resources to potential development, acquisitions or in-licensing opportunities that are never completed, or we may fail to realize the anticipated benefits of such efforts.

S-18

Table of Contents

Failure to enter into and/or maintain significant licensing, distribution and/or collaboration agreements on favorable terms to us may hinder our efforts to develop and commercialize our product candidates and could increase our development timelines as well as our need to rely on other financing mechanisms, such as sales of debt or equity securities, to fund our operations.

We have been engaged in efforts to enter into licensing, distribution and/or collaborative agreements with one or more pharmaceutical or biotechnology companies to assist us with development and/or commercialization of our product candidates. If we are successful in entering into such agreements, we may not be able to negotiate agreements with economic terms similar to those negotiated by other companies. We may not, for example, obtain significant upfront payments, substantial royalty rates or milestones. If we fail to enter into any such agreements, our efforts to develop and/or commercialize our products or product candidates may be undermined. In addition, if we do not raise funds through any such agreements, we will need to rely on other financing mechanisms, such as sales of debt or equity securities, to fund our operations. Such financing mechanisms, if available, may not be sufficient or timely enough to advance our programs forward in a meaningful way in the short-term.

While we have been pursuing these business development efforts for several years, we have not entered into a substantial agreement relating to the potential development or commercialization of any of our Prophage Series vaccines other than the agreement with NewVac giving them an exclusive license to manufacture, market and sell Oncophage as well as pursue a development program in the Russian Federation and certain other CIS countries. To date, the NewVac arrangement has not provided substantial benefit to us, and there is no guarantee that it will. In addition, other companies may not be interested in pursuing patient-specific vaccines like our Prophage Series vaccines, and many other companies have been and may continue to be unwilling to commit to an agreement prior to receipt of additional clinical data, if at all.

In addition, we would consider license and/or co-development opportunities to advance HerpV and, if we complete the Acquisition, antibody candidates derived from the Retrocyte Display technology platform of 4-AB. However, collaborative partners or licensees may defer discussions until these assets are further developed, or they may not engage in such discussions on terms acceptable to us or at all.

Because we rely on collaborators and licensees for the development and commercialization of most of our product candidate programs, these programs may not prove successful, and/or we may not receive significant payments from such parties.

Part of our strategy is to develop and commercialize a majority of our product candidates by continuing or entering into arrangements with academic, government, or corporate collaborators and licensees. Our success depends on our ability to negotiate such agreements and on the success of the other parties in performing research, preclinical and clinical testing, completing regulatory applications, and commercializing product candidates. For example, the development of candidates from the Prophage G Series is currently dependent in a large part on the efforts of our institutional collaborators, such as the Brain Tumor Research Center at the University of California, San Francisco, which has conducted or is in the process of conducting Phase 2 clinical trials of Prophage Series vaccines G-100 and G-200 for the treatment of glioma and the Alliance for Clinical Trials in Oncology, a National Cancer Institute cooperative group, which is sponsoring a Phase 2 clinical trial of G-200 in patients with surgically resectable recurrent glioma. When our licensees or third party collaborators sponsor clinical trials using our product candidates, we cannot control the timing or quality of such trials or related activities. In addition, substantially all product candidates containing QS-21 Stimulon, other than HerpV, depend on the success of our collaborative partners or licensees, and our relationships with these third parties. Such product candidates depend on our collaborators and licensees successfully enrolling patients and completing clinical trials, being committed to dedicating the resources to advance these product candidates, obtaining regulatory approvals, and successfully commercializing product candidates. We

have granted NewVac an exclusive license to manufacture, market and sell Oncophage in the Russian Federation and certain other CIS countries. NewVac has faced challenges establishing manufacturing capabilities and securing government reimbursement, which has impacted its ability to commercialize the product in the licensed territory.
NewVac

S-19

Table of Contents

may terminate this agreement at any time without cause. We do not expect to receive financial or other benefits, if any, from our relationship with NewVac or the sale of Oncophage in the Russian Federation or CIS countries.

In addition, if we complete the Acquisition, our research, development, and commercialization efforts with respect to antibody candidates from the Retrocyte Display technology platform will include the participation of institutional and corporate collaborators. For example, 4-AB has collaborative arrangements with the Ludwig Institute and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, and Brazil-based Recepta Biopharma S.A., among others. If we are not able to preserve these arrangements, as well as advance additional collaborations, on terms favorable to us, this may diminish the value of the Acquisition to us and could have a negative impact on our operations.

Development activities for our collaborative programs may fail to produce marketable products due to unsuccessful results or abandonment of these programs, failure to enter into future collaborations or license agreements, or the inability to manufacture product supply requirements for our collaborators and licensees. Several of our agreements also require us to transfer important rights and regulatory compliance responsibilities to our collaborators and licensees. As a result of these collaborative agreements, we will not control the nature, timing, or cost of bringing these product candidates to market. Our collaborators and licensees could choose not to devote resources to these arrangements or, under certain circumstances, may terminate these arrangements early. They may cease pursuing product candidates or elect to collaborate with different companies. In addition, these collaborators and licensees, outside of their arrangements with us, may develop technologies or products that are competitive with those that we are developing. From time to time, we may also become involved in disputes with our collaborators or licensees. Such disputes could result in the incurrence of significant expense, or the termination of collaborations. We may be unable to fulfill all of our obligations to our collaborators, which may result in the termination of collaborations. As a result of these factors, our strategic collaborations may not yield revenue. Furthermore, we may be unable to enter into new collaborations or enter into new collaborations on favorable terms. Failure to generate significant revenue from collaborations would increase our need to fund our operations through sales of debt or equity securities and would negatively affect our business prospects.

We are highly reliant on our Chief Executive Officer and other members of our management team. In addition, we have limited internal resources and if we fail to recruit and/or retain the services of key employees and external consultants as needed, we may not be able to achieve our strategic and operational objectives.

Garo H. Armen, Ph.D., the Chairman of our Board of Directors and our Chief Executive Officer, co-founded the Company in 1994, and has been, and continues to be, integral to building our company and developing our technology. If Dr. Armen is unable or unwilling to continue his relationship with Agenus, our business may be adversely impacted.

Effective December 1, 2005, we entered into an employment agreement with Dr. Armen. Subject to the earlier termination as provided in the agreement, the agreement had an original term of one year and is automatically extended thereafter for successive terms of one year each, unless either party provides notice to the other at least ninety days prior to the expiration of the original or any extension term. Dr. Armen plays an important role in our day-to-day activities. We do not carry key employee insurance policies for Dr. Armen or any other employee.

We also rely on a small staff of highly trained and experienced senior management and scientific, administrative and operations personnel and consultants to conduct our business. Reductions in our staffing levels have eliminated redundancies in key capabilities and skill sets among our full time staff and required us to rely more heavily on outside consultants and third parties. In addition, if in the future we need to perform sales, marketing and distribution functions for commercial and/or international operations, we will need to recruit experienced personnel and/or engage external consultants incurring significant expenditures.

S-20

Table of Contents

Reduction in expenses and resulting changes to our compensation and benefit programs have reduced the competitiveness of these programs and thereby increased employee retention risk. The competition for qualified personnel in the biotechnology field is intense, and if we are not able to continue to attract and retain qualified personnel and/or maintain positive relationships with our outside consultants, we may not be able to achieve our strategic and operational objectives.

Risks Related to Regulation of the Biopharmaceutical Industry

The drug development and approval process is uncertain, time-consuming, and expensive.

Clinical development, including preclinical testing and the process of obtaining and maintaining regulatory approvals for new therapeutic products, is lengthy, expensive, and uncertain. As of September 30, 2013, we have spent approximately 19 years and \$301.8 million on our research and development program in heat shock proteins for cancer. It also can vary substantially based on the type, complexity, and novelty of the product. We must provide regulatory authorities with manufacturing, product characterization, and preclinical and clinical data demonstrating that our product candidates are safe and effective before they can be approved for commercial sale. It may take us many years to complete our testing, and failure can occur at any stage of testing. Interim results of preclinical studies or clinical trials do not necessarily predict their final results, and acceptable results in early studies might not be seen in later studies. Any preclinical or clinical test may fail to produce results satisfactory to regulatory authorities for many reasons, including but not limited to insufficient product characterization, poor study structure conduct or statistical analysis planning, failure to enroll a sufficient number of patients or failure to prospectively identify the most appropriate patient eligibility criteria, and collectability of data. Preclinical and clinical data can be interpreted in different ways, which could delay, limit, or prevent regulatory approval. Negative or inconclusive results from a preclinical study or clinical trial, adverse medical events during a clinical trial, or safety issues resulting from products of the same class of drug could require a preclinical study or clinical trial to be repeated or cause a program to be terminated, even if other studies or trials relating to the program are successful. We or the FDA, other regulatory agencies, or an institutional review board may suspend or terminate human clinical trials at any time on various grounds.

The timing and success of a clinical trial is dependent on obtaining and maintaining sufficient cash resources, successful production of clinical trial material, enrolling sufficient patients in a timely manner, avoiding serious or significant adverse patient reactions, and demonstrating efficacy of the product candidate in order to support a favorable risk versus benefit profile, among other considerations. The timing and success of our clinical trials, in particular, are also dependent on clinical sites and regulatory authorities accepting each trial's protocol, statistical analysis plan, product characterization tests, and clinical data. In addition, regulatory authorities may request additional information or data that is not readily available. Delays in our ability to respond to such requests would delay, and failure to adequately address concerns would prevent, our commercialization efforts. We have encountered in the past, and may encounter in the future, delays in initiating trial sites and enrolling patients into our clinical trials. Future enrollment delays will postpone the dates by which we expect to complete the impacted trials and the potential receipt of regulatory approval. There is no guarantee we will successfully initiate and/or complete our clinical trials.

Delays or difficulties in obtaining regulatory approvals or clearances for our product candidates may:

adversely affect the marketing of any products we or our licensees or collaborators develop;

impose significant additional costs on us or our licensees or collaborators;

diminish any competitive advantages that we or our licensees or collaborators may attain;

limit our ability to receive royalties and generate revenue and profits; and

adversely affect our business prospects and ability to obtain financing.

S-21

Table of Contents

Delays or failures in our receiving regulatory approval for our product candidates in a timely manner may result in us having to incur additional development expense and subject us to having to secure additional financing. As a result, we may not be able to commercialize them in the time frame anticipated, and our business will suffer.

Even if we receive marketing approval for our product candidates, such product approvals could be subject to restrictions or withdrawals. Regulatory requirements are subject to change.

Regulatory authorities generally approve products for particular indications. If an approval is for a limited indication, this limitation reduces the size of the potential market for that product. Product approvals, once granted, are subject to continual review and periodic inspections by regulatory authorities. Our operations and practices are subject to regulation and scrutiny by the United States government, as well as governments of any other countries in which we do business or conduct activities. Later discovery of previously unknown problems or safety issues, and/or failure to comply with domestic or foreign laws, knowingly or unknowingly, can result in various adverse consequences, including, among other things, possible delay in approval or refusal to approve a product, warning letters, fines, injunctions, civil penalties, recalls or seizures of products, total or partial suspension of production, refusal of the government to renew marketing applications, complete withdrawal of a marketing application, and/or criminal prosecution, withdrawal of an approved product from the market, and/or exclusion from government health care programs. Such regulatory enforcement could have a direct and negative impact on the product for which approval is granted, but also could have a negative impact on the approval of any pending applications for marketing approval of new drugs or supplements to approved applications.

Because we are a company operating in a highly regulated industry, regulatory authorities could take enforcement action against us in connection with our, or our licensees or collaborators, business and marketing activities for various reasons. For example, the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act prohibits U.S. companies and their representatives from offering, promising, authorizing, or making payments to foreign officials for the purpose of obtaining or retaining business abroad.

From time to time, new legislation is passed into law that could significantly change the statutory provisions governing the approval, manufacturing, and marketing of products regulated by the FDA and other foreign health authorities. Additionally, regulations and guidance are often revised or reinterpreted by health agencies in ways that may significantly affect our business and our products. It is impossible to predict whether further legislative changes will be enacted, or whether regulations, guidance, or interpretations will change, and what the impact of such changes, if any, may be. For example, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Health Care and Education Affordability Reconciliation Act of 2010 (collectively, the ACA), enacted in March 2010, substantially changed the way healthcare is financed by both governmental and private insurers, and significantly impacted the pharmaceutical industry. With regard to pharmaceutical products, among other things, ACA is expected to expand and increase industry rebates for drugs covered under Medicaid programs and make changes to the coverage requirements under the Medicare D program. We expect both government and private health plans to continue to require healthcare providers, including healthcare providers that may one day purchase our products, to contain costs and demonstrate the value of the therapies they provide.

New data from our research and development activities, and/or resource considerations could modify our strategy and result in the need to adjust our projections of timelines and costs of programs.

Because we are focused on novel technologies, our research and development activities, including our nonclinical studies and clinical trials, involve the ongoing discovery of new facts and the generation of new data, based on which we determine next steps for a relevant program. These developments can occur with varying frequency and constitute the basis on which our business is conducted. We need to make determinations on an ongoing basis as to which of

these facts or data will influence timelines and costs of programs. We may not always be able to make such judgments accurately, which may increase the costs we incur attempting to commercialize our product candidates. We monitor the likelihood of success of our initiatives and we may need

S-22

Table of Contents

to discontinue funding of such activities if they do not prove to be commercially feasible, due to our limited resources.

We may need to successfully address a number of technological challenges in order to complete development of our product candidates. Moreover, these product candidates may not be effective in treating any disease or may prove to have undesirable or unintended side effects, toxicities, or other characteristics that may preclude our obtaining regulatory approvals or prevent or limit commercial use.

Risks Related to Intellectual Property Rights

If we are unable to obtain and enforce patent protection for our product candidates and related technology, our business could be materially harmed.

Issued patents may be challenged, narrowed, invalidated or circumvented. In addition, court decisions may introduce uncertainty in the enforceability or scope of patents owned by biotechnology companies. The legal systems of certain countries do not favor the aggressive enforcement of patents, and the laws of foreign countries may not allow us to protect our inventions with patents to the same extent as the laws of the United States. Because patent applications in the United States and many foreign jurisdictions are typically not published until 18 months after filing, or in some cases not at all, and because publications of discoveries in scientific literature lag behind actual discoveries, we cannot be certain that we were the first to make the inventions claimed in our issued patents or pending patent applications, or that we were the first to file for protection of the inventions set forth in our patents or patent applications. As a result, we may not be able to obtain or maintain protection for certain inventions. Therefore, the enforceability and scope of our patents in the United States and in foreign countries cannot be predicted with certainty and, as a result, any patents that we own or license may not provide sufficient protection against competitors. We may not be able to obtain or maintain patent protection from our pending patent applications, from those we may file in the future, or from those we may license from third parties. Moreover, even if we are able to obtain patent protection, such patent protection may be of insufficient scope to achieve our business objectives.

Furthermore, the product development timeline for biotechnology products is lengthy and it is possible that our issued patents covering our product candidates in the United States and other jurisdictions may expire prior to commercial launch. In addition, because our patent on QS-21 Stimulon composition of matter has already expired, our patent rights are limited to protecting certain combinations of QS-21 Stimulon with other adjuvants or formulations of QS-21 Stimulon with other agents, such as excipients that improve performance of the compound. However, there is no guarantee that a third party would necessarily choose to use QS-21 Stimulon in combination with such adjuvants or formulate it with the other agents covered by our patents. We are aware of other companies that claim to produce material comparable to QS-21 Stimulon. At least one other party has also developed derivatives of QS-21 that have shown biological activity.

Our strategy depends on our ability to identify and seek patent protection for our discoveries. This process is expensive and time consuming, and we may not be able to file and prosecute all necessary or desirable patent applications at a reasonable cost or in a timely manner or in all jurisdictions where protection may be commercially advantageous. Despite our efforts to protect our proprietary rights, unauthorized parties may be able to obtain and use information that we regard as proprietary. The issuance of a patent does not ensure that it is valid or enforceable, so even if we obtain patents, they may not be valid or enforceable against third parties. In addition, the issuance of a patent does not give us the right to practice the patented invention. Third parties may have blocking patents that could prevent us from marketing our own patented product and practicing our own patented technology.

