

SINOPEC SHANGHAI PETROCHEMICAL CO LTD

Form 20-F

April 30, 2013

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UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM 20-F

.. **REGISTRATION STATEMENT PURSUANT TO SECTION 12(b) OR (g) OF THE
SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934**

OR

x **ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE
SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934**

For the fiscal year ended December 31, 2012

OR

.. **TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 or 15(d) OF THE
SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934**

OR

.. **SHELL COMPANY REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15 (d) OF THE
SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934**

Date of event requiring this shell company report

For the transition period from to

Commission file number 1-12158

(Exact name of Registrant as specified in its charter)

Sinopec Shanghai Petrochemical Company Limited

(Translation of Registrant's name into English)

The People's Republic of China

(Jurisdiction of incorporation or organization)

No. 48 Jinyi Road, Jinshan District, Shanghai, PRC 200540

(Address of principal executive offices)

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(Name, Telephone, Email and/or Facsimile number and Address of Company Contact Person)

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Securities registered or to be registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act.

| Title of each class | Name of each exchange on which registered |
|--|--|
| American Depositary Shares, each representing 100 H Shares, par value RMB1.00 per Share | New York Stock Exchange |
| H Shares, par value RMB1.00 per Share | The Stock Exchange of Hong Kong Limited |

Securities registered or to be registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act.

None

(Title of Class)

Securities for which there is a reporting obligation pursuant to Section 15(d) of the Act.

None

(Title of Class)

Indicate the number of outstanding shares of each of the issuer's classes of capital or common stock as of the close of the period covered by the annual report.

2,330,000,000 H Shares, par value RMB1.00 per Share

4,870,000,000 domestic shares, par value RMB1.00 per Share

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act. Yes No

If this report is an annual or transition report, indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or (15) (d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. Yes No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days. Yes No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate Web site, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T (§232,405 of this chapter) during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit and post such files). Yes No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, or a non-accelerated filer. See definition of accelerated filer and large accelerated filer in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. (Check one):

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Large Accelerated Filer

Accelerated Filer

Non-Accelerated Filer

Indicate by check mark which basis of accounting the registrant has used to prepare the financial statements included in this filing:

U.S. GAAP

International Financial Reporting Standards as issued

Other

by the International Accounting Standards Board

If Other has been checked in response to the previous question, indicate by check mark which financial statement item the registrant has elected to follow. Item 17 Item 18

If this is an annual report, indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act). Yes No

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CAUTIONARY STATEMENT REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This annual report includes forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. All statements, other than statements of historical facts, included in this annual report that address activities, events or developments which we expect or anticipate will or may occur in the future are hereby identified as forward-looking statements for the purpose of the safe harbor provided by Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. The words such as believe, intend, expect, anticipate, project, estimate, predict, plan and similar expressions are also intended to identify forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements address, among others, such issues as:

amount and nature of future development,

future prices of and demand for our products,

future earnings and cash flow,

capital expansion programs,

future plans and capital expenditures,

expansion and other development trends of the petrochemical industry,

expected production or processing capacities, including expected rated capacities and primary distillation capacities, of units or facilities not yet in operation,

expansion and growth of our business and operations; and

our prospective operational and financial information.

These statements are based on assumptions and analyses made by us in light of our experience and our perception of historical trends, current conditions and expected future developments, as well as other factors we believe are appropriate in particular circumstances. However, whether actual results and developments will meet our expectations and predictions depends on a number of risks and uncertainties which could cause actual results to differ materially from our expectations, including the risks set forth in Item 3. Key Information Risk Factors and the following:

fluctuations in crude oil and natural gas prices,

fluctuations in prices of our products,

failures or delays in achieving production from development projects,

potential acquisitions and other business opportunities,

continued availability of capital and financing;

general economic, market and business conditions, including volatility in interest rates, changes in foreign exchange rates and volatility in commodity markets; and

other risks and factors beyond our control.

Consequently, all of the forward-looking statements made in this annual report are qualified by these cautionary statements and readers are cautioned not to place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements should be considered in light of the various important factors set forth above and elsewhere in this annual report. In addition, we cannot assure you that the actual results or developments anticipated by us will be realized or, even if substantially realized, that they will have the expected effect on us or our business or operations.

EXCHANGE RATES

Unless otherwise specified, references in this annual report to U.S. Dollars or U.S.\$ are to United States Dollars, references to HK dollars or HK\$ are to Hong Kong dollars and references to Renminbi or RMB are to Renminbi yuan, the legal tender currency of the PRC.

We publish our financial statements in Renminbi. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations from Renminbi to U.S. Dollars have been made at a rate of RMB6.2301 to U.S.\$1.00, the noon buying rate on December 31, 2012 as set forth in the H.10 statistical release of the U.S. Federal Reserve Board. We do not represent that Renminbi or US dollar amounts could be converted into U.S. Dollars or Renminbi, as the case may be, at any particular rate.

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CERTAIN TERMS AND CONVENTIONS

References to we or us or Company are references to Sinopec Shanghai Petrochemical Company Limited and our subsidiaries, unless the context requires otherwise. Before our formation, these references relate to the petrochemical businesses carried on by the Complex.

References to Sinopec Corp. are references to China Petroleum & Chemical Corporation, the controlling shareholder of the Company.

References to the Sinopec Group are references to China Petrochemical Corporation, the controlling company of Sinopec Corp.

References to the Complex are references to Shanghai Petrochemical Complex, our predecessor founded in 1972.

References to China or the PRC are references to The People's Republic of China which, for the purpose of this annual report and for geographical reference only, excludes Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan.

References to our A Shares are references to 720,000,000 of our domestic shares, par value RMB1.00 per share, which are ordinary shares subscribed for and traded exclusively on the Shanghai Stock Exchange by and between Chinese investors.

References to ADSs are references to our American Depositary Shares, which are listed and traded on the New York Stock Exchange. Each ADS represents 100 H Shares.

References to our domestic shares are references to all of our domestic shares, par value RMB1.00 per share, which are ordinary shares held by Chinese investors.

References to our H Shares are references to our overseas-listed foreign ordinary shares, par value RMB1.00 per share, which are listed and traded on the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong Limited (HKSE) under the number 338 .

Rated Capacity is the output capacity of a given production plant or, where appropriate, the throughput capacity, calculated by estimating the number of days in a year that the production plant is expected to operate, including downtime for regular maintenance, and multiplying that number by an amount equal to the plant optimal daily output or throughput, as the case may be.

All references to tons are to metric tons.

Unless otherwise noted, references to sales volume are to sales to entities other than us or our divisions and subsidiaries.

Table of Contents**PART I****ITEM 1. IDENTITY OF DIRECTORS, SENIOR MANAGEMENT AND ADVISORS.**

Not applicable.

ITEM 2. OFFER STATISTICS AND EXPECTED TIMETABLE.

Not applicable.

ITEM 3. KEY INFORMATION.**A. Selected Financial Data.**

Our selected consolidated statements of operations data (except for ADS data) and cash flows data for each of the years ended December 31, 2010, 2011 and 2012 and our selected consolidated balance sheets data as of December 31, 2011 and 2012 are derived from our consolidated financial statements included in Item 17. Financial Statements. Our selected consolidated statements of operations data and cash flows data for the years ended December 31, 2008 and 2009 and our consolidated balance sheets data as of December 31, 2008, 2009 and 2010 are derived from our consolidated financial statements not included in this annual report. Our selected consolidated financial data should be read in conjunction with our consolidated financial statements, and the notes thereto, and Item 5. Operating and Financial Review and Prospects. Our consolidated financial statements have been prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), as issued by the International Accounting Standards Board.

Selected Consolidated Financial Data**(in thousands, except per share and per ADS data)**

| | Years Ended December 31, | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | 2008 (RMB) | 2009 (RMB) | 2010 (RMB) | 2011 (RMB) | 2012 (RMB) |
| CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF OPERATIONS DATA | | | | | |
| Net sales: | | | | | |
| Synthetic fibers | 3,662,023 | 2,823,663 | 3,906,636 | 4,150,231 | 3,313,318 |
| Resins and plastics | 14,850,284 | 12,263,540 | 14,900,012 | 16,418,559 | 14,706,350 |
| Intermediate petrochemicals | 10,271,840 | 8,421,035 | 17,206,440 | 19,023,204 | 17,993,493 |
| Petroleum products | 27,552,859 | 18,917,890 | 28,733,890 | 37,350,244 | 38,301,388 |
| Trading of petrochemical products | 2,813,200 | 4,623,989 | 6,565,793 | 11,616,999 | 12,020,651 |
| Others | 179,565 | 295,147 | 783,111 | 950,416 | 882,074 |
| (Loss)/profit from operations | (7,820,762) | 2,019,978 | 2,963,594 | 1,059,824 | (1,772,446) |
| (Loss)/earnings before income tax | (8,017,936) | 2,163,011 | 3,529,878 | 1,296,706 | (2,016,473) |
| Net (loss)/income attributable to equity shareholders of the Company | (6,241,067) | 1,588,365 | 2,769,023 | 956,106 | (1,528,397) |
| Net income attributable to non-controlling interests | 36,717 | 64,471 | 25,358 | 30,416 | 23,255 |
| Basic (loss)/earnings per share(a) | (0.87) | 0.22 | 0.38 | 0.13 | (0.21) |
| Basic (loss)/earnings per ADS(a) | (86.68) | 22.06 | 38.46 | 13.28 | (21.23) |

(a)

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The calculation of earnings per share is based on the weighted average number of shares outstanding of 7,200,000,000 in each of 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012, respectively. Earnings per ADS are calculated on the basis that one ADS is equivalent to 100 H Shares.

| | Years Ended December 31, | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
| | (RMB) | (RMB) | (RMB) | (RMB) | (RMB) |
| CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS DATA | | | | | |
| Net cash (used in)/generated from operating activities | (3,986,490) | 3,346,890 | 3,973,719 | 2,219,994 | (2,066,385) |
| Capital expenditure | 1,511,072 | 2,120,292 | 1,356,845 | 3,481,235 | 4,259,859 |

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| | Years Ended December 31, | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | 2008 (RMB) | 2009 (RMB) | 2010 (RMB) | 2011 (RMB) | 2012 (RMB) |
| Net proceeds/ (repayment) related to corporate bonds | | 1,000,000 | | (1,000,000) | |
| Proceeds from loans and borrowings | 32,528,758 | 29,211,434 | 39,355,780 | 35,106,127 | 53,365,372 |
| Repayment of loans and borrowings | 27,377,610 | 31,849,620 | 42,631,344 | 32,791,261 | 46,779,614 |

| | Years Ended December 31, | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | 2008 (RMB) | 2009 (RMB) | 2010 (RMB) | 2011 (RMB) | 2012 (RMB) |

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEETS DATA

| | | | | | |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Current assets | 6,511,351 | 9,061,425 | 8,531,841 | 9,665,814 | 12,891,424 |
| Property, plant and equipment | 13,272,899 | 14,977,205 | 13,570,559 | 12,501,980 | 17,468,748 |
| Total assets | 27,667,066 | 30,039,902 | 28,697,535 | 30,718,865 | 36,462,546 |
| Short term debt(a) | 9,372,725 | 7,774,673 | 4,395,438 | 5,512,074 | 11,023,877 |
| Current liabilities | 13,342,720 | 14,304,925 | 10,573,225 | 12,271,832 | 18,927,257 |
| Long term debt (excluding current portion) | 429,021 | 304,258 | 175,000 | 160,050 | 1,231,340 |
| Total equity attributable to equity shareholders of the Company | 13,630,972 | 15,136,434 | 17,689,457 | 17,925,563 | 16,037,166 |

(a) Including corporate bonds and current portion of long term debt.

Dividends

The following table sets forth certain information concerning the dividends since January 1, 1994:

| Dividend Period | Dividend per Share |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| January 1, 1994-June 30, 1994 | RMB0.04 (U.S.\$0.0064) |
| July 1, 1994-December 31, 1994 | RMB0.085 (U.S.\$0.0136) |
| January 1, 1995-June 30, 1995 | RMB0.04 (U.S.\$0.0064) |
| July 1, 1995-December 31, 1995 | RMB0.09 (U.S.\$0.0144) |
| January 1, 1996-June 30, 1996 | RMB0.04 (U.S.\$0.0064) |
| July 1, 1996-December 31, 1996 | RMB0.08 (U.S.\$0.0128) |
| January 1, 1997-December 31, 1997 | RMB0.06 (U.S.\$0.0096) |
| January 1, 1998-December 31, 1998 | RMB0.03 (U.S.\$0.0048) |
| January 1, 1999-December 31, 1999 | RMB0.05 (U.S.\$0.0080) |
| January 1, 2000-December 31, 2000 | RMB0.06 (U.S.\$0.0096) |
| January 1, 2001-December 31, 2001 | No dividend |
| January 1, 2002-December 31, 2002 | RMB0.05 (U.S.\$0.0080) |
| January 1, 2003-December 31, 2003 | RMB0.08 (U.S.\$0.0128) |
| January 1, 2004-December 31, 2004 | RMB0.20 (U.S.\$0.0321) |
| January 1, 2005-December 31, 2005 | RMB0.10 (U.S.\$0.0161) |
| January 1, 2006-December 31, 2006 | RMB0.04 (U.S.\$0.0064) |
| January 1, 2007-December 31, 2007 | RMB0.09 (U.S.\$0.0144) |
| January 1, 2008-December 31, 2008 | No dividend |
| January 1, 2009-December 31, 2009 | RMB0.03 (U.S.\$0.0048) |
| January 1, 2010-December 31, 2010 | RMB0.10 (U.S.\$0.0161) |
| January 1, 2011-December 31, 2011 | RMB0.05 (U.S.\$0.0080) |
| January 1, 2012-December 31, 2012 | No dividend |

See also Item 8. Financial Information A. Consolidated Statements and Other Financial Information Dividend Policy.

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The Chinese government controls its foreign currency reserves in part through direct regulation of the conversion of Renminbi into foreign exchange and through restrictions on foreign trade. See [Item 10. Additional Information – D. Exchange Controls](#).

The following table sets forth information concerning exchange rates between Renminbi and U.S. Dollars for the periods indicated:

| Period | Noon Buying Rates (RMB/U.S.\$) | | | |
|---------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|--------|--------|
| | Period End | Average ⁽¹⁾ | High | Low |
| 2008 | 6.8225 | 6.9477 | 7.2946 | 6.7899 |
| 2009 | 6.8259 | 6.8307 | 6.8470 | 6.8176 |
| 2010 | 6.6000 | 6.7696 | 6.8330 | 6.6000 |
| 2011 | 6.2939 | 6.4630 | 6.6364 | 6.2939 |
| 2012 | 6.2301 | 6.3093 | 6.3879 | 6.2221 |
| October 2012 | 6.2372 | 6.2627 | 6.2877 | 6.2372 |
| November 2012 | 6.2265 | 6.2338 | 6.2454 | 6.2221 |
| December 2012 | 6.2301 | 6.2328 | 6.2502 | 6.2251 |
| January 2013 | 6.2186 | 6.2215 | 6.2303 | 6.2134 |
| February 2013 | 6.2213 | 6.2323 | 6.2438 | 6.2213 |
| March 2013 | 6.2108 | 6.2154 | 6.2246 | 6.2105 |

Source: The sources of the exchange rates are: (i) with respect to any period ending on or prior to December 31, 2008, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, and (ii) with respect to any period ending on or after January 1, 2009, the H.10 statistical release of the Federal Reserve Board.

Note: (1) Determined by averaging the rates on the last business day of each month during the respective period.

B. Capitalization and Indebtedness.

Not applicable.

C. Reasons for the Offer and Use of Proceeds.

Not applicable.

D. Risk Factors.

An investment in our ADSs involves significant risks. The risks and uncertainties described below are not the only ones we face. You should consider carefully all of the information in this annual report, including the risks and uncertainties described below and our consolidated financial statements and related notes, before making an investment in our ADSs. Any of the following risks could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations. In any such case, the market price of our ADSs could decline, and you may lose all or part of your investment.

Our operations may be adversely affected by the cyclical nature of the petroleum and petrochemical market and by the volatility of prices of crude oil and petrochemical products.

Most of our revenues are attributable to the sale of refined oil and petrochemical products, which have historically been cyclical and sensitive to the availability and price of raw materials and general economic conditions. Markets for many of our products are sensitive to changes in industry capacity and output levels, changes in regional and global economic conditions, the price and availability of substitute products and changes in consumer demand, which from time to time have had a significant impact on our product prices in the regional and global markets. Due to the decrease in tariff charges, the removal of other restrictions on importation and the Chinese government's gradual relaxation of its control of the allocation of products and pricing, many of our products have become increasingly vulnerable to the cyclical nature of regional and global petroleum and petrochemical markets, which may adversely affect our operations.

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We consume large amounts of crude oil to manufacture our products of which more than 90% is imported. In 2012, crude oil costs accounted for RMB55.54 billion, or 62.67% of our annual cost of sales. As a result, changes in crude oil prices can affect our profitability. In recent years, due to various reasons, the price of crude oil has fluctuated significantly. We cannot rule out the possibility of the occurrence of certain global emergencies which might disrupt our crude oil supply. We expect that the volatility and uncertainty of the prices of crude oil and petrochemical products will continue, and that increasing crude oil prices and declines in prices of petrochemical products may adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations.

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Some of our products are subject to government price controls, and we are not able to pass on all cost increases from rising crude oil prices through higher product prices.

We consume large amounts of crude oil to manufacture our products of which more than 90% is imported. We attempt to mitigate the effect of increased costs due to rising crude oil prices. However, our ability to pass on these increased costs to our customers is dependent on market conditions and government regulations. Given that the increase of the sales prices of our products may lag behind the increase of crude oil costs, we may fail to completely cover the increased costs by increasing our sales prices, particularly where government regulations restrict the prices of certain of our fuel products. In particular, gasoline, diesel and jet fuel, and liquefied petroleum gas are subject to government price controls at present. In 2010, 2011 and 2012, approximately 34.41%, 36.70% and 40.09% of our net sales were from such products subject to price controls. In 2012, the domestic prices of refined oil products were not brought into line with the prices of crude oil on the international markets in a timely manner due to various policy concerns, *e.g.*, the government's desire to control the high inflation rate in China, which resulted in a decline of RMB539.7 million of the operating profit of our refining business over the previous year. Although the current price-setting mechanism for refined petroleum products in China allows the Chinese government to adjust price in the PRC market when the average international crude oil price fluctuates beyond certain levels within a certain time period (see [Item 4. Information on the Company B. Business Overview Product Pricing](#)), the Chinese government still retains discretion as to whether or when to adjust the prices of the refined oil products. The Chinese government generally exercises certain price control over refined oil products once international crude oil prices experience a sustained rise or become significantly volatile. For instance, some of our fuel products are required to be sold to designated distributors (such as the subsidiaries of Sinopec Corp.). Because we cannot freely sell our fuel products to take advantage of opportunities for higher prices, we may not be able to fully cover increases in crude oil prices by increasing the sale prices of our products, which has had and will possibly continue to have a material adverse effect on our financial condition, results of operations and cash flows.

Our development and operation plans have significant capital expenditure and financing requirements, which are subject to a number of risks and uncertainties.

The petrochemical business is a capital intensive business. Our ability to maintain and increase our revenues, net income and cash flows depends upon continued capital spending. Our current business strategy contemplates capital expenditure for 2013 of approximately RMB2.6 billion (U.S.\$417.3 million), which will be provided through financing activities and use of our own capital. Our actual capital expenditures may vary significantly from these planned amounts, subject to our ability to generate sufficient cash flows from operations, investments and other factors that may be beyond our control. In addition, there can be no assurance as to whether, or at what cost, our capital projects will be completed or the success of these projects if completed.

As of March 31, 2013, we had an aggregate outstanding indebtedness of approximately RMB9.526 billion (U.S.\$1.529 billion). Most of our loans are with state-controlled banks in China and structured as short term debt obligations with payment due in one year or less. These banks have generally been willing to provide new short term loans while we pay off existing loans. Sinopec Corp., our controlling shareholder, did not provide any guarantee or credit support for our debt for the year ended December 31, 2012 and for the three-month period ended March 31, 2013.

Our ability to obtain external financing in the future and our ability to make timely repayments of our debt obligations are subject to a variety of uncertainties, including: our future results of operations, financial condition and cash flows; the condition of the economy in China and the condition of markets for our products; the cost of financing and the condition of financial markets; the issuance of relevant government approvals and other project risks associated with the development of infrastructure in China; and the continuing willingness of banks to provide new loans as we pay down existing debt.

While we anticipate that we will rely less on debt to finance capital expenditures and operations as the global economic outlook continues to improve, our business, results of operations and financial condition could be adversely affected if we fail to obtain sufficient funding for our operations or development plans.

We could face increasing competition.

Our principal market, Eastern China, which is comprised of Shanghai, Shandong, Jiangsu, Anhui, Zhejiang, Jiangxi and Fujian, has enjoyed stronger economic growth and a higher demand for petrochemical products than other regions of China. As a result, we believe that our competitors will try to expand their sales and build up their distribution networks in our principal market. We believe this will have an adverse impact on the production and sale of our major products. Moreover, Chinese private enterprises have gradually overcome technological and funding barriers to extend their business from the downstream processing sector to the upstream petrochemical field. These enterprises have advantages in many areas such as flexibility in operation costs, preferential policy treatments and regional presence, and may use these advantages to compete with us in our target market.

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We are controlled by Sinopec Corp., whose interests may not be aligned with yours.

As of March 31, 2013, Sinopec Corp. owned 55.56% of our shares. Accordingly, it has voting and management control over us, and its interests may be different from the interests of our other shareholders. Subject to our Articles of Association and applicable laws and regulations, Sinopec Corp. will be in a position to cause us to declare dividends, determine the outcome of corporate actions requiring shareholder approval or effect corporate transactions without the approval of the holders of the H shares and ADSs. Any such increase in our dividend payout would reduce funds available for reinvestment in our business and any such actions or transactions could adversely affect us or our minority shareholders. Sinopec Corp. may also experience changes in its own business strategy and policies. Although we are not currently aware of any specific changes, Sinopec Corp. may change its policies or practices toward us in ways that we cannot predict, with corresponding unpredictable consequences for our business. Additionally, Sinopec Corp. may leverage its controlling shareholder position to influence our decisions with regard to the manufacturing and operation, allocation of financial resources and appointment and removal of senior managements, which could adversely affect us or our minority shareholders.

We have also engaged from time to time and will continue to engage in a variety of transactions with Sinopec Corp., Sinopec Group, the controlling company of Sinopec Corp., and their various subsidiaries or affiliates which provide a number of services to us, including the supply of raw materials, product distribution and sales agency, project design and installment service, petrochemical industry related insurance and financial services. We also sell oil and petrochemical products to Sinopec Corp. and its affiliates. Our transactions with these companies are governed by a Mutual Product Supply and Sales Services Framework Agreement with Sinopec Corp. and a Comprehensive Services Framework Agreement with Sinopec Group, the terms of which were negotiated on an arm's length basis, see [Item 7. Related Party Transactions – B. Intercompany Service Agreements and Business-related Dealings](#). Our business and results of operations could be adversely affected if Sinopec Corp. or Sinopec Group refuses to engage in such transactions or if they seek to amend the contracts between the parties in a way adverse to us. In addition, Sinopec Corp. has interests in businesses which compete or are likely to compete, either directly or indirectly, with our businesses. Because Sinopec Corp. is our controlling shareholder and its interests may conflict with our own interests, Sinopec Corp. may take actions that favor itself over our interests.