The patent landscape in the field of therapeutic antibody development, manufacture and commercialization is crowded. For example, we are aware of third party patents directed to methods for identifying and producing

therapeutic antibodies, as well as third party patents directed to antibodies to numerous targets for which 4-AB

S-23

Table of Contents

also seeks to identify, develop, and commercialize antibodies. These third party patents may have relevance to the technology platforms utilized by 4-AB, including Retrocyte Display, as well as to development and commercialization of antibodies identified by 4-AB as therapeutic candidates. If we complete the Acquisition, we will continue to conduct analyses of these third party patents to determine whether we believe they are valid and enforceable and, if so, whether we believe we might infringe them and would be required to seek a license. If we determine that a license for a given patent or family of patents is necessary or desirable, there can be no guarantee that a license would be available on favorable terms, or at all.

Third parties may also seek to market biosimilar versions of any approved products. Alternatively, third parties may seek approval to market their own products similar to or otherwise competitive with our products. In these circumstances, we may need to defend and/or assert our patents, including by filing lawsuits alleging patent infringement. In any of these types of proceedings, a court or agency with jurisdiction may find our patents invalid and/or unenforceable. Even if we have valid and enforceable patents, these patents still may not provide protection against competing products or processes sufficient to achieve our business objectives.

We have exclusive rights to approximately 59 issued United States patents and approximately 82 issued foreign patents. We also have exclusive rights to approximately six pending United States patent applications and approximately 15 pending foreign patent applications. However, our patents may not protect us against our competitors. Our patent positions, and those of other pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, are generally uncertain and involve complex legal, scientific, and factual questions. The standards which the United States Patent and Trademark Office, or USPTO, uses to grant patents, and the standards which courts use to interpret patents, are not always applied predictably or uniformly and can change, particularly as new technologies develop. Consequently, the level of protection, if any, that will be provided by our patents if we attempt to enforce them, and they are challenged, is uncertain. In addition, the type and extent of patent claims that will be issued to us in the future is uncertain. Any patents that are issued may not contain claims that permit us to stop competitors from using similar technology.

The issued patents that cover the Prophage Series vaccines expire at various dates between 2015 and 2024. The issued patents related to HerpV expire at various dates between 2014 and 2029. Our patent to purified QS-21 Stimulon expired in 2008. Additional protection for QS-21 Stimulon in combination with other agents is provided by our other issued patents which expire between 2017 and 2022. We continue to explore means of extending the life cycle of our patent portfolio.

If we complete the Acquisition, we will own, co-own, or become licensed under a number of patents and patent applications directed to various methods and compositions, including methods for identifying therapeutic antibodies and product candidates arising out of 4-AB's technology platforms. We can provide no assurance that any patents we will control following completion of the Acquisition will have commercial value, or that any patent applications we will control will result in the issuance of valid and enforceable patents.

The patent position of pharmaceutical or biotechnology companies, including ours, is generally uncertain and involves complex legal and factual considerations. The standards which the USPTO and its foreign counterparts use to grant patents are not always applied predictably or uniformly and can change. There is also no uniform, worldwide policy regarding the subject matter and scope of claims granted or allowable in pharmaceutical or biotechnology patents. The laws of some foreign countries do not protect proprietary information to the same extent as the laws of the United States, and many companies have encountered significant problems and costs in protecting their proprietary information in these foreign countries. Outside the United States, patent protection must be sought in individual jurisdictions, further adding to the cost and uncertainty of obtaining adequate patent protection outside of the United States. Accordingly, we cannot predict whether additional patents protecting our technology will issue in the United

States or in foreign jurisdictions, or whether any patents that do issue will have claims of adequate scope to provide competitive advantage. Moreover, we cannot predict whether third parties will be able to successfully obtain claims or the breadth of such claims. The allowance of broader claims may increase the incidence and cost of patent interference

S-24

Table of Contents

proceedings, opposition proceedings, post-grant review, inter partes review, and/or reexamination proceedings, the risk of infringement litigation, and the vulnerability of the claims to challenge. On the other hand, the allowance of narrower claims does not eliminate the potential for adversarial proceedings, and may fail to provide a competitive advantage. Our issued patents may not contain claims sufficiently broad to protect us against third parties with similar technologies or products, or provide us with any competitive advantage.

Our patent on QS-21 Stimulon composition of matter has expired and we rely primarily on unpatented technology and know-how to protect our rights to QS-21 Stimulon.

Our patent on QS-21 Stimulon composition of matter has expired, and our patent rights are limited to protecting certain combinations of QS-21 Stimulon with other adjuvants or formulations of QS-21 Stimulon with other agents. Although our licenses also rely on unpatented technology, know-how, and confidential information, these intellectual property rights may not be enforceable in certain jurisdictions and, we may not be able to collect anticipated revenue from our licensees. Any such inability would have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

We may become involved in lawsuits to protect or enforce our patents, which could be expensive, time consuming and unsuccessful.

Even after they have been issued, our patents and any patents which we license may be challenged, narrowed, invalidated or circumvented. If our patents are invalidated or otherwise limited or will expire prior to the commercialization of our product candidates, other companies may be better able to develop products that compete with ours, which could adversely affect our competitive business position, business prospects and financial condition.

The following are examples of litigation and other adversarial proceedings or disputes that we could become a party to involving our patents or patents licensed to us:

we or our collaborators may initiate litigation or other proceedings against third parties to enforce our patent rights;

third parties may initiate litigation or other proceedings seeking to invalidate patents owned by or licensed to us or to obtain a declaratory judgment that their product or technology does not infringe our patents or patents licensed to us;

third parties may initiate opposition proceedings, post-grant review, inter partes review, or reexamination proceedings challenging the validity or scope of our patent rights, requiring us or our collaborators and/or licensors to participate in such proceedings to defend the validity and scope of our patents;

there may be a challenge or dispute regarding inventorship or ownership of patents currently identified as being owned by or licensed to us;

the USPTO may initiate an interference or derivation proceeding between patents or patent applications owned by or licensed to us and those of our competitors, requiring us or our collaborators and/or licensors to participate in an interference or derivation proceeding to determine the priority of invention, which could jeopardize our patent rights; or

third parties may seek approval to market biosimilar versions of our future approved products prior to expiration of relevant patents owned by or licensed to us, requiring us to defend our patents, including by filing lawsuits alleging patent infringement.

These lawsuits and proceedings would be costly and could affect our results of operations and divert the attention of our managerial and scientific personnel. There is a risk that a court or administrative body could decide that our patents are invalid or not infringed by a third party's activities, or that the scope of certain issued

Table of Contents

claims must be further limited. An adverse outcome in a litigation or proceeding involving our own patents could limit our ability to assert our patents against these or other competitors, affect our ability to receive royalties or other licensing consideration from our licensees, and may curtail or preclude our ability to exclude third parties from making, using and selling similar or competitive products. Any of these occurrences could adversely affect our competitive business position, business prospects and financial condition.

The degree of future protection for our proprietary rights is uncertain because legal means afford only limited protection and may not adequately protect our rights or permit us to gain or keep our competitive advantage. For example:

others may be able to develop a platform that is similar to, or better than, ours in a way that is not covered by the claims of our patents;

others may be able to make compounds that are similar to our product candidates but that are not covered by the claims of our patents;

we might not have been the first to make the inventions covered by patents or pending patent applications;

we might not have been the first to file patent applications for these inventions;

any patents that we obtain may not provide us with any competitive advantages or may ultimately be found invalid or unenforceable; or

we may not develop additional proprietary technologies that are patentable.

Our commercial success depends significantly on our ability to operate without infringing the patents and other proprietary rights of third parties.

Our success will depend in part on our ability to operate without infringing the proprietary rights of third parties. Other entities may have or obtain patents or proprietary rights that could limit our ability to make, use, sell, offer for sale or import our future approved products or impair our competitive position. In particular, if we complete the Acquisition, we will have six preclinical checkpoint antibody programs, and the patent landscape around the discovery, development, manufacture and commercial use of therapeutic antibodies is crowded.

Patents that we may ultimately be found to infringe could be issued to third parties. Third parties may have or obtain valid and enforceable patents or proprietary rights that could block us from developing product candidates using our technology. Our failure to obtain a license to any technology that we require may materially harm our business, financial condition and results of operations. Moreover, our failure to maintain a license to any technology that we require may also materially harm our business, financial condition, and results of operations. Furthermore, we would be exposed to a threat of litigation.

In the biopharmaceutical industry, significant litigation and other proceedings regarding patents, patent applications, trademarks and other intellectual property rights have become commonplace. The types of situations in which we may become a party to such litigation or proceedings include:

we or our collaborators may initiate litigation or other proceedings against third parties seeking to invalidate the patents held by those third parties or to obtain a judgment that our products or processes do not infringe those third parties' patents;

if our competitors file patent applications that claim technology also claimed by us or our licensors, we or our licensors may be required to participate in interference, derivation or other proceedings to determine the priority of invention, which could jeopardize our patent rights and potentially provide a third party with a dominant patent position;

if third parties initiate litigation claiming that our processes or products infringe their patent or other intellectual property rights, we and our collaborators will need to defend against such proceedings; and

Table of Contents

if a license to necessary technology is terminated, the licensor may initiate litigation claiming that our processes or products infringe or misappropriate their patent or other intellectual property rights and/or that we breached our obligations under the license agreement, and we and our collaborators would need to defend against such proceedings.

These lawsuits would be costly and could affect our results of operations and divert the attention of our management and scientific personnel. There is a risk that a court would decide that we or our collaborators are infringing the third party's patents and would order us or our collaborators to stop the activities covered by the patents. In that event, we or our collaborators may not have a viable alternative to the technology protected by the patent and may need to halt work on the affected product candidate or cease commercialization of an approved product. In addition, there is a risk that a court will order us or our collaborators to pay the other party damages. An adverse outcome in any litigation or other proceeding could subject us to significant liabilities to third parties and require us to cease using the technology that is at issue or to license the technology from third parties. We may not be able to obtain any required licenses on commercially acceptable terms or at all. Any of these outcomes could have a material adverse effect on our business.

The biopharmaceutical industry has produced a significant number of patents, and it may not always be clear to industry participants, including us, which patents cover various types of products or methods of use. The coverage of patents is subject to interpretation by the courts, and the interpretation is not always uniform or predictable. If we are sued for patent infringement, we would need to demonstrate that our products or methods either do not infringe the patent claims of the relevant patent or that the patent claims are invalid, and we may not be able to do this. Proving invalidity is difficult. For example, in the United States, proving invalidity requires a showing of clear and convincing evidence to overcome the presumption of validity enjoyed by issued patents. Even if we are successful in these proceedings, we may incur substantial costs and divert management's time and attention in pursuing these proceedings, which could have a material adverse effect on us. If we are unable to avoid infringing the patent rights of others, we may be required to seek a license, defend an infringement action or challenge the validity of the patents in court. Patent litigation is costly and time consuming. We may not have sufficient resources to bring these actions to a successful conclusion. In addition, if we do not obtain a license, develop or obtain non-infringing technology, fail to defend an infringement action successfully or have infringed patents declared invalid, we may incur substantial monetary damages, encounter significant delays in bringing our product candidates to market and be precluded from manufacturing or selling our product candidates.

The cost of any patent litigation or other proceeding, even if resolved in our favor, could be substantial. Some of our competitors may be able to sustain the cost of such litigation and proceedings more effectively than we can because of their substantially greater resources. Uncertainties resulting from the initiation and continuation of patent litigation or other proceedings could have a material adverse effect on our ability to compete in the marketplace. Patent litigation and other proceedings may also absorb significant management time.

If we fail to comply with our obligations under our intellectual property licenses with third parties, we could lose license rights that are important to our business.

We are currently party to various intellectual property license agreements and we will become a party to additional such agreements if we complete the Acquisition. These license agreements impose, and we expect that future license agreements may impose, various diligence, milestone payment, royalty, insurance and other obligations on us. These licenses typically include an obligation to pay an upfront payment, yearly maintenance payments and royalties on sales. If we fail to comply with our obligations under the licenses, the licensors may have the right to terminate their respective license agreements, in which event we might not be able to market any product that is covered by the agreements. Termination of the license agreements or reduction or elimination of our licensed rights may result in our having to negotiate new or reinstated licenses with less favorable terms, which could adversely affect our competitive business position and harm our business.

Table of Contents

If we are unable to protect the confidentiality of our proprietary information, the value of our technology and products could be adversely affected.

In addition to patent protection, we also rely on other proprietary rights, including protection of trade secrets, and other proprietary information. To maintain the confidentiality of trade secrets and proprietary information, we enter into confidentiality agreements with our employees, consultants, collaborators and others upon the commencement of their relationships with us. These agreements require that all confidential information developed by the individual or made known to the individual by us during the course of the individual's relationship with us be kept confidential and not disclosed to third parties. Our agreements with employees and our personnel policies also provide that any inventions conceived by the individual in the course of rendering services to us shall be our exclusive property. However, we may not obtain these agreements in all circumstances, and individuals with whom we have these agreements may not comply with their terms. Thus, despite such agreement, such inventions may become assigned to third parties. In the event of unauthorized use or disclosure of our trade secrets or proprietary information, these agreements, even if obtained, may not provide meaningful protection, particularly for our trade secrets or other confidential information. To the extent that our employees, consultants or contractors use technology or know-how owned by third parties in their work for us, disputes may arise between us and those third parties as to the rights in related inventions. To the extent that an individual who is not obligated to assign rights in intellectual property to us is rightfully an inventor of intellectual property, we may need to obtain an assignment or a license to that intellectual property from that individual, or a third party or from that individual's assignee. Such assignment or license may not be available on commercially reasonable terms or at all.

Adequate remedies may not exist in the event of unauthorized use or disclosure of our proprietary information. The disclosure of our trade secrets would impair our competitive position and may materially harm our business, financial condition and results of operations. Costly and time consuming litigation could be necessary to enforce and determine the scope of our proprietary rights, and failure to maintain trade secret protection could adversely affect our competitive business position. In addition, others may independently discover or develop our trade secrets and proprietary information, and the existence of our own trade secrets affords no protection against such independent discovery.

As is common in the biopharmaceutical industry, we employ individuals who were previously or concurrently employed at research institutions and/or other biotechnology or pharmaceutical companies, including our competitors or potential competitors. We may be subject to claims that these employees, or we, have inadvertently or otherwise used or disclosed trade secrets or other proprietary information of their former employers, or that patents and applications we have filed to protect inventions of these employees, even those related to one or more of our product candidates, are rightfully owned by their former or concurrent employer. Litigation may be necessary to defend against these claims. Even if we are successful in defending against these claims, litigation could result in substantial costs and be a distraction to management.

Obtaining and maintaining our patent protection depends on compliance with various procedural, documentary, fee payment and other requirements imposed by governmental patent agencies, and our patent protection could be reduced or eliminated for non-compliance with these requirements.

Periodic maintenance fees, renewal fees, annuity fees and various other governmental fees on patents and/or applications will be due to the USPTO and various foreign patent offices at various points over the lifetime of our patents and/or applications. We have systems in place to remind us to pay these fees, and we rely on our outside counsel to pay these fees when due. Additionally, the USPTO and various foreign patent offices require compliance with a number of procedural, documentary, fee payment and other similar provisions during the patent application process. We employ reputable law firms and other professionals to help us comply, and in many cases, an inadvertent

lapse can be cured by payment of a late fee or by other means in accordance with rules applicable to the particular jurisdiction. However, there are situations in which noncompliance can result in abandonment or lapse of the patent or patent application, resulting in partial or complete loss of patent rights in the relevant jurisdiction. If such an event were to occur, it could have a material adverse effect on our business.

S-28

Table of Contents

In addition, we are responsible for the payment of patent fees for patent rights that we have licensed from other parties. If any licensor of these patents does not itself elect to make these payments, and we fail to do so, we may be liable to the licensor for any costs and consequences of any resulting loss of patent rights.

Risks Related to Litigation

We may face litigation that could result in substantial damages and may divert management's time and attention from our business.

We may currently be a party, or may become a party, to legal proceedings, claims and investigations that arise in the ordinary course of business such as, but not limited to, patent, employment, commercial and environmental matters. While we currently believe that the ultimate outcome of any of these proceedings will not have a material adverse effect on our financial position, results of operations, or liquidity, litigation is subject to inherent uncertainty. Furthermore, litigation consumes both cash and management attention.

We maintain property and general commercial insurance coverage as well as errors and omissions and directors and officers insurance policies. This insurance coverage may not be sufficient to cover us for future claims.