Our business operations may be adversely affected by present or future environmental regulations.

We are subject to extensive environmental protection laws and regulations in China. These laws and regulations permit:

the imposition of fees and penalties for the discharge of waste substances;

the levy of payments and fines for damages for environmental offenses; and

the government to close or suspend any facility which fails to comply with orders and require it to correct or stop operations causing environmental damage.

Our production operations produce substantial amounts of waste materials (*i.e.*, waste water, waste gas and waste residue). In addition, our production and operations require permits that are subject to renewal, modification and revocation. At present, we believe that our operations substantially comply with all applicable Chinese environmental laws and regulations as they have been previously interpreted and enforced. The Chinese government (including the local governments), however, has moved, and may move further, toward the adoption of more regulations and more stringent environmental standards. Chinese national or local authorities may also apply more rigorous enforcement of such regulations which would require additional expenditures on environmental matters.

Our operations are exposed to risks relating to operating hazards and production safety and we have limited insurance coverage for resulting losses.

Our operations involve the handling and storage of explosives and other hazardous articles. In addition, our operations involve the use of heavy machinery, which involves inherent risks that cannot be entirely eliminated through our preventive efforts. As a result, we may encounter fires, explosions and other unexpected incidents during our operations, which may cause personal injuries or death, property damage, environmental damage, interruption of operations and reputational damages to us. Each of such incidents could have a material adverse impact on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

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We maintain a package of insurance coverage plan through Sinopec Group on our property, facilities and inventory. In addition, we maintain insurance policies for such assets as the engineering construction projects and products in transit with third-party's commercial insurance company. We do not carry any third party liability insurance to cover claims in respect of personal injury, property or environmental damage arising from accidents on our property or relating to our operations other than on our transportation vehicles. Our insurance coverage may not be sufficient to cover all the financial losses caused by the operating hazards. Resulting losses required to be compensated or otherwise paid by us due to such operating hazards that are not fully insured may have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

Our business may be limited or adversely affected by government regulations.

The Chinese central and local governments continue to exercise a certain degree of control over the petrochemical industry in China by, among other things:

mandating distribution channels for our fuel products;

setting allocations and pricing of certain resources, products and services;

assessing taxes and fees payable;

setting import and export quotas and procedures; and

setting safety, environmental and quality standards.

As a result, we may face significant constraints on our flexibility and ability to expand our business operations or to maximize our profitability. In addition, we have in the past benefited from favorable regulatory policies that have, for example, reduced the competition we face from illegal imports of petroleum products. Existing policies that favor our industry may change in the future and our business could be adversely affected by any such changes.

Our development plans may require regulatory approval.

We are currently engaged in a number of construction and expansion projects. Most of our projects are subject to governmental review and approval. The timing and cost of completion of these projects will depend on numerous factors, including approvals from relevant governmental authorities and general economic conditions in China.

While in general we attempt to obtain governmental approval as far in advance as practicable, we are unable to predict the timing and outcome of such governmental reviews and approvals. If any of our projects required for our future growth are not approved, or not approved on a timely basis, our results of operations and financial condition could be adversely affected.

China's entry into the World Trade Organization, or WTO, may significantly increase foreign competition in our lines of business.

China joined the WTO on December 11, 2001 and had committed to eliminate some tariff and non-tariff barriers to foreign competitions in the domestic petrochemical industry that benefited us in the past. In particular, China:

has reduced tariffs on imported petrochemical products that compete with ours;

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increased levels of permitted foreign investment in the domestic petrochemical industry, allowing foreign investors to own 100% of a domestic petrochemicals company from December 11, 2004;

has gradually relaxed restrictions on the import of crude oil by non-state owned companies;

has granted foreign-owned companies the right to import petrochemical products; and

has permitted foreign-owned companies to distribute and market fuel products in both retail and wholesale markets in China. As a result of these measures, we face increased competition from foreign companies and imports. In 2013, we expect the global financial crisis to continue to have a negative effect on the market for petrochemical products, and in turn our business. The petrochemical industry has experienced a slow recovery. In addition, competition for our products has increased, as many overseas companies have switched their focus to sales in China. In addition, tariff reductions could reduce our profit margins or otherwise negatively impact our revenue from certain products, including a small number of significant products. The Chinese government may also reduce the tariffs imposed on production equipment that we may import in the future.

Political and economic policies in China could affect our business in unpredictable ways.

The economy of China differs from the economies of most countries belonging to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development in a number of respects, including:

structure;

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level of government involvement;

level of development;

level of capital reinvestment;

control of foreign exchange; and

allocation of resources.

Before its adoption of reform and open-door policies beginning in 1978, China was primarily a planned economy. Since that time, the Chinese government has been reforming the Chinese economic system, and has also begun reforming the government structure. These reforms have resulted in significant economic growth and social progress. Although the Chinese government still owns a significant portion of the productive assets in China, economic reform policies since the late 1980s have emphasized autonomous enterprises and the utilization of market mechanisms. We expect that the Chinese government will continue these reforms, further reduce government intervention and rely more heavily on market mechanisms to allocate resources. Although we believe these reforms will have a positive effect on our overall long term development, we cannot predict whether changes to China's political, economic and social conditions, laws, regulations and policies will have any adverse effect on our current or future business or results of operations.

If the Chinese government changes current regulations that allow us to make payments in foreign currencies, we may be unable to obtain the foreign currency necessary for our business.

The Renminbi currently is not a freely convertible currency. We receive most of our revenue in Renminbi. A portion of our Renminbi revenue must be converted into other currencies to meet our foreign currency obligations. We have substantial requirements for foreign currencies, including:

debt service costs on foreign currency-denominated debt;

purchases of imported equipment;

payment of any cash dividends declared in respect of the H shares and the ADSs; and

import of crude oil and other materials.

Under existing foreign exchange regulations in China, we may undertake current account foreign exchange transactions, including the payment of dividends, without prior approval from the State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE) by producing commercial documents evidencing the foreign exchange transactions, provided that they are processed through Chinese banks licensed to engage in foreign exchange transactions. The Chinese government has stated publicly that it intends to eventually make the Renminbi freely convertible. However, uncertainty exists as to whether the Chinese government may restrict access to foreign currency for current account transactions if foreign currency becomes scarce in China.

Foreign exchange transactions under the capital account (international revenues and expenditures that increase or decrease debt or equity, including principal payments in respect of foreign currency-denominated obligations) continue to be subject to limitations and require the prior approval of the SAFE. These limitations could affect our ability to obtain foreign exchange through debt financing, or to make capital expenditures in foreign currency.

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If the Chinese government restricts our ability to make payments in foreign currency, we may be unable to obtain the foreign currency necessary for our business. In that case, our business may be materially adversely affected, and we may default on our obligations.

The change of currency policy and the fluctuation of Renminbi might adversely affect our business and operation results.

The exchange rate between the Renminbi and the U.S. Dollar or other foreign currencies might fluctuate and be affected by the change in Chinese political and economic conditions. In July 2005, the Chinese government changed its policy of pegging the Renminbi to the U.S. Dollar. Under the new policy, the Renminbi is permitted to fluctuate within a narrow and managed band against a basket of certain foreign currencies. Since the adoption of this new policy, the value of the Renminbi has fluctuated daily within a narrow band against the U.S. Dollar. Nevertheless, the Chinese government continues to receive significant international pressures to further liberalize its currency policy which could result in China adjusting its currency policy further.

A small portion of our cash and cash equivalents is denominated in foreign currencies (including the U.S. Dollar). The appreciation in the value of Renminbi against foreign currencies (including the U.S. Dollar) may cause a decrease in the Renminbi value of our cash and cash equivalents that are denominated in foreign currencies. In addition, the appreciation of Renminbi may harm the exports of our downstream manufacturers, thus adversely affecting the market demand for our products.

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As most of our revenue is denominated in Renminbi, and most of our purchase of crude oil and some equipment and certain loan repayments are made in foreign currencies, any depreciation of the Renminbi would increase our cost and adversely affect our capacity of making profits. In addition, any depreciation of the Renminbi could adversely affect the value of the dividends of our H shares and ADSs, which we declare in Renminbi and pay in foreign currencies.

The rejection of the proposed share reforms required of companies listed on the Shanghai Stock Exchange may adversely affect our market image and our ability to effectuate future transactions such as public offerings on the Shanghai Stock Exchange.

Pursuant to regulations issued by the China Securities Regulatory Commission (the CSRC), we were required to obtain shareholder approval for and implement certain share reforms in 2006. Under the share reform plans proposed by holders of our non-circulating A Shares in October 2006 and December 2007, respectively, all non-circulating A Shares would be converted into circulating A Shares and may be sold publicly on the Shanghai Stock Exchange subject to any applicable lock-up period under the condition that holders of our non-circulating A Shares transfer a portion of their A Shares to holders of our circulating A Shares. However, holders of our circulating A Shares rejected both share reform plans for various reasons. We are uncertain as to when such share reforms will be completed. On January 8, 2007, the Shanghai Stock Exchange began to impose stricter regulations on its listed companies that are required but unable to complete the share reforms, including imposing a cap and a basket on the price fluctuation rate set at 5% daily, stricter trading information disclosure requirements that are similarly applicable to ST and *ST shares and more restrictions on future financing abilities. Since March 26, 2007, the Shanghai Stock Exchange has required us to make public announcements periodically regarding the status of our share reforms. In addition, the CSRC is expected to impose stricter scrutiny on any securities-related applications filed by publicly listed PRC companies that are required to but have failed to complete such share reforms, their major shareholders and ultimate beneficial owners. The failure to complete the proposed share reforms may adversely affect our market image, the environment of our operation and our ability to effectuate future transactions such as public offerings on the Shanghai Stock Exchange. The possibility that the CSRC and the Shanghai Stock Exchange will impose more restrictions cannot be eliminated.

Interpretation and enforcement of Chinese laws and regulations is uncertain.

The Chinese legal system is based on statutory law. Under this system, prior court decisions may be cited as persuasive authority, but do not have the binding effect of precedents. Since 1979, the Chinese government has been developing a comprehensive system of commercial laws and considerable progress has been made in the promulgation of laws and regulations dealing with economic matters, such as corporate organization and governance, foreign investment, commerce, taxation and trade. Because these laws, regulations and legal requirements are relatively new and not all accessible to the public and because prior court decisions have little precedential value, the interpretation and enforcement of these laws, regulations and legal requirements involve greater uncertainty than in other jurisdictions.

You may not enjoy shareholders' protections that you would be entitled to in other jurisdictions.

As most of our business is conducted in China, our operations are governed principally by the laws of China. Despite the ceaseless improvement of the PRC Company Law and Securities Law, Chinese legal provisions for the protection of shareholders' rights and access to information are different from those applicable to companies formed in the United States, Hong Kong, the United Kingdom and other developed countries or regions. You may not enjoy shareholders' protections under Chinese law that you would be entitled to in other jurisdictions.

Our Articles of Association require you to submit your disputes with us and other persons defined by our Articles of Associations regarding the Company's affairs to arbitration. You will have no legal right to a court proceeding.

Our Articles of Association require holders of our H shares or ADSs having a claim against, or a dispute with, us, our directors, supervisors, executive officers or a holder of our domestic shares relating to any rights or obligations conferred or imposed by our Articles of Association, the Chinese Company Law or other relevant Chinese laws or regulations relating to our affairs, to submit such claim or dispute to arbitration with the China International Economic and Trade Arbitration Commission or to the Hong Kong International Arbitration Center. Our Articles of Association further provide that any arbitration decisions with respect to such disputes or claims shall be final and binding on all parties. As a result, you will have no legal right to a court proceeding.

Currently, United States financial regulatory and law enforcement agencies, including but not limited to the SEC, PCAOB, U.S. Department of Justice and NYSE, have limited or may have no ability to conduct investigations within the PRC concerning the Company, its officers, directors, auditors, market research services or other professional services or experts based in the PRC.