We are also exposed to the risk of employee fraud or other misconduct. Misconduct by employees could include intentional failures to comply with FDA regulations, to provide accurate information to the FDA, to comply with manufacturing standards we have established, to comply with federal and state health-care fraud and abuse laws and regulations, to report financial information or data accurately or to disclose unauthorized activities to us. In particular, sales, marketing and business arrangements in the healthcare industry are subject to extensive laws and regulations intended to prevent fraud, kickbacks, self-dealing and other abusive practices. These laws and regulations may restrict or prohibit a wide range of pricing, discounting, marketing and promotion, sales commission, customer incentive programs and other business arrangements.

Employee misconduct could also involve the improper use of information obtained in the course of clinical trials, which could result in regulatory sanctions and serious harm to our reputation. In addition, during the course of our operations, our directors, executives and employees may have access to material, nonpublic information regarding our business, our results of operations or potential transactions we are considering. We may not be able to prevent a director, executive or employee from trading in our common stock on the basis of, or while having access to, material, nonpublic information. If a director, executive or employee was to be investigated, or an action was to be brought against a director, executive or employee for insider trading, it could have a negative impact on our reputation and our stock price. Such a claim, with or without merit, could also result in substantial expenditures of time and money, and divert attention of our management team.

Product liability and other claims against us may reduce demand for our products and/or result in substantial damages.

We face an inherent risk of product liability exposure related to testing our product candidates in human clinical trials and commercial sales of Oncophage in Russia, and may face even greater risks if we sell our other product candidates commercially. An individual may bring a product liability claim against us if one of our product candidates causes, or merely appears to have caused, an injury. Product liability claims may result in:

decreased demand for our product candidates;

regulatory investigations;

injury to our reputation;

withdrawal of clinical trial volunteers;

costs of related litigation; and

substantial monetary awards to plaintiffs.

S-29

Table of Contents

We manufacture the Prophage Series vaccines from a patient's cancer cells, and medical professionals must inject the vaccines into the same patient from which they were manufactured. A patient may sue us if a hospital, a shipping company, or we fail to receive the removed cancer tissue or deliver that patient's vaccine. We anticipate that the logistics of shipping will become more complex if the number of patients we treat increases and that shipments of tumor and/or vaccines may be lost, delayed, or damaged. Additionally, complexities unique to the logistics of commercial products may delay shipments and limit our ability to move commercial product in an efficient manner without incident. We do not have any other insurance that covers loss of or damage to the Prophage Series vaccines or tumor material, and we do not know whether such insurance will be available to us at a reasonable price or at all. We have limited product liability coverage for use of our product candidates. Our product liability policy provides \$10.0 million aggregate coverage and \$10.0 million per occurrence coverage. This limited insurance coverage may be insufficient to fully cover us for future claims.

We are also subject to laws generally applicable to businesses, including but not limited to, federal, state and local wage and hour, employee classification, mandatory healthcare benefits, unlawful workplace discrimination and whistle-blowing. Any actual or alleged failure to comply with any regulation applicable to our business or any whistle-blowing claim, even if without merit, could result in costly litigation, regulatory action or otherwise harm our business, results of operations, financial condition, cash flow and future prospects.

If we do not comply with environmental laws and regulations, we may incur significant costs and potential disruption to our business.

We use or may use hazardous, infectious, and radioactive materials, and recombinant DNA in our operations, which have the potential of being harmful to human health and safety or the environment. We store these hazardous (flammable, corrosive, toxic), infectious, and radioactive materials, and various wastes resulting from their use, at our facilities pending use and ultimate disposal. We are subject to a variety of federal, state, and local laws and regulations governing use, generation, storage, handling, and disposal of these materials. We may incur significant costs complying with both current and future environmental health and safety laws and regulations. In particular, we are subject to regulation by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Drug Enforcement Agency, the Department of Transportation, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health, the International Air Transportation Association, and various state and local agencies. At any time, one or more of the aforementioned agencies could adopt regulations that may affect our operations. We are also subject to regulation under the Toxic Substances Control Act and the Resource Conservation Development programs.

Although we believe that our current procedures and programs for handling, storage, and disposal of these materials comply with federal, state, and local laws and regulations, we cannot eliminate the risk of accidents involving contamination from these materials. Although we have a workers' compensation liability policy, we could be held liable for resulting damages in the event of an accident or accidental release, and such damages could be substantially in excess of any available insurance coverage and could substantially disrupt our business.

Risks Related to our Common Stock

Our stock may be delisted from The Nasdaq Capital Market, which could affect its market price and liquidity.

Our common stock is currently listed on Nasdaq under the symbol AGEN. In the event that we fail to maintain compliance with the applicable listing requirements, our common stock could become subject to delisting from Nasdaq. Although we are currently in compliance with all of the listing standards for listing on Nasdaq, we cannot provide any assurance that we will continue to be in compliance in the future. We have been non-compliant with the

minimum bid price requirement set forth in Nasdaq Marketplace Rule 5550(a)(2) three times since our move to Nasdaq in April 2009.

S-30

Table of Contents***Provisions in our organizational documents could prevent or frustrate attempts by stockholders to replace our current management.***

Our certificate of incorporation and bylaws contain provisions that could make it more difficult for a third party to acquire us without the consent of our Board of Directors. Our certificate of incorporation provides for a staggered board and removal of directors only for cause. Accordingly, stockholders may elect only a minority of our Board at any annual meeting, which may have the effect of delaying or preventing changes in management. In addition, under our certificate of incorporation, our Board of Directors may issue additional shares of preferred stock and determine the terms of those shares of stock without any further action by our stockholders. Our issuance of additional preferred stock could make it more difficult for a third party to acquire a majority of our outstanding voting stock and thereby effect a change in the composition of our Board of Directors. Our certificate of incorporation also provides that our stockholders may not take action by written consent. Our bylaws require advance notice of stockholder proposals and director nominations and permit only our president or a majority of the Board of Directors to call a special stockholder meeting. These provisions may have the effect of preventing or hindering attempts by our stockholders to replace our current management. In addition, Delaware law prohibits a corporation from engaging in a business combination with any holder of 15% or more of its capital stock until the holder has held the stock for three years unless, among other possibilities, the board of directors approves the transaction. Our Board of Directors may use this provision to prevent changes in our management. Also, under applicable Delaware law, our Board of Directors may adopt additional anti-takeover measures in the future.

The first right to negotiate provision contained in our agreement with one of our licensees could hinder or delay a change of control of our company or the sale of certain of our assets.

We have entered into a First Right to Negotiate and Amendment Agreement with GSK that affords GSK, one of our licensees, a first right to negotiate with us in the event we determine to initiate a process to effect a change of control of our company with, or to sell certain of our assets to, an unaffiliated third party or in the event that a third party commences an unsolicited tender offer seeking a change of control of our company. In such event, we must provide GSK a period of time to determine whether it wishes to negotiate the terms of such a transaction with us. If GSK affirmatively so elects, we are required to negotiate with GSK in good faith towards effecting a transaction of that nature for a specified period. During the negotiation period, we are obligated not to enter into a definitive agreement with a third party that would preclude us from negotiating and/or executing a definitive agreement with GSK. If GSK determines not to negotiate with us or we are unable to come to an agreement with GSK during this period, we may enter into the specified change of control or sale transaction within the following 12 months, provided that such a transaction is not on terms in the aggregate that are materially less favorable to us and our stockholders (as determined by our Board of Directors, in its reasonable discretion) than terms last offered to us by GSK in a binding written proposal during the negotiation period. The first right to negotiate terminates on March 2, 2017. Although GSK's first right to negotiate does not compel us to enter into a transaction with GSK nor prevent us from negotiating with or entering into a transaction with a third party, the first right to negotiate could inhibit a third party from engaging in discussions with us concerning such a transaction or delay our ability to effect such a transaction with a third party.

Our stock has historically had low trading volume, and its public trading price has been volatile.

Between our initial public offering on February 4, 2000 and September 30, 2013, and for the nine months ended September 30, 2013, the closing price of our common stock has fluctuated between \$1.80 and \$315.78 per share and \$2.71 and \$4.93 per share, respectively. The average daily trading volume for the nine months ended September 30, 2013 and for the year ended December 31, 2012 was approximately 277,000 shares and 176,000 shares, respectively. The market may experience significant price and volume fluctuations that are often unrelated to the operating performance of individual companies. In addition to general market volatility, many factors may have a significant

adverse effect on the market price of our stock, including:

continuing operating losses, which we expect over the next several years as we continue our development activities;

S-31

Table of Contents

announcements of decisions made by public officials;

results of our preclinical studies and clinical trials;

announcements of new collaboration agreements with strategic partners or developments by our existing collaborative partners;

announcements of technological innovations, new commercial products, failures of products, or progress toward commercialization by our competitors or peers;

failure to complete the Acquisition, or once completed, failure to realize the anticipated benefits of the Acquisition;

developments concerning proprietary rights, including patent and litigation matters;

publicity regarding actual or potential results with respect to product candidates under development;

quarterly fluctuations in our financial results;

variations in the level of expenses related to any of our product candidates or clinical development programs;

additions or departures of key management or scientific personnel;

conditions or trends in the biotechnology and biopharmaceutical industries;

other events or factors, including those resulting from war, incidents of terrorism, natural disasters or responses to these events;

changes in accounting principles;

general economic and market conditions and other factors that may be unrelated to our operating performance or the operating performance of our competitors, including changes in market valuations of similar companies; and

sales of common stock by us or our stockholders in the future, as well as the overall trading volume of our common stock.

In the past, securities class action litigation has often been brought against a company following a significant decline in the market price of its securities. This risk is especially relevant for us because biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies generally experience significant stock price volatility.

The trading market for our common stock will depend in part on the research and reports that securities or industry analysts publish about us or our business. If one or more of the analysts who covers us downgrades our stock, or publishes inaccurate or unfavorable research about our business, our stock price would likely decline. If one or more of these analysts ceases coverage of us or fails to publish reports on us regularly, demand for our stock could decrease, which could cause our stock price and trading volume to decline.

The sale of a significant number of shares could cause the market price of our stock to decline.

The sale by us or the resale by stockholders of a significant number of shares of our common stock could cause the market price of our common stock to decline. As of September 30, 2013, we had approximately 35,228,000 shares of common stock outstanding. All of these shares are eligible for sale on Nasdaq, although certain of the shares are subject to sales volume and other limitations. We have filed registration statements to permit the sale of approximately 8,200,000 shares of common stock under our equity incentive plans. We have also filed registration statements to permit the sale of approximately 167,000 shares of common stock under our employee stock purchase plan, to permit the sale of 225,000 shares of common stock under our Directors' Deferred Compensation Plan, to permit the sale of approximately 8,274,000 shares of common stock pursuant to various private placement agreements and to permit the sale of approximately 10,000,000 shares of our common

Table of Contents

stock pursuant to our At Market Issuance Sales Agreement. As of September 30, 2013, an aggregate of 13.3 million of these shares remain available for sale. In addition, we have agreed to file a registration statement to permit the sale of the shares of our common stock that would be issued in connection with the Acquisition not later than 90 days following the closing of that transaction. The market price of our common stock may decrease based on the expectation of such sales.

As of September 30, 2013, warrants to purchase approximately 3,643,000 shares of our common stock with a weighted average exercise price per share of \$11.53 were outstanding.

As of September 30, 2013, options to purchase 4,164,965 shares of our common stock with a weighted average exercise price per share of \$5.74 were outstanding. These options are subject to vesting that occurs over a period of up to four years following the date of grant. As of September 30, 2013 we have 147,413 nonvested shares outstanding.

We may issue additional common stock, preferred stock, restricted stock units, or securities convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock. Furthermore, substantially all shares of common stock for which our outstanding stock options or warrants are exercisable are, once they have been purchased, eligible for immediate sale in the public market. The issuance of additional common stock, preferred stock, restricted stock units, or securities convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock or the exercise of stock options or warrants would dilute existing investors and could adversely affect the price of our securities. In addition, such securities may have rights senior to the rights of securities held by existing investors.

Failure to maintain effective internal controls in accordance with Section 404 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 and to comply with changing regulation of corporate governance and public disclosure could have a material adverse effect on our operating results and the price of our common stock.

The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 and rules adopted by the Securities and Exchange Commission and Nasdaq have resulted in significant costs to us. In particular, our efforts to comply with Section 404 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 and related regulations regarding the required assessment of our internal control over financial reporting, and our independent registered public accounting firm's audit of internal control over financial reporting, have required commitments of significant management time. We expect these commitments to continue.

Our internal control over financial reporting (as defined in Rules 13a-15 of the Exchange Act) is a process designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the reliability of financial reporting and the preparation of our consolidated financial statements for external purposes in accordance with U.S. GAAP. Because of its inherent limitations, internal control over financial reporting may not prevent or detect all deficiencies or weaknesses in our financial reporting. While our management has concluded that there were no material weaknesses in our internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2012, our procedures are subject to the risk that our controls may become inadequate because of changes in conditions or as a result of a deterioration in compliance with such procedures. No assurance is given that our procedures and processes for detecting weaknesses in our internal control over financial reporting will be effective.

If the Acquisition is completed, we anticipate additional commitments of management time to ensure that our internal control over financial reporting of the operations of 4-AB complies with Section 404 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002. 4-AB is a privately held company organized under the laws of Switzerland and, as such, it is not subject to financial reporting requirements applicable to public companies and is not required to prepare and publish audited financial statements in accordance with U.S. GAAP. Accordingly, our efforts to ensure that our internal control over the financial reporting of the operations of 4-AB may cause us to incur significant additional costs.

Changing laws, regulations and standards relating to corporate governance and public disclosure, are creating uncertainty for companies. Laws, regulations and standards are subject to varying interpretations in

S-33

Table of Contents

some cases due to their lack of specificity, and as a result, their application in practice may evolve over time as new guidance is provided, which could result in continuing uncertainty regarding compliance matters and higher costs caused by ongoing revisions to disclosure and governance practices. If we fail to comply with these laws, regulations and standards, our reputation may be harmed and we might be subject to sanctions or investigation by regulatory authorities, such as the Securities and Exchange Commission. Any such action could adversely affect our operating results and the market price of our common stock.

S-34

Table of Contents**USE OF PROCEEDS**

We estimate that the net proceeds to us from this offering, after deduction of the underwriting discount and payment of estimated offering expenses, will be approximately \$48.7 million (or approximately \$56.0 million if the underwriters' over-allotment option is exercised in full).

We intend to use the net proceeds from this offering for general corporate purposes, which may include transition and integration costs related to the Acquisition, working capital, capital expenditures, research and development expenditures, clinical trial expenditures, acquisitions of additional companies or technologies and investments. This offering is not contingent upon the closing of the Acquisition. For more information relating to the Acquisition, see Summary The Company Pending Acquisition in this prospectus supplement and the information set forth in, and filed as exhibits to, our Current Report on Form 8-K filed on January 13, 2014 and incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. In addition, we agreed to pay to Geller Biopharm, Inc. up to \$100,000 for advisory services provided to us in connection with this offering.

DILUTION

If you invest in our common stock in this offering, your ownership interest will be diluted to the extent of the difference between the public offering price per share and the pro forma net tangible book value per share after this offering. We calculate net tangible book value per share by dividing the net tangible book value, which is tangible assets less total liabilities, by the number of outstanding shares of our common stock.

Our net tangible book value per share as of September 30, 2013 was approximately \$(5,449,000), or \$(0.15) per share. After giving effect to the sale by us of 19,335,653 shares of common stock offered by this prospectus at a public offering price of \$2.70 per share and after deducting underwriting discounts and estimated offering expenses payable by us, our pro forma net tangible book value as of September 30, 2013 would have been approximately \$43.2 million, or \$0.79 per share. This represents an immediate increase in pro forma net tangible book value of \$0.94 per share to existing stockholders and an immediate dilution of \$1.91 per share to new investors purchasing our common stock in this offering. The following table illustrates the per share dilution:

| | |
|--|----------|
| Public offering price per share | \$ 2.70 |
| Net tangible book value per share as of September 30, 2013 | \$(0.15) |
| Increase in net tangible book value per share after this offering | \$ 0.94 |
| Pro forma net tangible book value per share as of September 30, 2013, after giving effect to this offering | \$ 0.79 |
| Dilution per share to new investors in this offering | \$(1.91) |

The information above assumes that the underwriters do not exercise their over-allotment option. If the underwriters exercise their over-allotment option in full, our net tangible book value per share after giving effect to this offering would be \$0.88 per share, and the dilution in net tangible book value per share to investors in this offering would be \$1.82 per share.

The above discussion and table are based on 35,228,412 shares of our common stock outstanding as of September 30, 2013 and does not include:

Edgar Filing: AGENUS INC - Form 424B5

3,642,712 shares issuable upon the exercise of outstanding warrants with a weighted-average exercise price of \$11.53 per share;

4,164,965 shares issuable upon the exercise of outstanding stock options with a weighted-average exercise price of \$5.74 per share;

147,413 nonvested shares;

S-35

Table of Contents

333,333 shares issuable upon the conversion of our outstanding shares of Series A-1 Convertible Preferred Stock;

150,078 shares available under our Employee Stock Purchase Plan; and

118,788 shares issuable under our Directors' Deferred Compensation Plan.

In addition, upon consummation of the Acquisition, we will pay the stockholders of 4-AB at closing a number of shares of our common stock having a fair market value (based on the average closing price of our common stock on the Nasdaq for the 30 trading days prior to the closing) of \$10 million. If closing of the Acquisition would have occurred on the date of this prospectus supplement, the number of shares issued to stockholders of 4-AB would have been 3,361,345. In addition, we may be obligated to pay in the future certain contingent milestones payments to the stockholders of 4-AB, payable at our election in cash or shares of our common stock, that may exceed \$40 million.

S-36

Table of Contents**UNDERWRITING**

William Blair & Company, L.L.C. as representative of the several underwriters has agreed, subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the underwriting agreement by and between us and William Blair & Company, L.L.C., to purchase from us the number of shares of common stock set forth opposite the underwriters' names in the table below.

| Underwriter | Number of Shares |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| William Blair & Company, L.L.C. | 13,534,958 |
| Maxim Group LLC | 3,867,131 |
| H.C. Wainwright & Co., LLC | 966,782 |
| MLV & Co. LLC | 966,782 |

This offering will be underwritten on a firm commitment basis. In the underwriting agreement, the underwriters have agreed, subject to the terms and conditions set forth therein, to purchase the shares of common stock being sold pursuant to this prospectus supplement at a price per share equal to the public offering price less the underwriting discount specified on the cover page of this prospectus supplement. According to the terms of the underwriting agreement, the underwriters will purchase all of the shares (other than those covered by the over-allotment option described below) offered by us if they purchase any shares.

We have granted an option to the underwriters to purchase up to 2,900,347 additional shares of our common stock at \$2.70 per share. The underwriters may exercise this option for 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement solely to cover any over-allotments. If any additional shares of common stock are purchased, the underwriters will offer the additional shares on the same terms as those on which the shares are being offered.

The underwriters have advised us that they propose to offer the common stock to the public initially at the public offering price set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement. The underwriters will offer the shares subject to prior sale and subject to receipt and acceptance of the shares by the underwriters. The underwriters may reject any order to purchase shares in whole or in part. The underwriters expect that we will deliver the shares to the underwriters through the facilities of The Depository Trust Company in New York, New York on or about February 10, 2014. At that time, the underwriters will pay us for the shares in immediately available funds. After commencement of the public offering, the underwriters may change the public offering price and other selling terms.

The following table summarizes the compensation to be paid by us to the underwriters assuming both no exercise and full exercise of the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares.

| | Per Share | Total Without Over-allotment Exercise | Total With Over-allotment Exercise |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|--|---|
| Public Offering Price | \$ 2.700 | \$ 52,206,263 | \$ 60,037,200 |
| Underwriting discount | \$ 0.162 | \$ 3,132,376 | \$ 3,602,232 |
| Net proceeds, before expenses, to us | \$ 2.538 | \$ 49,073,887 | \$ 56,434,968 |

We estimate that the total expenses for this offering, excluding the underwriting discount, will be approximately \$386,000.

We and certain of our directors and officers have agreed to a lock-up , pursuant to which neither we nor they will sell any shares without the prior consent of the underwriters for a period after the date of this prospectus supplement, subject to certain exceptions and extensions under certain circumstances. For us, this period is 60 days. For our directors and officers, this period is 90 days. Following the expiration of the applicable lock-up period, all of these shares of our common stock will also be eligible for future sale.

We have agreed to indemnify the underwriters and their controlling persons against certain liabilities for misstatements in the registration statement of which this prospectus supplement forms a part, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or to contribute to payments the underwriters may be required to

S-37

Table of Contents

make in respect thereof. We have also agreed to reimburse the underwriters for all reasonable third-party costs, fees and expenses not to exceed, without our consent, \$125,000.

The underwriters have informed us that they intend to deliver all copies of this prospectus supplement via electronic means, via hand delivery or through mail or courier services.

In connection with this offering, the underwriters and other persons participating in this offering may engage in transactions which affect the market price of the common stock. These may include stabilizing transactions. Stabilizing transactions consist of bids or purchases for the purpose of pegging, fixing or maintaining the price of the common stock.

In addition, the underwriters may impose a penalty bid. This allows the underwriters to reclaim the selling concession allowed to a selling group member if shares of common stock sold by such selling group member in this offering are repurchased by the underwriters in stabilizing or syndicate short covering transactions. These transactions, which may be effected on the Nasdaq Capital Market (Nasdaq) or otherwise, may stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the market price of the common stock and could cause the price to be higher than it would be without these transactions. The underwriters and other participants in this offering are not required to engage in any of these activities and may discontinue any of these activities at any time without notice. We and the underwriters make no representation or prediction as to whether the underwriters will engage in such transactions or choose to discontinue any transactions engaged in or as to the direction or magnitude of any effect that these transactions may have on the price of the common stock.

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus may be made available in electronic format on websites or through other online services maintained by the underwriters or by an affiliate of the underwriters. Other than this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus in electronic format, the information on the underwriters websites and any information contained in any other websites maintained by the underwriters is not part of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus or the registration statement of which this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus forms a part, has not been approved and/or endorsed by us or the underwriter.

The foregoing does not purport to be a complete statement of the terms and conditions of the underwriting agreement. A copy of the underwriting agreement is included as an exhibit to our Current Report on Form 8-K that will be filed with the SEC and incorporated by reference into the Registration Statement of which this prospectus supplement forms a part. See [Where You Can Find More Information](#) below.

The underwriters currently act as market makers for our common stock and may engage in passive market making in such securities on Nasdaq in accordance with Rule 103 of Regulation M under the Exchange Act. Rule 103 permits, upon the satisfaction of certain conditions, underwriters participating in a distribution that are also Nasdaq market makers in the security being distributed to engage in limited market making transactions during the period when Regulation M would otherwise prohibit such activity. Rule 103 prohibits underwriters engaged in passive market making generally from entering a bid or effecting a purchase price that exceeds the highest bid for those securities displayed on Nasdaq by a market maker that is not participating in the distribution. Under Rule 103, each underwriter is subject to a daily net purchase limitation equal to the greater of (i) 30% of such entity's average daily trading volume during the two full calendar months immediately preceding, or any consecutive 60 calendar days ending within the ten calendar days preceding, the date of the determination of the offering price of the common stock to be distributed or (ii) 200 shares of common stock.

Our common stock is listed on Nasdaq under the symbol [AGEN](#).

In the ordinary course of their various business activities, the underwriters and their affiliates may make or hold a broad array of investments and actively trade debt and equity securities (or related derivative securities) and financial instruments (including bank loans) for their own account and for the accounts of their customers,

S-38

Table of Contents

and such investment and securities activities may involve securities and/or instruments of ours. The underwriters and their affiliates may also make investment recommendations and/or publish or express independent research views in respect of such securities or instruments and may at any time hold, or recommend to clients that they acquire, long and/or short position in such securities and instruments.

S-39

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK

In this offering, we are offering 19,335,653 shares of common stock. The material terms and provisions of our common stock are described under the caption "Description of Common Stock" starting on page 5 of the accompanying prospectus.

LEGAL MATTERS

Choate, Hall & Stewart LLP, Boston, Massachusetts, will pass on the validity of the shares of common stock offered by this prospectus supplement. Morrison & Foerster LLP, New York, New York, is counsel for the underwriters in connection with this offering.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements of Agenus Inc. as of December 31, 2012 and 2011, and for each of the years in the three-year period ended December 31, 2012, and management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2012 have been incorporated by reference herein and in the registration statement in reliance upon the reports of KPMG LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, incorporated by reference herein, and upon the authority of said firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

S-40

Table of Contents

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and special reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. These documents are on file with the SEC under file number 000-29089. You may read and copy any document we file at the SEC's public reference room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C., 20549. You can request copies of these documents by contacting the SEC and paying a fee for the copying cost. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the public reference room. Our SEC filings are also available to the public from the SEC's website at www.sec.gov.

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are part of a registration statement on Form S-3 filed by us with the SEC. This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus do not contain all of the information set forth in the registration statement, certain parts of which are omitted in accordance with the rules and regulations of the SEC. Statements contained in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus or the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus as to the contents of any contract or other document referred to are not necessarily complete and in each instance reference is made to the copy of that contract or other document filed with the SEC. For further information about us and the securities offered by this prospectus supplement, we refer you to the registration statement and its exhibits and schedules which may be obtained as described herein.

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference the information contained in documents that we file with them, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be part of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, and information in documents that we file later with the SEC will automatically update and supersede information in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below into this prospectus supplement, and any future filings made by us with the SEC under Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act until the offering of all the securities by this prospectus supplement is completed, including all filings made after the date of this prospectus supplement. We hereby incorporate by reference the documents listed below (File No. 000-29089).

our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2012 as filed on March 18, 2013;

our Current Reports on Form 8-K as filed on February 5, 2013, February 27, 2013, April 16, 2013, May 1, 2013, June 17, 2013, September 5, 2013, September 17, 2013, September 19, 2013, October 8, 2013, November 7, 2013, December 16, 2013, January 13, 2014, January 14, 2014, January 21, 2014 and February 4, 2014;

our Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A as filed on April 23, 2013;

our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarterly period ended March 31, 2013 as filed on May 10, 2013;

Edgar Filing: AGENUS INC - Form 424B5

our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarterly period ended June 30, 2013 as filed on August 9, 2013;

our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarterly period ended September 30, 2013 as filed on November 8, 2013; and

the description of our common stock contained in our registration statement on Form 8-A filed under the Securities Exchange Act on January 24, 2000, including any amendment or reports filed for the purpose of updating such descriptions.

S-41

Table of Contents

We will provide each person to whom this prospectus supplement is delivered a copy of all of the information that has been incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus but not delivered with this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. You may obtain copies of these filings, at no cost, through the Investor Relations section of our website (www.agenusbio.com), and you may request copies of these filings, at no cost, by writing or telephoning us at:

Agenus Inc.

Attention: Secretary

3 Forbes Road

Lexington, MA 02421

Telephone: (781) 674-4400

The information contained on our website is not a part of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus.

S-42

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS

\$150,000,000

of

Common Stock

Preferred Stock

Warrants

Debt Securities

Units

We may offer to sell to the public, from time to time in one or more offerings for an aggregate initial offering price of up to \$150,000,000:

shares of our common stock;

shares of our preferred stock;

warrants to purchase shares of our common stock, preferred stock and/or debt securities;

debt securities consisting of debentures, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness; or

units consisting of any combination of the foregoing securities.

We may offer and sell any combination of the securities in amounts, at prices and on terms that we will determine at the time of any particular offering, to or through one or more agents, dealers or underwriters, or directly to purchasers, including through subscription rights offerings, on a continuous or delayed basis. If agents, underwriters or dealers are used to sell the securities, we will name them and describe their compensation in a prospectus supplement.

This prospectus describes the general terms of these securities and the general manner in which these securities will be offered. We will provide the specific terms of these securities in supplements to this prospectus. The prospectus supplements will also describe the specific manner in which these securities will be offered and may also supplement, update or amend information contained in this document. You should read this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement before you invest.

Our common stock is listed on The NASDAQ Capital Market and trades under the symbol AGEN. On January 2, 2013, the last sale price of our common stock as reported on the NASDAQ Capital Market was \$4.24 per share. The other securities that may be offered are not listed on any securities exchange or included in any automated quotation system.

Investing in our securities involves risks. See Risk Factors on page 2 of this prospectus.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission, nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the adequacy or accuracy of this prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is January 10, 2013.

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| <u>ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS</u> | 1 |
| <u>INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE</u> | 1 |
| <u>CAUTIONARY NOTE ABOUT FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS</u> | 2 |
| <u>RISK FACTORS</u> | 2 |
| <u>THE COMPANY</u> | 3 |
| <u>USE OF PROCEEDS</u> | 3 |
| <u>RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES</u> | 4 |
| <u>DILUTION</u> | 4 |
| <u>DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES</u> | 4 |
| <u>DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK</u> | 5 |
| <u>DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK</u> | 5 |
| <u>DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK</u> | 7 |
| <u>DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS</u> | 9 |
| <u>DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES</u> | 13 |
| <u>DESCRIPTION OF UNITS</u> | 20 |
| <u>LEGAL OWNERSHIP AND BOOK-ENTRY ISSUANCE</u> | 24 |
| <u>PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION</u> | 27 |
| <u>LEGAL MATTERS</u> | 29 |
| <u>EXPERTS</u> | 29 |
| <u>WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION</u> | 29 |

Table of Contents

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the SEC), using a shelf registration process for the delayed offering and sale of securities pursuant to Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the Securities Act). Under the shelf process, we may, from time to time, sell any of the Securities described in this prospectus in one or more primary offerings for an aggregate initial offering price of up to \$150,000,000.

This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we sell securities, we will provide one or more prospectus supplements that will contain specific information about the terms of the offering. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read both this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement together with the additional information described under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information** on page 31 of this prospectus.

We have not authorized anyone to provide you with any additional information. This prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement do not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy any securities other than the securities described in any accompanying prospectus supplement or an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy such securities in any circumstances in which such offer or solicitation is unlawful. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement, the documents incorporated by reference and any related free writing prospectus is accurate only as of their respective dates. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed materially since those dates.

As used in this prospectus, unless the context otherwise requires, the terms **we**, **us**, **our** and **the Company** mean, collectively, Agenus Inc. and its subsidiaries and their predecessors.

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference in this prospectus the information we file with the SEC. This helps us disclose certain important information to you by referring you to the documents we file. The information we incorporate by reference is an important part of this prospectus. Because we are incorporating by reference future filings with the SEC, this prospectus is continually updated and those future filings may modify or supersede some of the information included or incorporated in this prospectus. This means that you must look at all of the SEC filings that we incorporate by reference to determine if any of the statements in this prospectus or in any document previously incorporated by reference have been modified or superseded. We incorporate by reference each of the documents listed below.

our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2011 (File No. 000-29089);

our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed on December 21, 2012; December 19, 2012; November 9, 2012; October 23, 2012; June 19, 2012; March 20, 2012; March 5, 2012 and March 2, 2012 (except, with respect to each of the foregoing, for portions of such reports which were deemed to be furnished and not filed) (File No. 000-29089);

our Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A filed with the SEC on April 4, 2012;

our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2012 (File No. 000-29089);

our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2012 (File No. 000-29089);

our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2012 (File No. 000-29089); and the description of our common stock contained in our registration statement on Form 8-A filed under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act) on January 24, 2000, including any amendment or reports filed for the purpose of updating such descriptions (File No. 333-91747).

Table of Contents

All filings by Agenus pursuant to the Exchange Act subsequent to the date hereof and prior to effectiveness of this registration statement are incorporated in this registration statement and deemed to be a part hereof from the date of filing of such documents or reports. In addition, all documents and reports filed by Agenus subsequent to the date hereof pursuant to Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 and 15(d) of the Exchange Act prior to the filing of a post-effective amendment which indicates that all securities offered have been sold or which deregisters all securities remaining unsold, shall be deemed to be incorporated by reference in this registration statement and to be a part hereof from the date of filing of such documents or reports. Any statement contained in a document incorporated by reference herein shall be deemed to be modified or superseded to the extent that a statement contained herein or in any other subsequently filed document which also is incorporated by reference herein modifies or supersedes such statement. Statements in this prospectus concerning any document we filed as an exhibit to the registration statement or that we otherwise filed with the SEC are not intended to be comprehensive and are qualified by reference to these filings. You should review the complete document to evaluate these statements.

You may obtain copies of these documents, other than exhibits, free of charge on the Company's website, www.agenusbio.com, as soon as reasonably practicable after they have been filed with the SEC and through the SEC's website, www.sec.gov.