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The Company's operations and assets are physically located in the PRC. The PRC has limited or no agreements in place to facilitate cooperation with the SEC Division of Enforcement and other U.S. regulatory agencies charged with protecting investors for investigations within its jurisdiction. This may result in U.S. financial regulators, including but not limited to the SEC, the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB) and the U.S. Department of Justice, having limited access to the Company's books, records, testimony, on-site investigations of operations, subpoena power and other investigative actions, including those stemming from investor tips, complaints and referrals. Such limitations may result in the Company's investors receiving less protection from U.S. regulators than investors in companies operating in other jurisdictions because the Company and its service providers, particularly its auditors, are subject to less scrutiny than companies and service providers that are subject to regular investigations and inspections by U.S. regulators. For example, the PCAOB is currently unable to conduct independent regulatory inspections of PCAOB-registered firms' audit work related to a company's operations in China where the documentation of the audit work is located in China. As a result, our investors may be deprived of the benefits of the PCAOB's oversight of our independent registered public accounting firm through such inspections.

We may be or become a passive foreign investment company, which could result in adverse U.S. federal income tax consequences to U.S. investors.

We may be classified as a passive foreign investment company (PFIC) by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Such characterization could result in adverse U.S. federal income tax consequences to you if you are a U.S. investor. For example, U.S. investors who owned our H Shares or ADSs during any taxable year in which we were a PFIC generally are subject to increased U.S. tax liabilities and reporting requirements for that taxable year and all succeeding years, regardless of whether we actually continue to be a PFIC, although a shareholder election to terminate such deemed PFIC status may be available in certain circumstances. We do not intend to provide information to permit you to make a qualified electing fund election to avoid the adverse U.S. tax consequences described above. The same adverse U.S. federal income tax consequences will apply to U.S. investors who acquire our H Shares or ADSs during the current taxable year or any subsequent taxable year if we are treated as a PFIC for that taxable year.

The determination of whether or not we are a PFIC is made on an annual basis and depends on the composition of our income and assets, from time to time. Specifically, we will be classified as a PFIC for U.S. tax purposes for a taxable year if either (a) 75% or more of our gross income for such taxable year is passive income, or (b) 50% or more of the average percentage of our assets during such taxable year either produce passive income or are held for the production of passive income. For such purposes, if we directly or indirectly own 25% or more of the shares of another corporation, we generally will be treated as if we (a) held directly a proportionate share of the other corporation's assets, and (b) received directly a proportionate share of the other corporation's income.

We do not believe that we are currently a PFIC. However, because the PFIC determination is highly fact intensive and made at the end of each taxable year, there can be no assurance that we will not be a PFIC for the current or any future taxable year or that the IRS will not challenge our determination concerning our PFIC status. For further discussion of the adverse U.S. federal income tax consequences of our possible classification as a PFIC, see Item 10. Additional Information E. Taxation U.S. Taxation.

We have in the past sourced a small portion of crude oil from Iran that may be targeted by economic sanctions under relevant U.S. laws, and if such activities are determined by the U.S. governmental authorities as sanctionable activities, we could be sanctioned or otherwise penalized.

The United States has adopted a number of measures since 1996 that provide for the possible imposition of sanctions against non-U.S. companies engaged in certain activities in and with Iran in the energy sector, including the Executive Order 13622 issued on July 30, 2012 and the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (ITRSHRA) issued on August 10, 2012. The sanctionable activities include certain investments, the provision of goods, services, technology, or support that could contribute to the development of petroleum and petrochemical resources or the production of refined petroleum products in Iran, the exportation of refined petroleum products to Iran, the transportation of crude oil from Iran, or the engagement in a significant transaction for the purchase or acquisition of petroleum or petroleum products from Iran.

We have sourced a small portion of our crude oil from Iran in the past through a wholly-owned subsidiary of Sinopec Corp., our controlling shareholder, and we may continue to purchase crude oil from Iran. In addition, Sinopec Corp., our current controlling shareholder, and Sinopec Group, the controlling shareholder of Sinopec Corp., have engaged in operations in or purchasing crude oil sourced from Iran and may continue to do so in the future. Furthermore, we have no control over the activities of Sinopec Group or Sinopec Corp. in connection with any activities that they may conduct in Iran.

If our purchases of crude oil from Iran are determined to be sanctionable activities by the U.S. President and/or the relevant U.S. governmental authorities, we may be subject to one or more of the twelve sanctions options available under the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (as amended) and the ITRSHRA, which include restrictions on bank financing, outright blocking of the Company's property within U.S. jurisdiction and prohibition of U.S. persons from investing or purchasing a significant amount of equity or debt instruments of the Company. In addition, many

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states in the United States have adopted legislation requiring state pension funds to divest themselves of securities in any company with active business operations in Iran. We cannot assure that we or any of our affiliates will not be sanctioned by the U.S. President and/or the relevant U.S. governmental authorities in light of the activities by us or our affiliates in Iran. The imposition of any such sanctions on us or our affiliates will have a negative impact on our business, reputation or stock price.

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Sinopec Group, the controlling shareholder of Sinopec Corp. which is our current controlling shareholder, or its affiliates' current or future activities in certain countries are the subject of economic sanctions under relevant U.S. laws and could result in negative media and investor attention to us and possible imposition of sanctions on Sinopec Group, which could materially and adversely affect our shareholders

Sinopec Group undertakes, from time to time and without our involvement, overseas investments and operations in the oil and gas industry, including the exploration and production of oil and gas, refining and Liquefied Natural Gas, or LNG, projects. Sinopec Group's overseas asset portfolio includes oil and gas development projects in Iran, Sudan and Syria, which countries are on the sanction list published and administered by the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control, or OFAC. We cannot predict the interpretation or implementation of government policy at the U.S. federal, state or local levels with respect to any current or future activities by Sinopec Group or its affiliates in countries or with individuals or entities that are the subject of U.S. sanctions. Similarly, we cannot predict whether U.S. sanctions will be further tightened, or the impact that such actions may have on Sinopec Group. It is possible that the United States could subject Sinopec Group to sanctions due to these activities. Certain U.S. state and local governments and colleges have restrictions on the investment of public funds or endowment funds, respectively, in companies that are members of corporate groups with activities in certain countries that are the subject of U.S. sanctions. These investors may not wish to invest, and may divest their investment, in us because of our relationship with Sinopec Group and its investments and activities in those OFAC sanctioned countries. It is possible that, as a result of activities by Sinopec Group or its affiliates in countries that are the subject of U.S. sanctions, we may be subject to negative media or investor attention, which may distract management, consume internal resources and affect investors' perception of our company.

Further, the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (as amended) authorizes the imposition of sanctions on companies that engage in certain activities in and with Iran, especially in Iran's energy sector. It is possible that Sinopec Group or its affiliates engage in activities that are targeted for sanction purposes by ISA. It is possible that the U.S. government would determine, and in the event that the U.S. government so determines, that Sinopec Group, or an entity it owns or controls, had engaged in any such activities and if the most extreme sanction under the ISA, blocking, were applied to Sinopec Group's property, including controlled subsidiaries, Sinopec Group could be prohibited from engaging in business activities in the United States or with U.S. individuals or entities, and U.S. transactions in our securities and distributions to U.S. individuals and entities with respect to our securities could also be prohibited.

ITEM 4. INFORMATION ON THE COMPANY.

A. History and Development of the Company

General Information

We were established in the People's Republic of China as a joint stock limited company under the Chinese Company Law on June 29, 1993 as Shanghai Petrochemical Company Limited. On October 12, 2000, we changed our name to Sinopec Shanghai Petrochemical Company Limited. Our registered office is at No. 48 Jinyi Road, Jinshan District, Shanghai, China 200540. Our telephone number there is (86-21) 5794-1941.

Our Predecessor

Our predecessor, Shanghai Petrochemical Complex (the "Complex"), was founded in 1972 as one of the first large scale Chinese petrochemical enterprises using advanced imported technology and equipment. Prior to June 29, 1993, the Complex was wholly-owned by Sinopec Group, at the time a ministerial level enterprise (before its restructuring in 1998, Sinopec). The Complex's location was chosen because of accessibility by water and land transportation to Shanghai, a major industrial city of China, and the availability of reclaimable land. The Complex was initially under the administration of the Ministry of Textile Industry and in 1983 was placed under the administration of Sinopec.

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Construction Projects

The Complex and we, as its successor, have completed five major stages of construction. The first stage of construction (1972-1976) included reclamation of land and the installation of 18 production units. The second stage of construction (1980-1986) increased the Complex's capacity for processing crude oil and doubled its capacity for synthetic fiber production. The third stage of construction (1987-1992) primarily consisted of the installation of a 300,000 ton Rated Capacity ethylene unit, an additional crude oil refining unit and other units for the production of petrochemical products. The third stage of construction completed our transition from a synthetic fiber producer to a highly integrated producer of a wide variety of petrochemical products. The fourth stage of construction (2000-2002) mainly included the 700,000 ton Ethylene Expansion Project and Coal-Fired Power Plant Expansion Project. The fifth stage of construction (2003-2009) was mainly designed to optimize our structure and realize sustainable development, and mainly included 3,300,000t/a diesel hydrogenation unit, 1,200,000t/a delayed coking unit and other projects implemented for removing bottlenecks in refinery, the building of new 600,000t/a PX hydrocarbon complex unit, 150,000t/a C5 segregation unit, 380,000t/a ethane unit, etc.

The Company commenced the sixth stage of construction in 2010 (Phase 6 Project) and completed in December 2012. The purpose of the Phase 6 Project was to improve the Company's overall industrial structure and core competitiveness and its capability of maintaining sustainable developments. The Phase 6 Project focused on utilizing intensively natural resources and forming a complete set of facilities in accordance with the fundamental industrial model of integrating oil refining and petrochemical. It was expected to further achieve the reform of oil refining and to strengthen and expand the Company's core business while continuing to explore the development of fine chemicals and products with high added value. Phase 6 Project consisted of refining capacity expansion projects, technology development and fine chemicals projects, see [Item 4. Information on the Company – D. Property, Plant and Equipment – Capital Expansion Program](#).

Over the past 39 years, the Company has established its own infrastructure system to support its production needs. The Company has its own facilities to supply water, electricity, steam and other utilities and to treat waste water, as well as ocean and inland waterway wharfs and railroad and road transportation facilities.

Our Initial Public Offering and Listing

We were established as a subsidiary of Sinopec on June 29, 1993. In preparation for our initial public offering of ordinary shares, all assets and liabilities of the Complex were transferred either to us or to Sinopec Shanghai Jinshan Industrial Company (JI), a separate subsidiary of Sinopec. The Complex's non-core businesses and assets, such as housing, stores, schools, transportation and medical services were transferred to JI. The Complex's core business and assets was transferred to us. The Complex then ceased to exist as a legal entity. In 1998, Sinopec was restructured into a limited liability company under the name of China Petrochemical Corporation (Sinopec Group). On February 25, 2000, Sinopec Group transferred its interest in us to its subsidiary, Sinopec Corp. In 1997, JI was restructured and its subsidiaries were either transferred to Sinopec or Shanghai Jinshan District. Sinopec Group now provides community services to us that were formerly provided by JI.

Our H Shares were listed on the HKSE on July 26, 1993. Our ADSs, each representing 100 H Shares, are listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE). Our A Shares are listed on the Shanghai Stock Exchange. We were the first Chinese joint stock limited company to have securities concurrently traded in Hong Kong, the United States and China. On November 8, 1993, our A Shares were included in the Shanghai Stock Exchange Stock Index.

Description of Principal Capital Expenditures and Divestitures

In the fourth quarter of 2001, we established Secco, together with BP Chemicals East China Investments Limited (BP) and Sinopec Corp. We own 20%, while BP and Sinopec Corp. own 50% and 30% of the equity interest of Secco, respectively. Secco was established to build and operate a 900,000 ton Rated Capacity ethylene petrochemical manufacturing facility in order to manufacture and market ethylene, polyethylene, styrene, polystyrene, propylene, acrylonitrile, polypropylene, butadiene, aromatics and by-products; provide related after-sales services and technical advice with respect to such petrochemical products and by products; and engage in polymers application development. Secco completed construction in 2005. Secco's registered capital is U.S.\$901,440,964 of which we were obligated to contribute an amount in Renminbi equivalent to U.S.\$180,287,952 prior to the end of 2005. As of December 31, 2005, we had contributed such amount in full. For a description of capital expansion projects related to our facilities, see [Item 4. Information on the Company – D. Property, Plant and Equipment – Capital Expansion Program](#).

B. Business Overview

We are one of the largest petrochemical companies in China based on 2012 net sales and ethylene production. Our highly integrated petrochemical complex processes crude oil into a broad range of products in four major product areas:

synthetic fibers,

resins and plastics,

intermediate petrochemicals, and

petroleum products.

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Based on 2012 sales volumes, we are a leading Chinese producer of synthetic fibers and resins and plastic products. We believe that we are also a leading competitor in sales of petroleum products and intermediate petrochemicals in our regional markets.

Our net sales by business lines as a percentage of total net sales in each of 2010, 2011 and 2012 are summarized as follows:

Net Sales of RMB72,095.9 million in 2010

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Synthetic fibers | 5.42% |
| Resins and plastics | 20.67% |
| Intermediate petrochemicals | 23.87% |
| Petroleum products | 39.86% |
| Trading of petrochemical products | 9.11% |
| Others | 1.07% |
| Total | 100.00% |

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| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Synthetic fibers | 4.64% |
| Resins and plastics | 18.34% |
| Intermediate petrochemicals | 21.25% |
| Petroleum products | 41.73% |
| Trading of petrochemical products | 12.98% |
| Others | 1.06% |
| Total | 100.00% |

Net Sales of RMB87,217.3 million in 2012

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Synthetic fibers | 3.80% |
| Resins and plastics | 16.86% |
| Intermediate petrochemicals | 20.63% |
| Petroleum products | 43.92% |
| Trading of petrochemical products | 13.78% |
| Others | 1.01% |
| Total | 100.00% |

We derive a substantial portion of our revenues from customers in Eastern China (comprising Shanghai and its six neighboring provinces), an area that has experienced economic growth above the national average in recent years. We believe that we are well-positioned to take advantage of opportunities which may arise through the economic growth of China generally and in this area in particular. Shown by geographic region and exports, our net sales by business lines as a percentage of total net sales for each of 2010, 2011 and 2012 are as follows:

2010 Net Sales by Region (%)

| | Eastern China | Other parts of China | Exports |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Synthetic fibers | 85.05 | 14.08 | 0.87 |
| Resins and plastics | 87.20 | 12.80 | 0 |
| Intermediate petrochemicals | 83.07 | 14.08 | 2.85 |
| Petroleum products | 99.55 | 0.45 | 0 |
| Trading of petrochemical products | 88.90 | 0.36 | 10.74 |
| Total net sales | 92.32 | 7.01 | 0.67 |

2011 Net Sales by Region (%)

approximately \$30 million to conduct clinical trials and associated activities in connection with our therapeutic candidates in our neuromuscular program; and

the remainder for general and administrative expenses (including personnel-related costs), potential future development programs, capital expenditures and working capital and other general corporate purposes, including

potential acquisitions of rights to additional programs from third parties.

The expected use of the net proceeds from this offering represents our intentions based upon our current plans and business conditions, which could change in the future as our plans and business conditions evolve. The amounts and timing of our actual expenditures depend on numerous factors, including the ongoing status of and results from our clinical trials and other studies, the progress of our preclinical development efforts and any unforeseen cash needs. As a result, our management will have broad discretion in applying the net proceeds of this offering. Although we may use a portion of the net proceeds of this offering for the acquisition or licensing, as the case may be, of product candidates, technologies, compounds, other assets or complementary businesses, we have no current understandings, agreements or commitments to do so.

Pending the use of the proceeds from this offering, we intend to invest the net proceeds in short-term, interest-bearing, investment-grade securities, certificates of deposit or government securities.

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Table of Contents**Price range of our common stock**

Our common stock is traded on the NASDAQ Global Market under the symbol "XLRN". The following table summarizes the high and low sale prices for our common stock for the fiscal periods indicated as reported on the NASDAQ Global Market.

| | High | Low |
|----------------|-------------|------------|
| 2015 | | |
| First Quarter | \$ 43.00 | \$ 35.11 |
| Second Quarter | \$ 37.90 | \$ 26.94 |
| Third Quarter | \$ 36.31 | \$ 20.00 |
| Fourth Quarter | \$ 50.86 | \$ 21.93 |
| 2016 | | |
| First Quarter | \$ 48.05 | \$ 22.67 |
| Second Quarter | \$ 37.67 | \$ 25.49 |
| Third Quarter | \$ 40.70 | \$ 28.29 |
| Fourth Quarter | \$ 41.69 | \$ 24.77 |
| 2017 | | |
| First Quarter | \$ 32.57 | \$ 23.07 |
| Second Quarter | \$ 34.91 | \$ 24.37 |

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Dividend policy

We have never declared or paid cash dividends on our common stock. We currently intend to retain all available funds and any future earnings, if any, to fund the development and expansion of our business and we do not anticipate paying any cash dividends in the foreseeable future. In addition, any future debt financing arrangement may contain terms prohibiting or limiting the amount of dividends that may be declared or paid on our common stock. Any future determination to pay dividends will be made at the discretion of our board of directors.

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Table of Contents**Capitalization**

The following table sets forth our cash and cash equivalents and investments and capitalization as of June 30, 2017:

On an actual basis; and

On an as adjusted basis to reflect the receipt of the estimated net proceeds from the sale of shares of our common stock offered in this offering, after deducting underwriting discounts and commissions and estimated offering expenses payable by us.

You should read the following table along with our financial statements and the accompanying notes to those statements and other financial information included or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus.

| (in thousands, except share and per share data) | As of June 30, 2017 | |
|--|---------------------|-------------|
| | Actual | As adjusted |
| Cash, cash equivalents and short-term and long-term investments | \$ 194,038 | \$ 381,638 |
| Warrants to purchase common stock | \$ 1,516 | \$ 1,516 |
| Stockholders' equity: | | |
| Undesignated preferred stock, \$0.001 par value; 25,000,000 shares authorized and no shares issued or outstanding | | |
| Common stock, \$0.001 par value; 175,000,000 share authorized actual and as adjusted; 38,636,505 shares issued and outstanding, actual, and 44,041,911 shares issued and | 39 | 44 |

| | | |
|---|------------|------------|
| outstanding, as adjusted(1) | | |
| Additional paid-in capital | 608,493 | 796,088 |
| Accumulated deficit | (419,646) | (419,646) |
| Accumulated other comprehensive loss | (354) | (354) |
| Total stockholders' equity | 188,532 | 376,132 |
| Total capitalization | \$ 190,048 | \$ 377,648 |

(1) The actual and as adjusted common stock information excludes (i) 3,541,003 shares of common stock issuable upon the exercise of stock options outstanding as of June 30, 2017 at a weighted-average exercise price of \$28.57 per share, (ii) 63,296 shares of common stock issuable upon the exercise of warrants to purchase shares of common stock outstanding as of June 30, 2017 at a weighted-average exercise price of \$5.94 per share, (iii) 809,599 shares of common stock issuable upon vesting of outstanding restricted stock units as of June 30, 2017, (iv) 2,862,062 shares of common stock reserved for future issuance under our 2013 Equity Incentive Plan as of June 30, 2017, and (v) 199,739 shares of common stock reserved for future issuance under our Employee Stock Purchase Plan as of June 30, 2017.

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Table of Contents**Dilution**

If you invest in our common stock, your interest will be diluted to the extent of the difference between the price per share you pay in this offering and the net tangible book value per share of our common stock immediately after this offering. Our net tangible book value of our common stock as of June 30, 2017 was approximately \$188.5 million, or approximately \$4.88 per share of common stock based upon 38,636,505 shares outstanding as of June 30, 2017. Net tangible book value per share is equal to our total tangible assets, less our total liabilities, divided by the total number of shares outstanding.

After giving effect to the sale by us of 5,405,406 shares of common stock at a price of \$37.00 per share, and after deducting underwriting discounts and commissions and estimated offering expenses payable by us, our as adjusted net tangible book value as of June 30, 2017 would have been approximately \$376.1 million, or \$8.54 per share. This would represent an immediate increase in net tangible book value of \$3.66 per share to our existing stockholders and an immediate dilution in net tangible book value of \$28.46 per share to new investors purchasing our common stock in this offering at the public offering price. The following table illustrates this calculation on a per share basis:

| | | |
|---|----|-------|
| Offering price per share | \$ | 37.00 |
| Net tangible book value per share as of June 30, 2017 | \$ | 4.88 |
| Increase in net tangible book value per share attributable to the offering | | 3.66 |
| As adjusted net tangible book value per share after giving effect to the offering | \$ | 8.54 |
| Dilution in net tangible book value per share to new investors in the offering | \$ | 28.46 |

This discussion of dilution, and the table quantifying it, assumes no exercise of any outstanding options to purchase shares of our common stock or warrants and no vesting of restricted stock units as of June 30, 2017 and no issuance of up to 810,810 shares of common stock that we may sell to the underwriters upon exercise of their option to purchase additional shares. The exercise of outstanding options or warrants to purchase shares of our common stock having an exercise price less than the public offering price, or the vesting of restricted stock units, would increase the dilutive effect to new investors.

If the underwriters exercise their option to purchase 810,810 shares of common stock in full, the pro forma as adjusted net tangible book value after this offering would be approximately \$9.01 per share, representing an increase in net tangible book value of approximately \$4.13 per share to existing stockholders and immediate dilution in net tangible book value of approximately \$27.99 per share to investors purchasing our common stock in this offering at the public offering price.

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**Material United States federal
income tax considerations for
Non-U.S. Holders**

The following is a summary of the material U.S. federal income and estate tax considerations relating to the purchase, ownership and disposition of our common stock by Non-U.S. Holders (defined below). This summary does not purport to be a complete analysis of all the potential tax considerations relevant to Non-U.S. Holders of our common stock. This summary is based upon the Internal Revenue Code, the Treasury regulations promulgated or proposed thereunder and administrative and judicial interpretations thereof, all as of the date hereof and all of which are subject to change at any time, possibly on a retroactive basis.

This summary assumes that shares of our common stock are held as "capital assets" within the meaning of Section 1221 of the Internal Revenue Code (generally, property held for investment). This summary does not purport to deal with all aspects of U.S. federal income and estate taxation that might be relevant to particular Non-U.S. Holders in light of their particular investment circumstances or status, nor does it address specific tax considerations that may be relevant to particular persons (including, for example, financial institutions, broker-dealers, insurance companies, partnerships or other pass-through entities, certain U.S. expatriates, tax-exempt organizations, pension plans, "controlled foreign corporations", "passive foreign investment companies", corporations that accumulate earnings to avoid U.S. federal income tax, persons in special situations, such as those who have elected to mark securities to market or those who hold common stock as part of a straddle, hedge, conversion transaction, synthetic security or other integrated investment, or holders subject to the alternative minimum or the 3.8% Medicare tax on net investment income). In addition, except as explicitly addressed herein with respect to estate tax, this summary does not address estate and gift tax considerations or considerations under the tax laws of any state, local or non-U.S. jurisdiction.