CAUTIONARY NOTE ABOUT FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus, any prospectus supplement, and any information incorporated by reference into this prospectus or prospectus supplement may contain certain forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and Section 21E of the Exchange Act. You can identify these forward-looking statements by the fact they use words such as could, expect, anticipate, estimate, target, may, project, guidance, intent, will, potential, opportunity, future and other words and terms of similar meaning and expression in connection with any discussion of future operating or financial performance. You can also identify forward-looking statements by the fact that they do not relate strictly to historical or current facts. Such forward-looking statements are based on current expectations and involve inherent risks and uncertainties, including factors that could delay, divert or change any of them, and could cause actual outcomes to differ materially from current expectations. These statements are likely to relate to, among other things, our business strategy, our research and development, our product development efforts, our ability to commercialize our product candidates, the activities of our licensees, our prospects for initiating partnerships or collaborations, the timing of the introduction of products, the effect of new accounting pronouncements, uncertainty regarding our future operating results and our profitability, anticipated sources of funds as well as our plans, objectives, expectations and intentions.

Although the Company believes it has been prudent in its plans and assumptions, no assurance can be given that any goal or plan set forth in forward-looking statements can be achieved and readers are cautioned not to place undue reliance on such statements, which speak only as of the date made. The Company undertakes no obligation to release publicly any revisions to forward-looking statements as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

Oncophage[®] and Stimulon[®] are registered trademarks of Agenus Inc. and its subsidiaries. All rights reserved.

RISK FACTORS

Before purchasing any of the securities you should carefully consider the risk factors relating to Agenus incorporated by reference in this prospectus from our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2012, as well as the risks, uncertainties and additional information set forth in our SEC reports on Forms 10-K, 10-Q and 8-K and in the other documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus. For a

Table of Contents

description of these reports and documents, and information about where you can find them, see [Where You Can Find More Information](#) and [Incorporation of Certain Documents By Reference](#). Additional risks not presently known or that we presently consider to be immaterial could subsequently materially and adversely affect our financial condition, results of operations, business and prospects.

THE COMPANY

Agenus Inc. (including its subsidiaries, also referred to as Agenus, the Company, we, us, and our) is a biotechnology company developing and commercializing technologies to treat cancers and infectious diseases, primarily based on immunological approaches. Our technology portfolio consists of our Saponin Platform (based on our saponin adjuvant based technologies) and our Heat Shock Protein (HSP) Platform (based on our HSP based technologies). Within our Saponin Platform is QS-21 Stimulon® adjuvant, or QS-21, which is used by our licensees in numerous vaccines under development in trials, some as advanced as Phase 3, for a variety of diseases, including cancer, shingles, malaria, Alzheimer's disease, human immunodeficiency virus and tuberculosis. Within our HSP Platform, we are developing our Recombinant Series and our Prophage Series vaccines. HerpV, a therapeutic vaccine candidate from the Recombinant Series which is administered with QS-21, has been tested in a Phase 1 clinical trial for the treatment of genital herpes and is now entering a Phase 2 trial. In our Prophage Series we have tested product candidates in Phase 3 clinical trials for the treatment of renal cell carcinoma (RCC), the most common type of kidney cancer, and for metastatic melanoma, as well as in Phase 1 and Phase 2 clinical trials in a range of indications. Prophage Series vaccine R-100 is registered for use in Russia for the treatment of RCC in patients at intermediate risk of recurrence as Oncophage® vaccine (vitespen). Product candidates from our Prophage G-Series are currently in Phase 2 clinical trials in glioma, a type of brain cancer. Our business activities have included product research and development, intellectual property prosecution, manufacturing, regulatory and clinical affairs, corporate finance and development activities, market development, and support of our collaborations. Our product candidates require clinical trials and approvals from regulatory agencies, as well as acceptance in the marketplace. Part of our strategy is to develop and commercialize some of our product candidates by continuing our existing arrangements with academic and corporate collaborators and licensees and by entering into new collaborations.

You can find more information about Agenus in Agenus' filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission referenced in the sections in this document titled [Where You Can Find More Information](#) and [Incorporation of Certain Documents by Reference](#) .

USE OF PROCEEDS

This prospectus relates to the securities that may be offered and sold from time to time by us. We expect to use the net proceeds from the sale of the securities from offerings under this prospectus for general corporate purposes unless the applicable prospectus supplement states otherwise. General corporate purposes may include the acquisition of companies or businesses, repayment and refinancing of debt, working capital and capital expenditures. We may temporarily invest the net proceeds in investment-grade, interest-bearing securities until they are used for their stated purpose. We have not determined the amount of net proceeds to be used specifically for such purposes. As a result, management will retain broad discretion over the allocation of net proceeds.

Table of Contents**RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES**

| | Nine Months Ended | | Years Ended December 31, | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | September 30, 2012 | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 |
| Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges | | | | | | |
| Deficiency of Earnings to Cover | | | | | | |
| Fixed Charges | \$ (5,885) | \$ (23,276) | \$ (21,906) | \$ (30,318) | \$ (30,801) | \$ (37,935) |
| Ratio of Earnings to Combined | | | | | | |
| Fixed Charges and Preferred Stock | | | | | | |
| Dividends | | | | | | |
| Deficiency of Earnings to Cover | | | | | | |
| Combined Fixed Charges and | | | | | | |
| Preferred Stock Dividends | \$ (6,478) | \$ (24,066) | \$ (22,696) | \$ (31,108) | \$ (31,591) | \$ (38,725) |

For purposes of the ratio of earnings to fixed charges and the ration of combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends to earnings, earnings consist of income before income taxes, interest and the portions of rentals representative of the interest factor. Fixed charges consist of interest expense and the portions of rentals representative of the interest factor.

DILUTION

If there is a material dilution of the investor's equity interest from the sale of common equity securities offered under this prospectus, we will set forth in any prospectus supplement the following information regarding any such material dilution of the equity interests of purchasers purchasing securities in an offering under this prospectus:

the net tangible book value per share of our equity securities before and after the offering;

the amount of the increase in such net tangible book value per share attributable to the cash payments made by purchasers in the offering; and

the amount of the immediate dilution from the public offering price which will be absorbed by such purchasers.

DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES

The descriptions of the securities contained in this prospectus, together with the applicable prospectus supplements, summarize the material terms and provisions of the various types of securities that we or the selling stockholders may offer. We will describe in the applicable prospectus supplement relating to any securities the particular terms of the securities offered by that prospectus supplement. If we so indicate in the applicable prospectus supplement, the terms of the securities may differ from the terms we have summarized below. We will also include in the prospectus supplement information, where applicable, about material U.S. federal income tax considerations relating to the

securities, and the securities exchange, if any, on which the securities will be listed.

We may sell from time to time, in one or more primary offerings, common stock, preferred stock, debt securities and warrants to purchase any such securities.

In this prospectus, we refer to the common stock, preferred stock, debt securities and warrants to be sold by us in a primary offering collectively as securities. The total dollar amount of all securities that we may issue under the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part will not exceed \$150,000,000.

Table of Contents

If we issue debt securities at a discount from their original stated principal amount, then we will use the issue price, and not the principal amount, of such debt securities for purposes of calculating the total dollar amount of all securities issued under this prospectus.

This prospectus may not be used to consummate a sale of securities unless it is accompanied by a prospectus supplement.

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

Agenus is authorized to issue up to 70,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$0.01 per share, with 24,648,415 issued as of January 2, 2013. Agenus is also authorized to issue up to 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value \$0.01 per share, with 31,620 Series A convertible preferred stock issued as of January 2, 2013 and 3,105 Series B2 convertible preferred stock issued as of January 2, 2013.

The following description of the Agenus capital stock does not purport to be complete and is qualified in all respects by reference to Agenus' restated certificate of incorporation and bylaws, and the Delaware General Corporation Law (the "DGCL").

DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK

General

Each share of Agenus' common stock has the same relative rights and is identical in all respects with each other share of common stock.

Voting Rights

Subject to preferences that may apply to shares of preferred stock outstanding at the time, the holders of outstanding shares of common stock are entitled to receive dividends out of assets legally available for payment of dividends, as the board may from time to time determine. Each stockholder is entitled to one vote for each share of common stock held on all matters submitted to a vote of stockholders. Our certificate of incorporation does not provide for cumulative voting for the election of directors, which means that the holders of a majority of the shares voted can elect all of the directors then standing for election. The common stock is not entitled to preemptive rights and is not subject to conversion or redemption. Each outstanding share of common stock offered by this prospectus will, when issued, be fully paid and nonassessable.

Dividends

Holders of common stock are entitled to share ratably in any dividends declared by our board of directors, subject to any preferential dividend rights of any outstanding preferred stock. Dividends consisting of shares of common stock may be paid to holders of shares of common stock. We have never declared or paid cash dividends on our common stock. We do not intend to pay cash dividends in the foreseeable future.

Preemptive Rights

Holders of common stock do not have any preemptive rights with respect to any shares that may be issued by Agenus in the future. Thus, Agenus may sell shares of its common stock without first offering them to the then holders of common stock.

Liquidation

In the event of any liquidation or dissolution of Agenus, whether voluntary or involuntary, the holders of Agenus common stock would be entitled to receive pro rata, after payment of all debts and liabilities of Agenus,

Table of Contents

all assets of Agenus available for distribution, subject to the rights of the holders of any preferred stock which may be issued with a priority in liquidation or dissolution over the holders of common stock.

Listing

Our common stock is listed on The NASDAQ Capital Market under the symbol AGEN. On January 2, 2013, the last reported sale price for our common stock on The NASDAQ Capital Market was \$4.24 per share. As of January 2, 2013, we had approximately 19,000 stockholders of record.

Anti-Takeover Provisions

Statutory Business Combination Provision

Delaware has adopted a business combination statute (Section 203 of the DGCL) that may also have additional anti-takeover effects to provisions in Agenus restated certificate of incorporation and bylaws. Section 203 of the DGCL, which, subject to certain exceptions, prohibits a Delaware corporation from engaging in any business combination with an interested stockholder for a period of three years following the time that such stockholder became an interested stockholder, unless:

the board of directors of the corporation approves either the business combination or the transaction that resulted in the stockholder becoming an interested stockholder, prior to the time the interested stockholder attained that status;

upon the closing of the transaction that resulted in the stockholder becoming an interested stockholder, the interested stockholder owned at least 85% of the voting stock of the corporation outstanding at the time the transaction commenced, excluding, for purposes of determining the number of shares outstanding, those shares owned by persons who are directors and also officers and by employee stock plans in which employee participants do not have the right to determine confidentially whether shares held subject to the plan will be tendered in a tender or exchange offer; or

at or subsequent to such time, the business combination is approved by the board of directors and authorized at an annual or special meeting of stockholders, and not by written consent, by the affirmative vote of at least 66 2/3% of the outstanding voting stock that is not owned by the interested stockholder.

With certain exceptions, an interested stockholder is a person or group who or which owns 15% or more of the corporation's outstanding voting stock (including any rights to acquire stock pursuant to an option, warrant, agreement, arrangement or understanding, or upon the exercise of conversion or exchange rights, and stock with respect to which the person has voting rights only), or is an affiliate or associate of the corporation and was the owner of 15% or more of such voting stock at any time within the previous three years.

In general, Section 203 defines a business combination to include:

any merger or consolidation involving the corporation and the interested stockholder;

any sale, transfer, pledge or other disposition of 10% or more of the assets of the corporation involving the interested stockholder;

subject to certain exceptions, any transaction that results in the issuance or transfer by the corporation of any stock of the corporation to the interested stockholder;

any transaction involving the corporation that has the effect of increasing the proportionate share of the stock or any class or series of the corporation beneficially owned by the interested stockholder; or

the receipt by the interested stockholder of the benefit of any loans, advances, guarantees, pledges or other financial benefits provided by or through the corporation.

Table of Contents

A Delaware corporation may opt out of this provision with an express provision in its original certificate of incorporation or an express provision in its amended and restated certificate of incorporation or bylaws resulting from a stockholders' amendment approved by at least a majority of the outstanding voting shares. However, Agenus has not opted out of this provision. Section 203 could prohibit or delay mergers or other takeover or change-in-control attempts and, accordingly, may discourage attempts to acquire Agenus.

Size of the Board and Vacancies

Our bylaws provide that the exact number of directors is determined by resolution of the board of directors or by the stockholders at the annual meeting. Our board of directors has the right to fill any vacancies resulting from death, resignation, disqualification or removal, as well as any newly created directorships arising from an increase in the size of the board.

Amendment of Charter Provisions

The affirmative vote of the holders of at least a majority of the voting power of all then outstanding shares of our voting stock, voting together as a single class, is required to, among other things, amend, alter, change or repeal certain provisions of our restated certificate of incorporation. Our bylaws may only be amended (or new bylaws adopted) by the board of directors or the affirmative vote of the holders of at least a majority of the voting power of all then outstanding shares of our voting stock represented in person or by proxy at the meeting at which the amendment is voted on.

Undesignated Preferred Stock

We could issue preferred stock that could have other rights, including economic rights senior to our common stock, so that the issuance of the preferred stock could adversely affect the market value of our common stock. The issuance of the preferred stock may also have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a change in control of Agenus without any action by the stockholders. The effects of issuing preferred stock could include one or more of the following:

restricting dividends on the common stock;

diluting the voting power of the common stock;

impairing the liquidation rights of the common stock; or

discouraging, delaying or preventing changes in control or management of Agenus.

Transfer Agent

The transfer agent and registrar for Agenus common stock is American Stock Transfer & Trust Company. Its telephone number is (800) 937-5449.

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK

We currently have authorized 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock, of which 31,620 shares have been designated as series A convertible preferred stock, 10,000 shares have been designated as series B1 convertible preferred stock, and 5,250 have been designated as series B2 convertible preferred stock. As of the date of this prospectus, the series A convertible preferred stock is issued and outstanding in the amount described in the preceding sentence and we have 3,105 shares of our series B2 convertible preferred stock outstanding although no further shares can be converted into shares of common stock. In April 2009, we issued 988,202 shares of our common stock upon conversion of 2,145 shares of our series B2 convertible preferred stock via cashless conversions. In April 2008, all of the series B1 convertible preferred stock was converted into 264,199 shares of

Table of Contents

our common stock via a cashless conversion. The remaining 4,953,130 authorized shares of preferred stock are undesignated and not issued or outstanding as of the date of this prospectus. As of the date of this prospectus, we do not have any equity securities that would be senior to, or on par with, our authorized preferred stock.

Series A Preferred Stock

On September 24, 2003, we sold 31,620 shares of series A convertible preferred stock, par value \$.01 per share, which we refer to as series A preferred stock. Under the terms and conditions of the Certificate of Designation creating the series A preferred stock, the stock is convertible by the holder at any time into shares of our common stock, is non-voting, carries a 2.5 percent annual dividend yield, has an initial conversion price of \$94.86, and is redeemable by us at its face amount on or after September 24, 2013. The liquidation value of the series A preferred stock is equal to \$1,000 per share outstanding plus any accrued unpaid dividends. The Certificate of Designation does not restrict the repurchase or redemption of shares by us while there is an arrearage in the payment of dividends. The Certificate of Designation does not contemplate a sinking fund. This description of the series A preferred stock is qualified in its entirety by reference to the Certificate of Designation.

Series B Preferred Stock

On September 10, 2007, we issued 10,000 shares of our series B1 convertible preferred stock and 5,250 shares of our series B2 convertible preferred stock (the series B1 convertible preferred stock and the series B2 convertible preferred stock are referred to collectively as the class B convertible preferred stock) to a single institutional investor. In April 2008, all of the series B1 convertible preferred stock was converted into 264,199 shares of our common stock via a cashless conversion. Shares of the series B2 convertible preferred stock permit the investor to purchase common shares for consideration of up to 35 percent of the total dollar amount previously invested pursuant to the agreement with the investor, including conversions of the series B1 convertible preferred stock, at a purchase price equal to the lesser of \$24.96 per common share or a price calculated based on the then-prevailing price of our common stock, and expire seven years from the date of issuance. The total number of shares of common stock issued or issuable to the holder of the class B convertible preferred stock cannot exceed 19.9% of our outstanding common stock. In April 2009, we issued 988,202 shares of our common stock upon conversion of 2,145 shares of our series B2 convertible preferred stock via cashless conversions. No dividends are paid on the class B convertible preferred stock and there are no liquidation preferences. This description of the class B convertible preferred stock is qualified in its entirety by reference to the Certificate of Designations.

Undesignated Preferred Stock

This section describes the general terms and provisions of the preferred stock that we may offer by this prospectus. The prospectus supplement will describe the specific terms of the series of the preferred stock offered through that prospectus supplement. Those terms may differ from the terms discussed below. Any series of preferred stock we will issue will be governed by our restated certificate of incorporation, as amended, including the certificate of designations relating to such series of preferred stock, and our bylaws, as amended. In this section entitled Description of Preferred Stock, references to Agenus, we, our and us refer only to Agenus Inc. and not to its consolidated subsidiaries.

We will fix the rights, preferences, privileges and restrictions of the preferred stock of each series in the certificate of designations relating to that series. We will incorporate by reference as an exhibit to the registration statement that includes this prospectus the form of any certificate of designations which describes the terms of the series of preferred stock we are offering before the issuance of the related series of preferred stock. This description will include the following, to the extent applicable:

the title and stated value;

the number of shares we are offering;

-8-

Table of Contents

the liquidation preference per share;

the purchase price;

the dividend rate, period and payment date, and method of calculation for dividends, if any;

whether any dividends will be cumulative or non-cumulative and, if cumulative, the date from which dividends will accumulate;

the provisions for a sinking fund, if any;

the provisions for redemption or repurchase, if applicable, and any restrictions on our ability to exercise those redemption and repurchase rights;

any listing of the preferred stock on any securities exchange or market;

whether the preferred stock will be convertible into our common stock and, if applicable, the conversion price, or how it will be calculated, and the conversion period;

whether the preferred stock will be exchangeable into debt securities and, if applicable, the exchange price, or how it will be calculated, and the exchange period;

voting rights, if any, of the preferred stock;

preemptive rights, if any;

restrictions on transfer, sale or other assignment, if any;

whether interests in the preferred stock will be represented by depositary shares;

a discussion of any material or special United States federal income tax considerations applicable to the preferred stock;

the relative ranking and preferences of the preferred stock as to dividend rights and rights if we liquidate, dissolve or wind up our affairs; any limitations on issuance of any class or series of preferred stock ranking senior to or on a parity with the series of preferred stock as to dividend rights and rights if we liquidate, dissolve or wind up our affairs; and

any other specific terms, preferences, rights or limitations of, or restrictions on, the preferred stock.

When we issue shares of preferred stock under this prospectus, the shares, when issued in accordance with the terms of the applicable agreement, will be validly issued, fully paid and non-assessable and will not have, or be subject to, any preemptive or similar rights.

Section 242 of DGCL provides that the holders of each class or series of stock will have the right to vote separately as a class on certain amendments to our restated certificate of incorporation that would affect the class or series of preferred stock, as applicable. This right is in addition to any voting rights that may be provided for in the applicable certificate of designation.

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

We may issue warrants or other rights. We may issue these securities in such amounts or in as many distinct series as we wish. This section summarizes the terms of these securities that apply generally. We will describe the financial and other specific terms of any such series of securities in the prospectus supplement accompanying this prospectus. Those terms may vary from the terms described here.

When we refer to a series of securities in this section, we mean all securities issued as part of the same series under any applicable indenture, agreement or other instrument. When we refer to the prospectus supplement, we mean the applicable prospectus supplement describing the specific terms of the security you purchase. The terms used in the prospectus supplement will have the meanings described in this prospectus, unless otherwise specified.

Table of Contents

In this section entitled **Description of Warrants**, references to **Agenus**, **we**, **our** and **us** refer only to Agenus Inc. and its consolidated subsidiaries. Also, in this section, references to **holders** mean those who own warrants or other rights registered in their own names, on the books that we or any applicable trustee or warrant or rights agent maintain for this purpose, and not those who own beneficial interests in warrants registered in street name or in warrants issued in book-entry form through one or more depositories. Owners of beneficial interests in warrants should also read the section entitled **Legal Ownership and Book-Entry Issuance**.

Warrants

The following description of warrants does not purport to be complete and is qualified in its entirety by reference to the description of a particular series of warrants contained in an applicable prospectus supplement. For information relating to common stock and preferred stock, see **Description of Common Stock** and **Description of Preferred Stock**, respectively.

We may offer by means of this prospectus warrants for the purchase of our preferred stock or common stock. We may issue warrants separately or together with any other securities offered by means of this prospectus, and the warrants may be attached to or separate from such securities. Each series of warrants will be issued under a separate warrant agreement to be entered into between us and a warrant agent specified therein. The warrant agent will act solely as our agent in connection with the warrants of such series and will not assume any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for or with any holders or beneficial owners of warrants.

Agreements

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the following provisions will apply to any warrants we issue pursuant to this prospectus. Each series of warrants may be evidenced by certificates and may be issued under a separate indenture, agreement or other instrument to be entered into between us and a bank that we select as agent with respect to such series. The agent, if any, will have its principal office in the U.S. and have a combined capital and surplus of at least \$50,000,000. Warrants in book-entry form will be represented by a global security registered in the name of a depository, which will be the holder of all the securities represented by the global security. Those who own beneficial interests in a global security will do so through participants in the depository's system, and the rights of these indirect owners will be governed solely by the applicable procedures of the depository and its participants. We describe book-entry securities under **Legal Ownership and Book-Entry Issuance**.

General Terms of Warrants

The prospectus supplement relating to a series of warrants will identify the name and address of the warrant agent, if any. The prospectus supplement will describe the following terms, where applicable, of the warrants in respect of which this prospectus is being delivered:

the title and issuer of the warrants;

the aggregate number of warrants;

the price or prices at which the warrants will be issued;

the currencies in which the price or prices of the warrants may be payable;

the designation, amount and terms of the securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants;

the designation and terms of the other securities with which the warrants are issued and the number of warrants issued with each such security or each principal amount of security;

if applicable, the date on and after which the warrants and any related securities will be separately transferable;

Table of Contents

any securities exchange or quotation system on which the warrants or any securities deliverable upon exercise of such securities may be listed;

the price or prices at which and currency or currencies in which the securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants may be purchased;

the date on which the right to exercise the warrants shall commence and the date on which such right shall expire;

the minimum or maximum amount of warrants that may be exercised at any one time;

whether the warrants will be issued in fully registered for or bearer form, in global or non-global form or in any combination of these forms;

information with respect to book-entry procedures, if any;

a discussion of certain U.S. federal income tax considerations; and

any other material terms of the warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the warrants.

Exercise of Warrants

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the following provisions will apply to any warrants we issue pursuant to this prospectus. If any warrant is exercisable for other securities or other property, the following provisions will apply. Each such warrant may be exercised at any time up to any expiration date and time mentioned in the prospectus supplement relating to those warrants. After the close of business on any applicable expiration date, unexercised warrants will become void.

Warrants may be exercised by delivery of the certificate representing the securities to be exercised, or in the case of global securities, as described below under Legal Ownership and Book-Entry Issuance, by delivery of an exercise notice for those warrants, together with certain information, and payment to any agent in immediately available funds, as provided in the prospectus supplement, of the required purchase amount, if any. Upon receipt of payment and the certificate or exercise notice properly executed at the office indicated in the prospectus supplement, we will, in the time period the relevant agreement provides, issue and deliver the securities or other property purchasable upon such exercise. If fewer than all of the warrants represented by such certificates are exercised, a new certificate will be issued for the remaining amount of warrants.

If mentioned in the prospectus supplement, securities may be surrendered as all or part of the exercise price for warrants.

Antidilution Provisions

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the following provisions will apply to any warrants we issue pursuant to this prospectus. In the case of warrants to purchase common stock, the exercise price payable and the number of shares of common stock purchasable upon warrant exercise may be adjusted in certain events, including:

the issuance of a stock dividend to common shareholders or a combination, subdivision or reclassification of common stock;

the issuance of rights, warrants or options to all common and preferred shareholders entitling them to purchase common stock for an aggregate consideration per share less than the current market price per share of common stock;

any distribution to our common shareholders of evidences of our indebtedness of assets, excluding cash dividends or distributions referred to above; and

any other events mentioned in the prospectus supplement.

Table of Contents

The prospectus supplement will describe which, if any, of these provisions shall apply to a particular series of warrants. Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, no adjustment in the number of shares purchasable upon warrant exercise will be required until cumulative adjustments require an adjustment of at least 1% of such number and no fractional shares will be issued upon warrant exercise, but we will pay the cash value of any fractional shares otherwise issuable.

Modification

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the following provisions will apply to any warrants we issue pursuant to this prospectus. We and any agent for any series of warrants may amend any warrant or rights agreement and the terms of the related warrants by executing a supplemental agreement, without any such warrant holders' consent, for the purpose of:

curing any ambiguity, any defective or inconsistent provision contained in the agreement, or making any other corrections to the agreement that are not inconsistent with the provisions of the warrant certificates;

evidencing the succession of another corporation to us and its assumption of our covenants contained in the agreement and the securities;

appointing a successor depository, if the securities are issued in the form of global securities;

evidencing a successor agent's acceptance of appointment with respect to any securities;

adding to our covenants for the benefit of securityholders or surrendering any right or power we have under the agreement;

issuing warrants in definitive form, if such securities are initially issued in the form of global securities; or

amending the agreement and the warrants as we deem necessary or desirable and that will not adversely affect the interests of the applicable warrant holders in any material respect.

We and any agent for any series of warrants may also amend any agreement and the related warrants by a supplemental agreement with the consent of the holders of a majority of the warrants of any series affected by such amendment, for the purpose of adding, modifying or eliminating any of the agreement's provisions or of modifying the rights of the holders of warrants. However, no such amendment that:

reduces the number or amount of securities receivable upon any exercise of any such security;

shortens the time period during which any such security may be exercised;

otherwise adversely affects the exercise rights of warrant holders in any material respect; or

reduces the number of securities the consent of holders of which is required for amending the agreement or the related warrants;

may be made without the consent of each holder affected by that amendment.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the following provisions will apply to any warrants we issue pursuant to this prospectus. Any agreement with respect to warrants will provide that we are generally permitted to merge or consolidate with another corporation or other entity. Any such agreement will also provide that we are permitted to sell our assets substantially as an entirety to another corporation or

Table of Contents

other entity or to have another entity sell its assets substantially as an entirety to us. With regard to any series of warrants, however, we may not take any of these actions unless all of the following conditions are met:

if we are not the successor entity, the person formed by the consolidation or into or with which we merge or the person to which our properties and assets are conveyed, transferred or leased must be an entity organized and existing under the laws of the United States, any state or the District of Columbia and must expressly assume the performance of our covenants under any relevant indenture, agreement or other instrument; and

we or that successor corporation must not immediately be in default under that agreement.

Enforcement by Holders of Warrants

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the following provisions will apply to any warrants we issue pursuant to this prospectus. Any agent for any series of warrants will act solely as our agent under the relevant agreement and will not assume any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for any securityholder. A single bank or trust company may act as agent for more than one issue of securities. Any such agent will have no duty or responsibility in case we default in performing our obligations under the relevant agreement or warrant, including any duty or responsibility to initiate any legal proceedings or to make any demand upon us. Any securityholder may, without the agent's consent or consent of any other securityholder, enforce by appropriate legal action its right to exercise any warrant exercisable for any property.

Replacement of Certificates

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the following provisions will apply to any warrants we issue pursuant to this prospectus. We will replace any destroyed, lost, stolen or mutilated warrant or rights certificate upon delivery to us and any applicable agent of satisfactory evidence of the ownership of that certificate and of its destruction, loss, theft or mutilation, and (in the case of mutilation) surrender of that certificate to us or any applicable agent, unless we have, or the agent has, received notice that the certificate has been acquired by a bona fide purchaser. That securityholder will also be required to provide indemnity satisfactory to us and the relevant agent before a replacement certificate will be issued.

Title

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the following provisions will apply to any warrants we issue pursuant to this prospectus. We, any agents for any series of warrants and any of their agents may treat the registered holder of any certificate as the absolute owner of the securities evidenced by that certificate for any purpose and as the person entitled to exercise the rights attaching to the warrants so requested, despite any notice to the contrary. See Legal Ownership and Book-Entry Issuance.

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

We will issue the debt securities offered by this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement under an indenture to be entered into between Agenus and the trustee identified in the applicable prospectus supplement. The terms of the debt securities will include those stated in the indenture and those made part of the indenture by reference to the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as in effect on the date of the indenture. We have filed a copy of the form of indenture as an exhibit to the registration statement in which this prospectus is included. The indenture will be subject

to and governed by the terms of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939.

We may offer under this prospectus up to an aggregate principal amount of \$150,000,000 in debt securities; or if debt securities are issued at a discount, or in a foreign currency, foreign currency units or composite currency, the principal amount as may be sold for an initial public offering price of up to \$150,000,000. Unless

Table of Contents

otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, the debt securities will represent direct, unsecured obligations of Agenus and will rank equally with all of our other unsecured indebtedness.

The following statements relating to the debt securities and the indenture are summaries, qualified in their entirety to the detailed provisions of the indenture.

General

We may issue the debt securities in one or more series with the same or various maturities, at par, at a premium, or at a discount. We will describe the particular terms of each series of debt securities in a prospectus supplement relating to that series, which we will file with the SEC.

The prospectus supplement will set forth, to the extent required, the following terms of the debt securities in respect of which the prospectus supplement is delivered:

the title of the series;

the aggregate principal amount;

the issue price or prices, expressed as a percentage of the aggregate principal amount of the debt securities;

any limit on the aggregate principal amount;

the date or dates on which principal is payable;

the interest rate or rates (which may be fixed or variable) or, if applicable, the method used to determine such rate or rates;

the date or dates from which interest, if any, will be payable and any regular record date for the interest payable;

the place or places where principal and, if applicable, premium and interest, is payable;

the terms and conditions upon which we may, or the holders may require us to, redeem or repurchase the debt securities;

the denominations in which such debt securities may be issuable, if other than denominations of \$1,000, or any integral multiple of that number;

whether the debt securities are to be issuable in the form of certificated debt securities (as described below) or global debt securities (as described below);

the portion of principal amount that will be payable upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity date if other than the principal amount of the debt securities;

the currency of denomination;

the designation of the currency, currencies or currency units in which payment of principal and, if applicable, premium and interest, will be made;

if payments of principal and, if applicable, premium or interest, on the debt securities are to be made in one or more currencies or currency units other than the currency of denomination, the manner in which the exchange rate with respect to such payments will be determined;

if amounts of principal and, if applicable, premium and interest may be determined by reference to an index based on a currency or currencies, or by reference to a commodity, commodity index, stock exchange index, or financial index, then the manner in which such amounts will be determined;

the provisions, if any, relating to any collateral provided for such debt securities;

Table of Contents

any addition to or change in the covenants and/or the acceleration provisions described in this prospectus or in the indenture;

any events of default, if not otherwise described below under Events of Default ;

the terms and conditions, if any, for conversion into or exchange for shares of common stock or preferred stock;

any depositories, interest rate calculation agents, exchange rate calculation agents, or other agents; and

the terms and conditions, if any, upon which the debt securities shall be subordinated in right of payment to other indebtedness of Agenus.

We may issue discount debt securities that provide for an amount less than the stated principal amount to be due and payable upon acceleration of the maturity of such debt securities in accordance with the terms of the indenture. We may also issue debt securities in bearer form, with or without coupons. If we issue discount debt securities or debt securities in bearer form, we will describe material U.S. federal income tax considerations and other material special considerations which apply to these debt securities in the applicable prospectus supplement.

We may issue debt securities denominated in or payable in a foreign currency or currencies or a foreign currency unit or units. If we do, we will describe the restrictions, elections, and general tax considerations relating to the debt securities and the foreign currency or currencies or foreign currency unit or units in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Exchange and/or Conversion Rights

We may issue debt securities which can be exchanged for or converted into shares of common stock or preferred stock. If we do, we will describe the terms of exchange or conversion in the prospectus supplement relating to these debt securities.

Transfer and Exchange

We may issue debt securities that will be represented by either:

book-entry securities, which means that there will be one or more global securities registered in the name of a depository or a nominee of a depository; or

certificated securities, which means that they will be represented by a certificate issued in definitive registered form.

We will specify in the prospectus supplement applicable to a particular offering whether the debt securities offered will be book-entry or certificated securities.

Certificated Debt Securities

Those who hold certificated debt securities may transfer or exchange such debt securities at the trustee's office or at the paying agent's office or agency in accordance with the terms of the indenture. There will be no service charge for any transfer or exchange of certificated debt securities but there may be a requirement to pay an amount sufficient to cover any tax or other governmental charge payable in connection with such transfer or exchange.

Those who hold certificated debt securities may effect the transfer of certificated debt securities and of the right to receive the principal of, premium, and/or interest, if any, on the certificated debt securities only by surrendering the certificate representing the certificated debt securities and having us or the trustee issue a new certificate to the new holder.