For purposes of this summary, a "Non-U.S. Holder" means a beneficial owner of common stock that for U.S. federal income tax purposes is not classified as a partnership and is not:

an individual who is a citizen or resident of the United States;

a corporation or any other organization taxable as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes, created or organized in or under the laws of the United States, any state thereof or the

District of Columbia;

an estate, the income of which is included in gross income for U.S. federal income tax purposes regardless of its source; or

a trust if (1) a U.S. court is able to exercise primary supervision over the trust's administration and one or more U.S. persons have the authority to control all of the trust's substantial decisions or (2) the trust has a valid election in effect under applicable U.S. Treasury regulations to be treated as a U.S. person.

If an entity that is classified as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes holds our common stock, the tax treatment of persons treated as its partners for U.S. federal income tax purposes will generally depend upon the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. Partnerships and other entities that are classified as partnerships for U.S. federal income tax purposes and persons holding our common stock through a partnership or other entity classified as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes are urged to consult their own tax advisors.

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There can be no assurance that the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) will not challenge one or more of the tax consequences described herein, and we have not obtained, nor do we intend to obtain a ruling from the IRS with respect to the U.S. federal income or estate tax consequences to a Non-U.S. Holder of the purchase, ownership or disposition of our common stock.

THIS SUMMARY IS FOR GENERAL INFORMATION ONLY AND IS NOT INTENDED TO BE TAX ADVICE. NON-U.S. HOLDERS ARE URGED TO CONSULT THEIR TAX ADVISORS CONCERNING THE U.S. FEDERAL INCOME AND ESTATE TAXATION, STATE, LOCAL AND NON-U.S. TAXATION AND OTHER TAX CONSEQUENCES TO THEM OF THE PURCHASE, OWNERSHIP AND DISPOSITION OF OUR COMMON STOCK.

Distributions on our common stock

As discussed under "Dividend Policy" above, we do not currently expect to pay dividends. In the event that we do make a distribution of cash or property with respect to our common stock, any such distributions generally will constitute dividends for U.S. federal income tax purposes to the extent of our current and accumulated earnings and profits, if any, as determined under U.S. federal income tax principles. If a distribution exceeds our current and accumulated earnings and profits, the excess will constitute a return of capital and will first reduce the holder's adjusted tax basis in our common stock, but not below zero. Any remaining excess will be treated as capital gain, subject to the tax treatment described below in "Gain on Sale, Exchange or Other Taxable Disposition of Our Common Stock". Any such distribution would also be subject to the discussion below under the section titled "Additional Withholding and Reporting Requirements".

Dividends paid to a Non-U.S. Holder generally will be subject to a 30% U.S. federal withholding tax unless such Non-U.S. Holder provides us or our agent, as the case may be, with the appropriate IRS Form W-8, such as:

IRS Form W-8BEN or W-8BEN-E (or successor form) certifying, under penalties of perjury, a reduction in withholding under an applicable income tax treaty, or

IRS Form W-8ECI (or successor form) certifying that a dividend paid on common stock is not subject to withholding tax because it is effectively connected with a trade or business in the United States of the Non-U.S. Holder (in which case such dividend generally will be subject to regular graduated U.S. tax rates as

described below).

The certification requirement described above must be provided to us or our agent prior to the payment of dividends and must be updated periodically. The certification also may require a Non-U.S. Holder that provides an IRS form or that claims treaty benefits to provide its U.S. taxpayer identification number. Special certification and other requirements apply in the case of certain Non-U.S. Holders that hold shares of our common stock through intermediaries or are pass-through entities for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

Each Non-U.S. Holder is urged to consult its own tax advisor about the specific methods for satisfying these requirements. A claim for exemption will not be valid if the person receiving the applicable form has actual knowledge or reason to know that the statements on the form are false.

If dividends are effectively connected with a trade or business in the United States of a Non-U.S. Holder (and, if required by an applicable income tax treaty, is attributable to a permanent establishment maintained by such Non-U.S. Holder in the United States), the Non-U.S. Holder, although exempt from the withholding tax described above (provided that the certifications described above are satisfied), generally

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will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on such dividends on a net income basis in the same manner as if it were a resident of the United States. In addition, if a Non-U.S. Holder is treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes, the Non-U.S. Holder may be subject to an additional "branch profits tax" equal to 30% (unless reduced by an applicable income treaty) of its earnings and profits in respect of such effectively connected dividend income.

Non-U.S. Holders that do not timely provide us or our agent with the required certification, but which are eligible for a reduced rate of U.S. federal withholding tax pursuant to an income tax treaty, may obtain a refund or credit of any excess amount withheld by timely filing an appropriate claim for refund with the IRS.

Gain on sale, exchange or other taxable disposition of our common stock

Subject to the discussion below under the section titled "Additional Withholding and Reporting Requirements", in general, a Non-U.S. Holder will not be subject to U.S. federal income tax or withholding tax on gain realized upon such holder's sale, exchange or other taxable disposition of shares of our common stock unless (1) such Non-U.S. Holder is an individual who is present in the United States for 183 days or more in the taxable year of disposition, and certain other conditions are met, (2) we are or have been a "United States real property holding corporation", as defined in the Internal Revenue Code (a USRPHC), at any time within the shorter of the five-year period preceding the disposition and the Non-U.S. Holder's holding period in the shares of our common stock, and certain other requirements are met, or (3) such gain is effectively connected with the conduct by such Non-U.S. Holder of a trade or business in the United States (and, if required by an applicable income tax treaty, is attributable to a permanent establishment maintained by such Non-U.S. Holder in the United States).

If the first exception applies, the Non-U.S. Holder generally will be subject to U.S. federal income tax at a rate of 30% (or at a reduced rate under an applicable income tax treaty) on the amount by which such Non-U.S. Holder's capital gains allocable to U.S. sources exceed capital losses allocable to U.S. sources during the taxable year of the disposition. If the third exception applies, the Non-U.S. Holder generally will be subject to U.S. federal income tax with respect to such gain on a net income basis in the same manner as if it were a resident of the United States and a Non-U.S. Holder that is a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes may also be subject to a branch profits tax with respect to any earnings and profits attributable to such gain at a rate of 30% (or at a reduced rate under an applicable income tax treaty).

Generally, a corporation is a USRPHC only if the fair market value of its U.S. real property interests (as defined in the Internal Revenue Code) equals or exceeds 50% of the sum of the fair market value of its worldwide real property interests plus its other assets used or held for use in a trade or business. Although there can be no assurance in this regard, we believe that we are not, and do not anticipate becoming, a USRPHC. However, because the determination of whether we are a USRPHC depends on the fair market value of our U.S. real property interests relative to the fair market value of other business assets, there can be no assurance that we will not become a USRPHC in the future. Even if we became a USRPHC, a Non-U.S. Holder would not be subject to U.S. federal income tax on a sale, exchange or other taxable disposition of our common stock by reason of our status as USRPHC so long as our common stock is regularly traded on an established securities market at any time during the calendar year in which the disposition occurs and such Non-U.S. Holder does not own and is not deemed to own (directly, indirectly or constructively) more than 5% of our common stock at any time during the shorter of the five year period ending on the date of disposition and the holder's holding period. However, no assurance can be provided that our common stock will be regularly traded on an established securities market for purposes of the

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rules described above. Prospective investors are encouraged to consult their own tax advisors regarding the possible consequences to them if we are, or were to become, a USRPHC.

Additional withholding and reporting requirements

Sections 1471 through 1474 of the Internal Revenue Code and related Treasury Regulations, together with other Treasury Department or IRS guidance issued thereunder, and intergovernmental agreements, legislation, rules and other official guidance adopted pursuant to such intergovernmental agreements (commonly referred to as "FATCA") generally will impose a U.S. federal withholding tax of 30% on payments to certain non-U.S. entities (including certain intermediaries), including dividends on our common stock and, on or after January 1, 2019, the gross proceeds from a sale or other disposition of shares of our common stock, unless such persons comply with a complicated U.S. information reporting, disclosure and certification regime. This regime requires, among other things, a broad class of persons to enter into agreements with the IRS to obtain, disclose and report information about their investors and account holders. An intergovernmental agreement between the United States and an applicable foreign country may, however, modify these requirements.

Prospective investors should consult their own tax advisors regarding the possible impact of these rules on their investment in our common stock, and the possible impact of these rules on the entities through which they hold our common stock, including, without limitation, the process and deadlines for meeting the applicable requirements to prevent the imposition of this 30% withholding tax under FATCA.

Backup withholding and information reporting

We must report annually to the IRS and to each Non-U.S.

Holder the gross amount of the distributions on our common stock paid to the holder and the tax withheld, if any, with respect to the distributions. Non-U.S. Holders may have to comply with specific certification procedures to establish that the holder is not a United States person (as defined in the Internal Revenue Code) in order to avoid backup withholding at the applicable rate, currently 28%, with respect to dividends on our common stock. Dividends paid to Non-U.S. Holders subject to the U.S. withholding tax, as described above under the section titled "Distributions on Our Common Stock", generally will be exempt from U.S. backup withholding.

Information reporting and backup withholding will generally apply to the proceeds of a disposition of our common stock by a Non-U.S. Holder effected by or

through the U.S. office of any broker, U.S. or foreign, unless the holder certifies its status as a Non-U.S. Holder and satisfies certain other requirements, or otherwise establishes an exemption. Generally, information reporting and backup withholding will not apply to a payment of disposition proceeds to a Non-U.S. Holder where the transaction is effected outside the United States through a non-U.S. office of a broker. However, for information reporting purposes, dispositions effected through a non-U.S. office of a broker with substantial U.S. ownership or operations generally will be treated in a manner similar to dispositions effected through a U.S. office of a broker. Prospective investors should consult their own tax advisors regarding the application of the information reporting and backup withholding rules to them, including the availability of and procedure for obtaining an exemption from backup withholding.

Copies of information returns may be made available to the tax authorities of the country in which the Non-U.S.

Holder resides or, in which the Non-U.S. Holder is incorporated, under the provisions of a specific treaty or agreement.

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Backup withholding is not an additional tax. Any amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules from a payment to a Non-U.S. Holder can be refunded or credited against the Non-U.S. Holder's U.S. federal income tax liability, if any, provided that an appropriate claim is timely filed with the IRS.

U.S. federal estate tax

Common stock owned (or treated as owned) by an individual who is not a citizen or a resident of the United States (as defined for U.S. federal estate tax purposes) at the time of death will be included in the individual's gross estate for U.S. federal estate tax purposes unless an applicable estate or other tax treaty provides otherwise, and therefore, may be subject to U.S. federal estate tax.

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Table of Contents**Underwriting**

J.P. Morgan Securities LLC, Citigroup Global Markets Inc., and Leerink Partners LLC are acting as joint book-running managers of the offering and as representatives of the underwriters named below. Subject to the terms and conditions stated in the underwriting agreement dated the date of this prospectus supplement, each underwriter named below has severally agreed to purchase, and we have agreed to sell to that underwriter, the number of shares set forth opposite the underwriter's name.

| Underwriter | Number of Shares |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| J.P. Morgan Securities LLC | 2,054,054 |
| Citigroup Global Markets Inc. | 2,054,054 |
| Leerink Partners LLC | 1,297,298 |
| Total | 5,405,406 |

The underwriting agreement provides that the obligations of the underwriters to purchase the shares included in this offering are subject to approval of legal matters by counsel and to other conditions. The underwriters are obligated to purchase all the shares (other than those covered by the option to purchase additional shares described below) if they purchase any of the shares.

Shares sold by the underwriters to the public will initially be offered at the public offering price set forth on the cover of this prospectus supplement. Any shares sold by the underwriters to securities dealers may be sold at a discount from the public offering price not to exceed \$1.332 per share. If all the shares are not sold at the initial offering price, the underwriters may change the offering price and the other selling terms. The representatives have advised us that the underwriters do not intend to make sales to discretionary accounts.

We have granted to the underwriters an option, exercisable for 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement, to purchase up to 810,810 additional shares at the public offering price less the underwriting discount. To the extent the option is exercised, each underwriter must purchase a number of additional shares approximately proportionate to that underwriter's initial purchase commitment. Any shares issued or sold under the option will be issued and sold on the same terms and conditions as the other shares that are the subject of this offering.

We, and our officers and directors have agreed that, for a period of 60 days from the date of this prospectus supplement, we and they will not, without the prior written consent of J.P. Morgan, Citigroup and Leerink, among other things, dispose of or hedge any shares or any

securities convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock. J.P. Morgan, Citigroup and Leerink in their sole discretion may release any of the securities subject to these lock-up agreements at any time, which, in the case of officers and directors, shall be without notice.

Our common stock is listed on the NASDAQ Global Market under the symbol XLRN.

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The following table shows the underwriting discounts and commissions that we are to pay to the underwriters in connection with this offering. These amounts are shown assuming both no exercise and full exercise of the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares of common stock.

| | | Paid by Accelaron | |
|-----------|----|--------------------------|----------------------|
| | | No exercise | Full exercise |
| Per share | \$ | 2.22 | \$ 2.22 |
| Total | \$ | 12,000,001 | \$ 13,800,000 |

We estimate that our portion of the total expenses of this offering will be approximately \$400,000.

We have also agreed to reimburse the underwriters for certain of their expenses in an amount up to \$30,000 as set forth in the underwriting agreement.

In connection with the offering, the underwriters may purchase and sell shares in the open market. Purchases and sales in the open market may include short sales, purchases to cover short positions, which may include purchases pursuant to the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares, and stabilizing purchases.

Short sales involve secondary market sales by the underwriters of a greater number of shares than they are required to purchase in the offering.

"Covered" short sales are sales of shares in an amount up to the number of shares represented by the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares.

"Naked" short sales are sales of shares in an amount in excess of the number of shares represented by the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares.

Covering transactions involve purchases of shares either pursuant to the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares or in the open market in order to cover short positions.

To close a naked short position, the underwriters must purchase shares in the open market. A naked short position is more likely to be created if the underwriters are concerned that there may be downward pressure on the price of the shares in the open market after pricing that could adversely affect investors who purchase in the offering.

To close a covered short position, the underwriters must purchase shares in the open market or must exercise the option to purchase additional shares. In determining the source of shares to close the covered short position, the underwriters will consider, among other things, the price of shares available for purchase in the open market as compared to the price at which they may purchase shares through the option to purchase additional shares.

Stabilizing transactions involve bids to purchase shares so long as the stabilizing bids do not exceed a specified maximum.

Purchases to cover short positions and stabilizing purchases, as well as other purchases by the underwriters for their own accounts, may have the effect of preventing or retarding a decline in the market price of the shares. They may also cause the price of the shares to be higher than the price that would otherwise exist in the open market in the absence of these transactions. The underwriters may conduct these transactions on the NASDAQ Global Market, in the over-the-counter market or otherwise. If the underwriters commence any of these transactions, they may discontinue them at any time.

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Other relationships

Some of the underwriters and their affiliates have engaged in, and may in the future engage in, investment banking and other commercial dealings in the ordinary course of business with us or our affiliates, including serving as underwriters for our initial public offering in September 2013, for which they received, or may in the future receive, customary fees and commissions for these transactions.

Conflicts of interest

The underwriters are full service financial institutions engaged in various activities, which may include securities trading, commercial and investment banking, financial advisory, investment management, principal investment, hedging, financing and brokerage activities. Certain of the underwriters and their respective affiliates may, from time to time, engage in transactions with and perform services for us in the ordinary course of their business for which they may receive customary fees and reimbursement of expenses. In the ordinary course of their various business activities, the underwriters and their respective affiliates may make or hold a broad array of investments and actively trade debt and equity securities (or related derivative securities) and financial instruments (which may include bank loans and/or credit default swaps) for their own account and for the accounts of their customers and may at any time hold long and short positions in such securities and instruments. Such investments and securities activities may involve securities and/or instruments of ours or our affiliates. The underwriters and their affiliates may also make investment recommendations and/or publish or express independent research views in respect of such securities or financial instruments and may hold, or recommend to clients that they acquire, long and/or short positions in such securities and instruments.

We have agreed to indemnify the underwriters against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, or to contribute to payments the underwriters may be required to make because of any of those liabilities

Notice to prospective investors in the European Economic Area

In relation to each member state of the European Economic Area that has implemented the Prospectus Directive (each, a relevant member state), with effect from and including the date on which the Prospectus Directive is implemented in that relevant member state (the relevant implementation date), an offer of shares described in this prospectus supplement may not be made to the public in that relevant member state other than:

to any legal entity which is a qualified investor
as defined in the Prospectus Directive;

to fewer than 100 or, if the relevant member
state has implemented the relevant provision of
the 2010 PD Amending Directive, 150 natural or
legal persons (other than qualified investors as
defined in the Prospectus Directive), as
permitted under the Prospectus Directive,
subject to obtaining the prior consent of the
relevant Dealer or Dealers nominated by us for
any such offer; or

in any other circumstances falling within
Article 3(2) of the Prospectus Directive,

provided that no such offer of securities shall require us or
any underwriter to publish a prospectus pursuant to
Article 3 of the Prospectus Directive.

For purposes of this provision, the expression an "offer of
securities to the public" in any relevant member state
means the communication in any form and by any means
of sufficient information on the terms of

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the offer and the shares to be offered so as to enable an investor to decide to purchase or subscribe for the shares, as the expression may be varied in that member state by any measure implementing the Prospectus Directive in that member state, and the expression "Prospectus Directive" means Directive 2003/71/EC (and amendments thereto, including the 2010 PD Amending Directive, to the extent implemented in the relevant member state) and includes any relevant implementing measure in the relevant member state. The expression 2010 PD Amending Directive means Directive 2010/73/EU.

The sellers of the shares have not authorized and do not authorize the making of any offer of shares through any financial intermediary on their behalf, other than offers made by the underwriters with a view to the final placement of the shares as contemplated in this prospectus supplement. Accordingly, no purchaser of the shares, other than the underwriters, is authorized to make any further offer of the shares on behalf of the sellers or the underwriters.

Notice to prospective investors in the United Kingdom

This prospectus supplement is only being distributed to, and is only directed at, persons in the United Kingdom that are qualified investors within the meaning of Article 2(1)(e) of the Prospectus Directive that are also (i) investment professionals falling within Article 19(5) of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Financial Promotion) Order 2005 (the Order) or (ii) high net worth entities, and other persons to whom it may lawfully be communicated, falling within Article 49(2)(a) to (d) of the Order (each such person being referred to as a "relevant person"). This prospectus supplement and its contents are confidential and should not be distributed, published or reproduced (in whole or in part) or disclosed by recipients to any other persons in the United Kingdom. Any person in the United Kingdom that is not a relevant person should not act or rely on this document or any of its contents.

Notice to prospective investors in France

Neither this prospectus supplement nor any other offering material relating to the shares described in this prospectus supplement has been submitted to the clearance procedures of the *Autorité des Marchés Financiers* or of the competent authority of another member state of the European Economic Area and notified to the *Autorité des Marchés Financiers*. The shares have not been offered or sold and will not be offered or sold, directly or indirectly, to the public in France. Neither this prospectus supplement nor any other offering material relating to the shares has been or will be:

released, issued, distributed or caused to be released, issued or distributed to the public in France; or

used in connection with any offer for subscription or sale of the shares to the public in France.

Such offers, sales and distributions will be made in France only:

to qualified investors (*investisseurs qualifiés*) and/or to a restricted circle of investors (*cercle restreint d'investisseurs*), in each case investing for their own account, all as defined in, and in accordance with, articles L.411-2, D.411-1, D.411-2, D.734-1, D.744-1, D.754-1 and D.764-1 of the French *Code monétaire et financier*;

to investment services providers authorized to engage in portfolio management on behalf of third parties; or

in a transaction that, in accordance with article L.411-2-II-1°-or-2°-or 3° of the French *Code monétaire et financier* and article 211-2 of the General Regulations (*Règlement Général*) of the *Autorité des Marchés Financiers*, does not constitute a public offer (*appel public à l'épargne*).

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The ordinary shares may be resold directly or indirectly, only in compliance with articles L.411-1, L.411-2, L.412-1 and L.621-8 through L.621-8-3 of the French *Code monétaire et financier*.

Notice to prospective investors in Australia

No prospectus or other disclosure document (as defined in the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) of Australia (Corporations Act)) in relation to the common stock has been or will be lodged with the Australian Securities & Investments Commission (ASIC). This document has not been lodged with ASIC and is only directed to certain categories of exempt persons. Accordingly, if you receive this document in Australia:

(a)
you confirm and warrant that you are either:

(i)
a "sophisticated investor" under section 708(8)(a) or (b) of the Corporations Act;

(ii)
a "sophisticated investor" under section 708(8)(c) or (d) of the Corporations Act and that you have provided an accountant's certificate to us which complies with the requirements of section 708(8)(c)(i) or (ii) of the Corporations Act and related regulations before the offer has been made;

(iii)
a person associated with the company under section 708(12) of the Corporations Act; or

(iv)
a "professional investor" within the meaning of section 708(11)(a) or (b) of the Corporations Act, and to the extent that you are unable to confirm or warrant that you are an exempt sophisticated investor, associated person or professional investor under the Corporations Act any offer made to you under this document is void and incapable of acceptance; and

(b)

you warrant and agree that you will not offer any of the common stock for resale in Australia within 12 months of that common stock being issued unless any such resale offer is exempt from the requirement to issue a disclosure document under section 708 of the Corporations Act.

Notice to prospective investors in Hong Kong

The shares may not be offered or sold in Hong Kong by means of any document other than (i) in circumstances which do not constitute an offer to the public within the meaning of the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 32, Laws of Hong Kong), or (ii) to "professional investors" within the meaning of the Securities and Futures Ordinance (Cap. 571, Laws of Hong Kong) and any rules made thereunder, or (iii) in other circumstances which do not result in the document being a "prospectus" within the meaning of the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 32, Laws of Hong Kong) and no advertisement, invitation or document relating to the shares may be issued or may be in the possession of any person for the purpose of issue (in each case whether in Hong Kong or elsewhere), which is directed at, or the contents of which are likely to be accessed or read by, the public in Hong Kong (except if permitted to do so under the laws of Hong Kong) other than with respect to shares which are or are intended to be disposed of only to persons outside Hong Kong or only to "professional investors" within the meaning of the Securities and Futures Ordinance (Cap. 571, Laws of Hong Kong) and any rules made thereunder.

Notice to prospective investors in Japan

The shares offered in this prospectus supplement have not been and will not be registered under the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law of Japan. The shares have not been offered or sold and will not be offered or sold, directly or indirectly, in Japan or to or for the account of any resident of Japan (including any corporation or other entity organized under the laws of Japan), except (i) pursuant to an

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exemption from the registration requirements of the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law and (ii) in compliance with any other applicable requirements of Japanese law.

Notice to prospective investors in Canada

The shares may be sold only to purchasers purchasing, or deemed to be purchasing, as principal that are accredited investors, as defined in National Instrument 45-106 *Prospectus Exemptions* or subsection 73.3(1) of the *Securities Act* (Ontario), and are permitted clients, as defined in National Instrument 31-103 *Registration Requirements, Exemptions and Ongoing Registrant Obligations*. Any resale of the shares must be made in accordance with an exemption from, or in a transaction not subject to, the prospectus requirements of applicable securities laws.

Securities legislation in certain provinces or territories of Canada may provide a purchaser with remedies for rescission or damages if this prospectus supplement (including any amendment thereto) contains a misrepresentation, provided that the remedies for rescission or damages are exercised by the purchaser within the time limit prescribed by the securities legislation of the purchaser's province or territory. The purchaser should refer to any applicable provisions of the securities legislation of the purchaser's province or territory for particulars of these rights or consult with a legal advisor.