Table of Contents

Global Securities

If we decide to issue debt securities in the form of one or more global securities, then we will register the global securities in the name of the depositary for the global securities or the nominee of the depositary, and the global securities will be delivered by the trustee to the depositary for credit to the accounts of the holders of beneficial interests in the debt securities.

The prospectus supplement will describe the specific terms of the depositary arrangement for debt securities of a series that are issued in global form. None of the Company, the trustee, any payment agent, or the security registrar will have any responsibility or liability for any aspect of the records relating to or payments made on account of beneficial ownership interests in a global debt security or for maintaining, supervising, or reviewing any records relating to these beneficial ownership interests.

No Protection in the Event of Change of Control

The indenture does not have any covenants or other provisions providing for a put or increased interest or otherwise that would afford holders of debt securities additional protection in the event of a recapitalization transaction, a change of control of Agenus, or a highly leveraged transaction. If we offer any covenants or provisions of this type with respect to any debt securities covered by this prospectus, we will describe them in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Covenants

Unless otherwise indicated in this prospectus or a prospectus supplement, the debt securities will not have the benefit of any covenants that limit or restrict our business or operations, the pledging of our assets, or the incurrence by us of indebtedness. We will describe in the applicable prospectus supplement any material covenants in respect of a series of debt securities.

Consolidation, Merger, and Sale of Assets

We have agreed in the indenture that we will not consolidate with or merge into any other person, or convey, transfer, sell, or lease our properties and assets substantially as an entirety to any person, unless:

the person formed by the consolidation or into or with which we are merged or the person to which our properties and assets are conveyed, transferred, sold, or leased, is a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the U.S., any state or the District of Columbia, or a corporation or comparable legal entity organized under the laws of a foreign jurisdiction and, if we are not the surviving person, the surviving person has expressly assumed all of our obligations, including the payment of the principal of, and premium, if any, and interest on the debt securities and the performance of the other covenants under the indenture; and

immediately after giving effect to the transaction, no event of default, and no event which, after notice or lapse of time or both, would become an event of default, has occurred and is continuing under the indenture.

Events of Default

Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, the following events will be events of default under the indenture with respect to debt securities of any series:

we fail to pay any principal or premium, if any, when it becomes due;

we fail to pay any interest within 30 days after it becomes due;

Table of Contents

we fail to comply with any other covenant in the debt securities or the indenture for 60 days after written notice specifying the failure from the trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series; and

certain events involving bankruptcy, insolvency, or reorganization of Agenus or any of our significant subsidiaries.

The trustee may withhold notice to the holders of the debt securities of any series of any default, except in payment of principal of, or premium, if any, or interest on the debt securities of a series, if the trustee considers it to be in the best interest of the holders of the debt securities of that series to do so.

If an event of default (other than an event of default resulting from certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency, or reorganization) occurs, and is continuing, then the trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series may accelerate the maturity of the debt securities. If this happens, the entire principal amount, plus the premium, if any, of all the outstanding debt securities of the affected series plus accrued interest to the date of acceleration will be immediately due and payable. At any time after the acceleration, but before a judgment or decree based on such acceleration is obtained by the trustee, the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of outstanding debt securities of such series may rescind and annul such acceleration if:

all events of default (other than nonpayment of accelerated principal, premium, or interest) have been cured or waived;

all lawful interest on overdue interest and overdue principal has been paid; and

the rescission would not conflict with any judgment or decree.

In addition, if the acceleration occurs at any time when Agenus has outstanding indebtedness which is senior to the debt securities, the payment of the principal amount of outstanding debt securities may be subordinated in right of payment to the prior payment of any amounts due under the senior indebtedness, in which case the holders of debt securities will be entitled to payment under the terms prescribed in the instruments evidencing the senior indebtedness and the indenture.

If an event of default resulting from certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency, or reorganization occurs, the principal, premium, and interest amount with respect to all of the debt securities of any series will be due and payable immediately without any declaration or other act on the part of the trustee or the holders of the debt securities of that series.

The holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of a series will have the right to waive any existing default or compliance with any provision of the indenture or the debt securities of that series and to direct the time, method, and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the trustee, subject to certain limitations specified in the indenture.

No holder of any debt security of a series will have any right to institute any proceeding with respect to the indenture or for any remedy under the indenture, unless:

the holder gives to the trustee written notice of a continuing event of default;

the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the affected series make a written request and offer reasonable indemnity to the trustee to institute a proceeding as trustee;

the trustee fails to institute a proceeding within 60 days after such request; and

the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the affected series do not give the trustee a direction inconsistent with such request during such 60-day period.

Table of Contents

These limitations do not, however, apply to a suit instituted for payment on debt securities of any series on or after the due dates expressed in the debt securities.

Modification and Waiver

From time to time, we and the trustee may, without the consent of holders of the debt securities of one or more series, amend the indenture or the debt securities of one or more series, or supplement the indenture, for certain specified purposes, including:

to provide that the surviving entity following a change of control of Agenus permitted under the indenture will assume all of our obligations under the indenture and debt securities;

to provide for certificated debt securities in addition to uncertificated debt securities;

to comply with any requirements of the SEC under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939;

to cure any ambiguity, defect, or inconsistency, or make any other change that does not materially and adversely affect the rights of any holder; and

to appoint a successor trustee under the indenture with respect to one or more series.

From time to time, we and the trustee may, with the consent of holders of at least a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities, amend or supplement the indenture or the debt securities, or waive compliance in a particular instance by us with any provision of the indenture or the debt securities. We may not, however, without the consent of each holder affected by such action, modify or supplement the indenture or the debt securities, or waive compliance with any provision of the indenture or the debt securities in order to:

reduce the amount of debt securities whose holders must consent to an amendment, supplement, or waiver to the indenture or such debt security;

reduce the rate of or change the time for payment of interest;

reduce the principal of or change the stated maturity of the debt securities;

make any debt security payable in money other than that stated in the debt security;

change the amount or time of any payment required, or reduce the premium payable upon any redemption, or change the time before which no such redemption may be made;

waive a default in the payment of the principal of, premium, if any, or interest on the debt securities or a redemption payment; or

take any other action otherwise prohibited by the indenture to be taken without the consent of each holder affected by the action.

Defeasance of Debt Securities and Certain Covenants in Certain Circumstances

The indenture permits us, at any time, to elect to discharge our obligations with respect to one or more series of debt securities by following certain procedures described in the indenture. These procedures will allow us either:

to defease and be discharged from any and all of our obligations with respect to any debt securities except for the following obligations (which discharge is referred to as legal defeasance):

- (1) to register the transfer or exchange of such debt securities;
- (2) to replace temporary or mutilated, destroyed, lost, or stolen debt securities;
- (3) to compensate and indemnify the trustee; or
- (4) to maintain an office or agency in respect of the debt securities and to hold monies for payment in trust; or

Table of Contents

to be released from our obligations with respect to the debt securities under certain covenants contained in the indenture, as well as any additional covenants which may be contained in the applicable supplemental indenture (which release is referred to as covenant defeasance).

In order to exercise either defeasance option, we must deposit with the trustee or other qualifying trustee, in trust for that purpose:

money;

U.S. Government Obligations (as described below) or Foreign Government Obligations (as described below) which through the scheduled payment of principal and interest in accordance with their terms will provide money; or

a combination of money and/or U.S. Government Obligations and/or Foreign Government Obligations sufficient in the written opinion of a nationally-recognized firm of independent accountants to provide money;

which in each case specified above, provides a sufficient amount to pay the principal of, premium, if any, and interest, if any, on the debt securities of the series, on the scheduled due dates or on a selected date of redemption in accordance with the terms of the indenture.

In addition, defeasance may be effected only if, among other things:

in the case of either legal or covenant defeasance, we deliver to the trustee an opinion of counsel, as specified in the indenture, stating that as a result of the defeasance neither the trust nor the trustee will be required to register as an investment company under the Investment Company Act of 1940;

in the case of legal defeasance, we deliver to the trustee an opinion of counsel stating that we have received from, or there has been published by, the Internal Revenue Service a ruling to the effect that, or there has been a change in any applicable federal income tax law with the effect that (and the opinion shall confirm that), the holders of outstanding debt securities will not recognize income, gain, or loss for U.S. federal income tax purposes solely as a result of such legal defeasance and will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on the same amounts, in the same manner, including as a result of prepayment, and at the same times as would have been the case if legal defeasance had not occurred;

in the case of covenant defeasance, we deliver to the trustee an opinion of counsel to the effect that the holders of the outstanding debt securities will not recognize income, gain, or loss for U.S. federal income tax purposes as a result of covenant defeasance and will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on the same amounts, in the same manner, and at the same times as would have been the case if covenant defeasance had not occurred; and

certain other conditions described in the indenture are satisfied.

If we fail to comply with our remaining obligations under the indenture and applicable supplemental indenture after a covenant defeasance of the indenture and applicable supplemental indenture, and the debt securities are declared due and payable because of the occurrence of any undefeased event of default, the amount of money and/or U.S. Government Obligations and/or Foreign Government Obligations on deposit with the trustee could be insufficient to pay amounts due under the debt securities of the affected series at the time of acceleration. We will, however, remain liable in respect of these payments.

The term "U.S. Government Obligations" as used in the above discussion means securities which are direct obligations of or non-callable obligations guaranteed by the United States of America for the payment of which obligation or guarantee the full faith and credit of the United States of America is pledged.

The term "Foreign Government Obligations" as used in the above discussion means, with respect to debt securities of any series that are denominated in a currency other than U.S. dollars (1) direct obligations of the

Table of Contents

government that issued or caused to be issued such currency for the payment of which obligations its full faith and credit is pledged or (2) obligations of a person controlled or supervised by or acting as an agent or instrumentality of such government the timely payment of which is unconditionally guaranteed as a full faith and credit obligation by that government, which in either case under clauses (1) or (2), are not callable or redeemable at the option of the issuer.

Regarding the Trustee

We will identify the trustee with respect to any series of debt securities in the prospectus supplement relating to the applicable debt securities. You should note that if the trustee becomes a creditor of Agenus, the indenture and the Trust Indenture Act of 1939 limit the rights of the trustee to obtain payment of claims in certain cases, or to realize on certain property received in respect of any such claim, as security or otherwise. The trustee and its affiliates may engage in, and will be permitted to continue to engage in, other transactions with us and our affiliates. If, however, the trustee acquires any conflicting interest within the meaning of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, it must eliminate such conflict or resign.

The holders of a majority in principal amount of the then outstanding debt securities of any series may direct the time, method, and place of conducting any proceeding for exercising any remedy available to the trustee. If an event of default occurs and is continuing, the trustee, in the exercise of its rights and powers, must use the degree of care and skill of a prudent person in the conduct of his or her own affairs. Subject to that provision, the trustee will be under no obligation to exercise any of its rights or powers under the indenture at the request of any of the holders of the debt securities, unless they have offered to the trustee reasonable indemnity or security.

DESCRIPTION OF UNITS

This section outlines some of the provisions of the units and the unit agreements that we may enter into. This information may not be complete in all respects and is qualified entirely by reference to the unit agreement with respect to the units of any particular series. The specific terms of any series of units will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement. If so described in a particular supplement, the specific terms of any series of units may differ from the general description of terms presented below.

In this section entitled Description of Units, references to Agenus, we, our and us refer only to Agenus Inc. and its consolidated subsidiaries. Also, in this section, references to holders mean those who own units registered in their own names, on the books that we or our agent maintain for this purpose, and not those who own beneficial interests in units registered in street name or in units issued in book-entry form through one or more depositaries. Owners of beneficial interests in the units should read the section below entitled Legal Ownership and Book-Entry Issuance.

We may issue units comprised of one or more debt securities, shares of common stock, shares of preferred stock, stock purchase contracts, warrants, rights and other securities in any combination. Each unit will be issued so that the holder of the unit is also the holder of each security included in the unit. Thus, the holder of a unit will have the rights and obligations of a holder of each included security. The unit agreement under which a unit is issued may provide that the securities included in the unit may not be held or transferred separately, at any time or at any time before a specified date.

The applicable prospectus supplement may describe:

the designation and terms of the units and of the securities comprising the units, including whether and under what circumstances those securities may be held or transferred separately;

any provisions of the governing unit agreement that differ from those described below; and

any provisions for the issuance, payment, settlement, transfer or exchange of the units or of the securities comprising the units.

Table of Contents

The provisions described in this section, as well as those described under **Description of Common Stock**, **Description of Preferred Stock**, **Description of Warrants** and **Description of Debt Securities** will apply to the securities included in each unit, to the extent relevant.

Issuance in Series

We may issue units in such amounts and in as many distinct series as we wish. This section summarizes terms of the units that apply generally to all series. Most of the financial and other specific terms of your series will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Unit Agreements

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the following provisions will apply to any units we issue pursuant to this prospectus. We will issue the units under one or more unit agreements to be entered into between us and a bank or other financial institution, as unit agent. We may add, replace or terminate unit agents from time to time. We will identify the unit agreement under which each series of units will be issued and the unit agent under that agreement in the applicable prospectus supplement.

The following provisions will generally apply to all unit agreements unless otherwise stated in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Enforcement of Rights

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the following provisions will apply to any units we issue pursuant to this prospectus. The unit agent under a unit agreement will act solely as our agent in connection with the units issued under that agreement. The unit agent will not assume any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for or with any holders of those units or of the securities comprising those units. The unit agent will not be obligated to take any action on behalf of those holders to enforce or protect their rights under the units or the included securities.

Except as indicated in the next paragraph, a holder of a unit may, without the consent of the unit agent or any other holder, enforce its rights as holder under any security included in the unit, in accordance with the terms of that security and the indenture, warrant agreement, rights agreement or other instrument under which that security is issued. Those terms are described elsewhere in this prospectus under the sections relating to debt securities, preferred stock, common stock or warrants, as relevant.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a unit agreement may limit or otherwise affect the ability of a holder of units issued under that agreement to enforce its rights, including any right to bring a legal action, with respect to those units or any securities, other than debt securities, that are included in those units. Limitations of this kind will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Modification without Consent of Holders

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the following provisions will apply to any units we issue pursuant to this prospectus. We and the applicable unit agent may amend any unit or unit agreement without the consent of any holder:

to cure any ambiguity;

to correct or supplement any defective or inconsistent provision; or

to make any other change that we believe is necessary or desirable and will not adversely affect the interests of the affected holders in any material respect.

Table of Contents

We do not need any approval to make changes that affect only units to be issued after the changes take effect. We may also make changes that do not adversely affect a particular unit in any material respect, even if they adversely affect other units in a material respect. In those cases, we do not need to obtain the approval of the holder of the unaffected unit; we need only obtain any required approvals from the holders of the affected units.

Modification with Consent of Holders

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the following provisions will apply to any units we issue pursuant to this prospectus. We may not amend any particular unit or a unit agreement with respect to any particular unit unless we obtain the consent of the holder of that unit, if the amendment would:

impair any right of the holder to exercise or enforce any right under a security included in the unit if the terms of that security require the consent of the holder to any changes that would impair the exercise or enforcement of that right; or

reduce the percentage of outstanding units or any series or class the consent of whose holders is required to amend that series or class, or the applicable unit agreement with respect to that series or class, as described below.

Any other change to a particular unit agreement and the units issued under that agreement would require the following approval:

if the change affects only the units of a particular series issued under that agreement, the change must be approved by the holders of a majority of the outstanding units of that series; or

if the change affects the units of more than one series issued under that agreement, it must be approved by the holders of a majority of all outstanding units of all series affected by the change, with the units of all the affected series voting together as one class for this purpose.

These provisions regarding changes with majority approval also apply to changes affecting any securities issued under a unit agreement, as the governing document.

In each case, the required approval must be given by written consent.

Unit Agreements Will Not Be Qualified Under Trust Indenture Act

No unit agreement will be qualified as an indenture, and no unit agent will be required to qualify as a trustee, under the Trust Indenture Act. Therefore, holders of units issued under unit agreements will not have the protections of the Trust Indenture Act with respect to their units.

Mergers and Similar Transactions Permitted; No Restrictive Covenants or Events of Default

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the following provisions will apply to any units we issue pursuant to this prospectus. The unit agreements will not restrict our ability to merge or consolidate with, or

sell our assets to, another corporation or other entity or to engage in any other transactions. If at any time we merge or consolidate with, or sell our assets substantially as an entirety to, another corporation or other entity, the successor entity will succeed to and assume our obligations under the unit agreements. We will then be relieved of any further obligation under these agreements.

The unit agreements will not include any restrictions on our ability to put liens on our assets, including our interests in our subsidiaries, nor will they restrict our ability to sell our assets. The unit agreements also will not provide for any events of default or remedies upon the occurrence of any events of default.

Table of Contents

Governing Law

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the following provisions will apply to any units we issue pursuant to this prospectus. The unit agreements and the units will be governed by New York law.

Form, Exchange and Transfer

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the following provisions will apply to any units we issue pursuant to this prospectus. We will issue each unit in global that is, book-entry form only. Units in book-entry form will be represented by a global security registered in the name of a depository, which will be the holder of all the units represented by the global security. Those who own beneficial interests in a unit will do so through participants in the depository's system, and the rights of these indirect owners will be governed solely by the applicable procedures of the depository and its participants. We describe book-entry securities below under Legal Ownership and Book-Entry Issuance.

In addition, we will issue each unit in registered form, unless we say otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement. Bearer securities would be subject to special provisions, as we describe below under Securities Issued in Bearer Form.

Each unit and all securities comprising the unit will be issued in the same form.

If we issue any units in registered, non-global form, the following will apply to them.

The units will be issued in the denominations stated in the applicable prospectus supplement. Holders may exchange their units for units of smaller denominations or combined into fewer units of larger denominations, as long as the total amount is not changed.

Holders may exchange or transfer their units at the office of the unit agent. Holders may also replace lost, stolen, destroyed or mutilated units at that office. We may appoint another entity to perform these functions or perform them ourselves.

Holders will not be required to pay a service charge to transfer or exchange their units, but they may be required to pay for any tax or other governmental charge associated with the transfer or exchange. The transfer or exchange, and any replacement, will be made only if our transfer agent is satisfied with the holder's proof of legal ownership. The transfer agent may also require an indemnity before replacing any units.

If we have the right to redeem, accelerate or settle any units before their maturity, and we exercise our right as to less than all those units or other securities, we may block the exchange or transfer of those units during the period beginning 15 days before the day we mail the notice of exercise and ending on the day of that mailing, in order to freeze the list of holders to prepare the mailing. We may also refuse to register transfers of or exchange any unit selected for early settlement, except that we will continue to permit transfers and exchanges of the unsettled portion of any unit being partially settled. We may also block the transfer or exchange of any unit in this manner if the unit includes securities that are or may be selected for early

settlement.

Only the depositary will be entitled to transfer or exchange a unit in global form, since it will be the sole holder of the unit.

Payments and Notices

In making payments and giving notices with respect to our units, we will follow the procedures we plan to use with respect to our debt securities, where applicable.

Table of Contents

LEGAL OWNERSHIP AND BOOK-ENTRY ISSUANCE

We can issue securities in registered form or in the form of one or more global securities. We describe global securities in greater detail below. We refer to those persons who have securities registered in their own names on the books that we or any applicable depository or warrant agent maintain for this purpose as the holders of those securities. These persons are the legal holders of the securities. We refer to those persons who, indirectly through others, own beneficial interests in securities that are not registered in their own names, as indirect holders of those securities. As we discuss below, indirect holders are not legal holders, and investors in securities issued in book-entry form or in street name will be indirect holders.

Book-Entry Holders

Except as described below, we will issue securities in book-entry form only, as we will specify in the applicable prospectus supplement. This means securities may be represented by one or more global securities registered in the name of a financial institution that holds them as depository on behalf of other financial institutions that participate in the depository's book-entry system. These participating institutions, which are referred to as participants, in turn, hold beneficial interests in the securities on behalf of themselves or their customers.

Only the person in whose name a security is registered is recognized as the holder of that security. Global securities will be registered in the name of the depository or its participants. Consequently, for global securities, we will recognize only the depository as the holder of the securities, and we will make all payments on the securities to the depository. The depository passes along the payments it receives to its participants, which in turn pass the payments along to their customers who are the beneficial owners. The depository and its participants do so under agreements they have made with one another or with their customers; they are not obligated to do so under the terms of the securities.

As a result, investors in a book-entry security will not own securities directly. Instead, they will own beneficial interests in a global security, through a bank, broker or other financial institution that participates in the depository's book-entry system or holds an interest through a participant. As long as the securities are issued in global form, investors will be indirect holders, and not legal holders, of the securities.

Street Name Holders

We may terminate a global security or issue securities that are not issued in global form. In these cases, investors may choose to hold their securities in their own names or in street name. Securities held by an investor in street name would be registered in the name of a bank, broker or other financial institution that the investor chooses, and the investor would hold only a beneficial interest in those securities through an account he or she maintains at that institution.

For securities held in street name, we or any applicable depository will recognize only the intermediary banks, brokers and other financial institutions in whose names the securities are registered as the holders of those securities, and we or any such depository will make all payments on those securities to them. These institutions pass along the payments they receive to their customers who are the beneficial owners, but only because they agree to do so in their customer agreements or because they are legally required to do so. Investors who hold securities in street name will be indirect holders, not legal holders, of those securities.

Legal Holders

Our obligations, as well as the obligations of any applicable depositary or warrant agent or other third party employed by us or any of the foregoing, run only to the legal holders of the securities. We do not have obligations to investors who hold beneficial interests in global securities, in street name or by any other indirect

Table of Contents

means. This will be the case whether an investor chooses to be an indirect holder of a security or has no choice because we are issuing the securities only in global form.

For example, once we make a payment or give a notice to the holder, we have no further responsibility for the payment or notice even if that holder is required, under agreements with depository participants or customers or by law, to pass it along to the indirect holders but does not do so. Similarly, we may want to obtain the approval of the holders to amend an instrument defining the rights of security holders, to relieve us of the consequences of a breach or of our or its obligation to comply with a particular provision of such an instrument or for other purposes. In such an event, we would seek approval only from the legal holders, and not the indirect holders, of the securities. Whether and how the holders contact the indirect holders is up to the legal holders.

Special Considerations for Indirect Holders

If you hold securities through a bank, broker or other financial institution, either in book-entry form or in street name, you should check with your own institution to find out:

how it handles securities payments and notices;

whether it imposes fees or charges;

how it would handle a request for the holders' consent, if ever required;

whether and how you can instruct it to send you securities registered in your own name so you can be a holder, if that is permitted in the future;

how it would exercise rights under the securities if there were a default or other event triggering the need for holders to act to protect their interests; and

if the securities are in book-entry form, how the depository's rules and procedures will affect these matters.

Global Securities

A global security is a security that represents one or any other number of individual securities held by a depository. Generally, all securities represented by the same global securities will have the same terms.

Each security issued in book-entry form will be represented by a global security that we deposit with and register in the name of a financial institution or its nominee that we select. The financial institution that we select for this purpose is called the depository. Unless specified otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, The Depository Trust Company, New York, New York ("DTC"), will be the depository for all securities issued in book-entry form.

A global security may not be transferred to or registered in the name of anyone other than the depository, its nominee or a successor depository, unless special termination situations arise. We describe those situations below under "Special

Situations When a Global Security Will Be Terminated. As a result of these arrangements, the depositary, or its nominee, will be the sole registered owner and legal holder of all securities represented by a global security, and investors will be permitted to own only beneficial interests in a global security. Beneficial interests must be held by means of an account with a broker, bank or other financial institution that in turn has an account with the depositary or with another institution that does. Thus, an investor whose security is represented by a global security will not be a legal holder of the security, but only an indirect holder of a beneficial interest in the global security.

If the prospectus supplement for a particular security indicates that the security will be issued in global form only, then the security will be represented by a global security at all times unless and until the global security is terminated. If termination occurs, we may issue the securities through another book-entry clearing system or decide that the securities may no longer be held through any book-entry clearing system.

Table of Contents

Special Considerations for Global Securities

As an indirect holder, an investor's rights relating to a global security will be governed by the account rules of the investor's financial institution and of the depository, as well as general laws relating to securities transfers. We do not recognize an indirect holder as a legal holder of securities and instead deal only with the depository that holds the global security.

If securities are issued only in the form of a global security, an investor should be aware of the following:

An investor cannot cause the securities to be registered in his or her name, and cannot obtain non-global certificates for his or her interest in the securities, except in the special situations we describe below.

An investor will be an indirect holder and must look to his or her own bank or broker for payments on the securities and protection of his or her legal rights relating to the securities, as we describe above.

An investor may not be able to sell interests in the securities to some insurance companies and to other institutions that are required by law to own their securities in non-book-entry form.

An investor may not be able to pledge his or her interest in a global security in circumstances where certificates representing the securities must be delivered to the lender or other beneficiary of the pledge in order for the pledge to be effective.

The depository's policies, which may change from time to time, will govern payments, transfers, exchanges and other matters relating to an investor's interest in a global security. We and any applicable agent have no responsibility for any aspect of the depository's actions or for its records of ownership interests in a global security. We and any applicable agent also will not supervise the depository in any way.

The depository may, and we understand that DTC will, require that those who purchase and sell interests in the global security within its book-entry system use immediately available funds, and your broker or bank may require you to do so as well.

Financial institutions that participate in the depository's book-entry system, and through which an investor holds its interest in the global security, may also have their own policies affecting payments, notices and other matters relating to the securities.

There may be more than one financial intermediary in the chain of ownership for an investor. We do not monitor and are not responsible for the actions of any of those intermediaries.

Special Situations When A Global Security Will Be Terminated

In a few special situations described below, the global security will terminate, and interests in it will be exchanged for physical certificates representing those interests. After that exchange, the choice of whether to hold securities directly or in street name will be up to the investor. Investors must consult their own banks or brokers to find out how to have their interests in securities transferred to their own name, so that they will be direct holders. We have described the rights of holders and street name investors above.

The global security will terminate when the following special situations occur:

if the depositary notifies us that it is unwilling, unable or no longer qualified to continue as depositary for that global security and we do not appoint another institution to act as depositary within 90 days;

if we notify any applicable depositary or warrant agent that we wish to terminate that global security; or

if an event of default has occurred with regard to securities represented by that global security and has not been cured or waived.

Table of Contents

The applicable prospectus supplement may also list additional situations for terminating a global security that would apply only to the particular series of securities covered by the prospectus supplement. When a global security terminates, the depository, and not us or any applicable agent, is responsible for deciding the names of the institutions that will be the initial direct holders.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the securities covered by this prospectus directly to purchasers or through underwriters, broker-dealers or agents, who may receive compensation in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions from us. These discounts, concessions or commissions as to any particular underwriter, broker-dealer or agent may be in excess of those customary in the types of transactions involved. In addition, we may issue the securities as a dividend or distribution or in a subscription rights offering to our existing security holders.

The securities may be sold in one or more transactions at fixed prices, at prevailing market prices at the time of sale, at varying prices determined at the time of sale or at negotiated prices. These sales may be effected in transactions which may involve crosses or block transactions.

If underwriters are used in a primary offering of securities, such offered securities may be resold in one or more transactions:

on any national securities exchange or quotation service on which the preferred stock or the common stock may be listed or quoted at the time of sale, including, as of the date of this prospectus, the NASDAQ Capital Market in the case of the common stock;

in the over-the-counter market;

in transactions otherwise than on these exchanges or services or in the over-the-counter market; or

through the writing of options, whether the options are listed on an options exchange or otherwise. Each prospectus supplement will state the terms of the offering, including, but not limited to:

the names of any underwriters, dealers, or agents;

the public offering or purchase price of the securities and the net proceeds that we will receive from the sale;

any underwriting discounts and commissions or other items constituting underwriters' compensation;

any discounts, commissions, or fees allowed or paid to dealers or agents; and

any securities exchange on which the offered securities may be listed.

If we sell securities to underwriters, we will execute an underwriting agreement with them at the time of the sale and will name them in the applicable prospectus supplement. In connection with these sales, the underwriters may be deemed to have received compensation in the form of underwriting discounts and commissions. The underwriters also may receive commissions from purchasers of securities for whom they may act as agent. Unless we specify otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, the underwriters will not be obligated to purchase the securities unless the conditions set forth in the underwriting agreement are satisfied, and if the underwriters purchase any of the securities offered by such prospectus supplement, they will be required to purchase all of such offered securities. The underwriters may acquire the securities for their own account and may resell the securities from time to time in one or more transactions, including negotiated transactions, at a fixed public offering price or varying prices determined at the time of sale. The underwriters may sell the securities to or through dealers, and those dealers may receive discounts, concessions, or commissions from the underwriters as well as from the purchasers for whom they may act as agent.

Table of Contents

We may designate agents who agree to use their reasonable efforts to solicit purchasers for the period of their appointment or to sell securities on a continuing basis. We may also sell securities directly to one or more purchasers without using underwriters or agents.

Under agreements entered into with us, underwriters and agents may be entitled to indemnification by us against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, or to contribution for payments the underwriters or agents may be required to make. The underwriters, agents, and their affiliates may engage in financial or other business transactions with us and our subsidiaries in the ordinary course of business.

The aggregate proceeds to us from the sale of the securities will be the purchase price of the securities less discounts and commissions, if any.

In order to comply with the securities laws of certain states, if applicable, any securities covered by this prospectus must be sold in such jurisdictions only through registered or licensed brokers or dealers. In addition, in certain states securities may not be sold unless they have been registered or qualified for sale in the applicable state or an exemption from the registration or qualification requirement is available and is complied with.

In order to facilitate the offering of the securities, any underwriters may engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the price of the securities or any other securities the prices of which may be used to determine payments on such securities. Specifically, any underwriters may overallocate in connection with the offering, creating a short position for their own accounts. In addition, to cover overallocations or to stabilize the price of the securities or of any such other securities, the underwriters may bid for, and purchase, the securities or any such other securities in the open market. Finally, in any offering of the securities through a syndicate of underwriters, the underwriting syndicate may reclaim selling concessions allowed to an underwriter or a dealer for distributing the securities in the offering if the syndicate repurchases previously distributed securities in transactions to cover syndicate short positions, in stabilization transactions or otherwise. Any of these activities may stabilize or maintain the market price of the securities above independent market levels. Any such underwriters are not required to engage in these activities and may end any of these activities at any time.

The applicable prospectus supplement may provide that the original issue date for your securities may be more than three scheduled business days after the trade date for your securities. Accordingly, in such a case, if you wish to trade securities on any date prior to the third business day before the original issue date for your securities, you will be required, by virtue of the fact that your securities initially are expected to settle in more than three scheduled business days after the trade date for your securities, to make alternative settlement arrangements to prevent a failed settlement.

The securities may be new issues of securities and may have no established trading market. The securities may or may not be listed on a national securities exchange. We can make no assurance as to the liquidity of or the existence of trading markets for any of the securities.

In order to comply with the securities laws of some states, if applicable, the shares of common stock offered by this prospectus must be sold in such jurisdictions only through registered or licensed brokers or dealers. In addition, in some states the shares of common stock may not be sold unless they have been registered or qualified for sale in the applicable state or an exemption from the registration or qualification requirement is available and is complied with.

To the extent required, this prospectus may be amended or supplemented from time to time to describe a specific plan of distribution.

Transfer Agent

The transfer agent and registrar for Agenus common stock is American Stock Transfer & Trust Company. Its telephone number is (800) 937-5449.

Table of Contents

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the securities that may be offered hereby will be passed upon for us by Choate, Hall & Stewart LLP.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements of Agenus Inc., as of December 31, 2011 and 2010, and for each of the years in the three-year period ended December 31, 2011, and management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2011 have been incorporated by reference herein and in the registration statement in reliance upon the reports of KPMG LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, incorporated by reference herein, and upon the authority of said firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

Agenus Inc. (Agenus) is subject to the information requirements of the Exchange Act, and files annual, quarterly and special reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. You may read and copy any materials we file with the SEC at the Public Reference Room of the SEC at Room 1580, 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. You may obtain information on the operation of the Public Reference Room by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. In addition, we file many of our documents electronically with the SEC, and you may access those documents over the Internet. The SEC maintains a web site that contains reports, proxy and information statements and other information regarding issuers that file electronically with the SEC. The address of the SEC's website is <http://www.sec.gov>. Documents we have filed with the SEC are also available on our website through the investor link at www.agenusbio.com. Information contained on our web site does not constitute a part of this prospectus and is not incorporated by reference herein.

Table of Contents

19,335,653 Shares

Agenus Inc.

Common Stock

February 5, 2014

William Blair

Maxim Group LLC

H.C. Wainwright & Co., LLC

MLV & Co.