Pursuant to section 3A.3 of National Instrument 33-105 *Underwriting Conflicts* (NI 33-105), the underwriters are not required to comply with the disclosure requirements of NI 33-105 regarding underwriter conflicts of interest in connection with this offering.

Notice to prospective investors in Singapore

This prospectus supplement has not been registered as a prospectus with the Monetary Authority of Singapore. Accordingly, this prospectus supplement and any other document or material in connection with the offer or sale, or invitation for subscription or purchase, of the shares may not be circulated or distributed, nor may the shares be offered or sold, or be made the subject of an invitation for subscription or purchase, whether directly or indirectly, to persons in Singapore other than (i) to an institutional investor under Section 274 of the Securities and Futures Act, Chapter 289 of Singapore (the SFA), (ii) to a relevant person pursuant to Section 275(1), or any person pursuant to Section 275(1A), and in accordance with the conditions specified in Section 275 of the SFA or (iii) otherwise pursuant to, and in accordance with the conditions of, any other applicable provision of the SFA, in each case subject to compliance with conditions set forth in the SFA.

Where the shares are subscribed or purchased under
Section 275 of the SFA by a relevant person which is:

a corporation (which is not an accredited
investor (as defined in Section 4A of the SFA))
the sole business of which is to hold investments
and the entire share capital of which is owned by
one or more individuals, each of whom is an
accredited investor; or

a trust (where the trustee is not an accredited
investor) whose sole purpose is to hold
investments and each beneficiary of the trust is
an individual who is an accredited investor,

shares, debentures and units of shares and
debentures of that corporation or the
beneficiaries' rights and interest (howsoever
described) in that trust shall not be transferred
within six months after that

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corporation or that trust has acquired the shares pursuant to an offer made under Section 275 of the SFA except:

to an institutional investor (for corporations, under Section 274 of the SFA) or to a relevant person defined in Section 275(2) of the SFA, or to any person pursuant to an offer that is made on terms that such shares, debentures and units of shares and debentures of that corporation or such rights and interest in that trust are acquired at a consideration of not less than S\$200,000 (or its equivalent in a foreign currency) for each transaction, whether such amount is to be paid for in cash or by exchange of securities or other assets, and further for corporations, in accordance with the conditions specified in Section 275 of the SFA;

where no consideration is or will be given for the transfer; or

where the transfer is by operation of law.

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Legal matters

The validity of the shares of common stock offered hereby will be passed upon for us by Ropes & Gray LLP, Boston, Massachusetts. Certain legal matters will be passed upon for the underwriters by Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, P.C., Boston, Massachusetts.

Experts

The consolidated financial statements of Acceleron Pharma Inc. appearing in Acceleron Pharma Inc.'s Annual Report (Form 10-K) for the year ended December 31, 2016, and the effectiveness of Acceleron Pharma Inc.'s internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2016 have been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, as set forth in their reports thereon, included therein, and incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements are incorporated herein by reference in reliance upon such reports given on the authority of such firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

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PROSPECTUS

**ACCELERON
PHARMA INC.**

Common Stock

Preferred Stock

Warrants

We may offer and sell from time to time, in one or more series or issuances and on terms determined at the time of the offering, any combination of the securities described in this prospectus.

Specific terms of any offering will be provided in a supplement to this prospectus. Any prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should carefully read this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement as well as the documents incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus before you purchase any of the securities offered hereby.

These securities may be offered and sold in the same offering or in separate offerings, to or through underwriters, dealers or agents or directly to purchasers. The names of any underwriters, dealers or agents involved in the sale of our securities and their compensation will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

General Information

Our common stock is traded on the NASDAQ Global Market under the symbol "XLRN". On September 18, 2017, the closing price of our common stock was \$39.38.

Investing in our securities involves risks. See "Risk Factors" on page 3 and in any applicable prospectus supplement and in the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus for a discussion of the factors you should carefully consider before deciding to purchase these securities.

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 September 19, 2017.

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ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is a part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") using a "shelf" registration process. Under this shelf registration process, any combination of the securities described in this prospectus may be sold in one or more offerings. Each time securities are sold under this shelf registration, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read both this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement, including all documents incorporated herein by reference, together with additional information described under "Where You Can Find More Information" below.

We have not authorized any dealer, agent or other person to give any information or to make any representation other than those contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement. You must not rely upon any information or representation not contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus or an accompanying prospectus supplement. This prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement, if any, do not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy any securities other than the registered securities to which they relate, nor do this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy securities in any jurisdiction to any person to whom it is unlawful to make such offer or solicitation in such jurisdiction. You should not assume that the information contained in this prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement, if any, is accurate on any date subsequent to the date set forth on the front of the document or that any information we have incorporated by reference is correct on any date subsequent to the date of the document incorporated by reference, even though this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement is delivered or securities are sold on a later date.

Unless the context otherwise requires, "Accelaron", the "Company", "we", "us", "our" and similar names refer to Accelaron Pharma Inc. and its wholly owned subsidiary.

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OUR BUSINESS

Our Company

We are a leading biopharmaceutical company in the discovery and development of TGF-beta therapeutics to treat serious and rare diseases. Our research focuses on key natural regulators of cellular growth and repair, particularly the Transforming Growth Factor-Beta, or TGF-beta, protein superfamily. By combining our discovery and development expertise, including our proprietary knowledge of the TGF-beta superfamily, and our internal protein engineering and manufacturing capabilities, we have generated several innovative therapeutic candidates, all of which encompass novel potential first-in-class mechanisms of action. We have focused and prioritized our research and development activities within three key therapeutic areas, and if successful, these candidates could have the potential to significantly improve clinical outcomes for patients across these areas of high, unmet need.

Our common stock is listed on the NASDAQ Global Market under the symbol "XLRN". Our principal executive offices are located at 128 Sidney Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139, and our telephone number is (617) 649-9200. Our website address is www.acceleronpharma.com. The information found on our website is not part of this prospectus.

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RISK FACTORS

Investing in our securities involves risk. Prior to making a decision about investing in our securities, you should carefully consider the specific risk factors discussed under the heading "Risk Factors" in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2016, on file with the SEC, which is incorporated by reference into this prospectus and any prospectus supplement in its entirety, as the same may be amended, supplemented or superseded from time to time by our filings under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "Exchange Act"), together with those under the heading "Risk Factors" in any applicable prospectus supplement and all of the other information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus or such prospectus supplement. See "Where You Can Find More Information." The risks and uncertainties we describe are not the only ones we face. Additional risks and uncertainties not presently known to us or that we currently deem immaterial may also affect our operations. If any of these risks were to occur, our business, financial condition or results of operations would likely suffer. In that event, the trading price of our common stock could decline, and you could lose all or part of your investment.

CAUTIONARY NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus, any prospectus supplement and the other documents we have filed with the SEC that are incorporated herein by reference contain forward-looking statements that involve risks and uncertainties, as well as assumptions that, if they never materialize or prove incorrect, could cause our results to differ materially from those expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. In some cases, these forward-looking statements can be identified by the use of forward-looking terminology. The statements contained in this prospectus that are not purely historical are "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act. The terms "anticipate", "believe", "contemplate", "continue", "could", "estimate", "expect", "forecast", "goal", "intend", "may", "plan", "potential", "predict", "project", "should", "strategy", "target", "will", "would", "vision", or, in each case, the negative or other variations thereon or other similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements, although not all forward-looking statements contain these identifying words.

The forward-looking statements in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement and the other documents we have filed with the SEC that are incorporated herein by reference include, among other things, statements regarding our intentions, beliefs, projections, outlook, analyses or current expectations concerning, among other

things:

our ongoing and planned preclinical studies and clinical trials;

clinical trial data and the timing of results of our ongoing clinical trials;

our plans to develop and commercialize ACE-083 and our other preclinical therapeutic candidates and our and Celgene's plans to develop and commercialize luspatercept and sotatercept;

the potential benefits of strategic partnership agreements and our ability to enter into selective strategic partnership arrangements;

the timing of, and our and Celgene's ability to, obtain and maintain regulatory approvals for our therapeutic candidates;

the rate and degree of market acceptance and clinical utility of any approved therapeutic candidate, particularly in specific patient populations;

our ability to quickly and efficiently identify and develop therapeutic candidates;

our commercialization, marketing and manufacturing capabilities and strategy;

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our intellectual property position; and

our estimates regarding our results of operations, financial condition, liquidity, capital requirements, prospects, growth and strategies.

Given these uncertainties, you should not place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements. You should read this prospectus, any supplements to this prospectus and the documents that we reference in this prospectus with the understanding that our actual future results may be materially different from what we expect. Except as required by law, we do not undertake any obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements contained in this prospectus or any supplement to this prospectus, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Except as otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, we intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of the securities offered by us by this prospectus for general corporate purposes, including working capital, capital expenditures, research, development and manufacturing expenditures, clinical trial expenditures, general and administrative expenses, or commercial expenditures. We may temporarily invest the net proceeds in short-term, interest-bearing, investment-grade securities, certificates of deposit or government 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.

Additional information on the use of net proceeds from the sale of securities offered by us by this prospectus may be set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the specific offering.

Table of Contents**RATIO OF COMBINED FIXED CHARGES AND PREFERRED STOCK DIVIDENDS TO EARNINGS**

The following table sets forth our historical ratios of fixed charges and preferred stock dividends to earnings for the periods indicated. You should read this table in conjunction with the financial statements and notes incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

| | Year Ended December 31, | | | | | Six Months Ended June 30, |
|--|-------------------------|------|------|------|------|---------------------------|
| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
| Ratio of combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends to earnings(1) | | | | | | |

(1)

Earnings were inadequate to cover fixed charges and preferred dividends for the years ended December 31, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 by \$59.6 million, \$39.0 million, \$51.3 million, \$63.9 million and \$57.0 million, respectively, and for the six months ended June 30, 2017, by \$55.1 million.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell securities in any of the ways described below or in any combination:

to or through underwriters or dealers;

through one or more agents; or

directly to purchasers or to a single purchaser.

The distribution of the securities may be effected from time to time in one or more transactions:

at a fixed price, or prices, which may
be changed from time to time;

at market prices prevailing at the time
of sale;

at prices related to such prevailing
market prices; or

at negotiated prices.

Each prospectus supplement will describe the method
of distribution of the securities and any applicable
restrictions.

The prospectus supplement with respect to the
securities of a particular series will describe the terms of
the offering of the securities, including the following:

the name or names of any
underwriters, dealers or agents and the
amounts of securities underwritten or
purchased by each of them;

the public offering price of the
securities and the proceeds to us and
any discounts, commissions or
concessions allowed or reallocated or
paid to dealers; and

any securities exchanges on which the
securities may be listed.

Any offering price and any discounts or concessions
allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers may be changed
from time to time.

Only the agents or underwriters named in each
prospectus supplement are agents or underwriters in
connection with the securities being offered thereby.

We may authorize underwriters, dealers or other
persons acting as our agents to solicit offers by certain
institutions to purchase securities from us pursuant to
delayed delivery contracts providing for payment and
delivery on the date stated in each applicable prospectus
supplement. Each contract will

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be for an amount not less than, and the aggregate amount of securities sold pursuant to such contracts shall not be less nor more than, the respective amounts stated in each applicable prospectus supplement. Institutions with whom the contracts, when authorized, may be made include commercial and savings banks, insurance companies, pension funds, investment companies, educational and charitable institutions and other institutions, but shall in all cases be subject to our approval. Delayed delivery contracts will be subject only to those conditions set forth in each applicable prospectus supplement, and each prospectus supplement will set forth any commissions we pay for solicitation of these contracts.

Agents, underwriters and other third parties described above may be entitled to indemnification by us against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, or to contribution from us with respect to payments that the agents, underwriters or other third parties may be required to make in respect thereof. Agents, underwriters and such other third parties may be customers of, engage in transactions with, or perform services for us in the ordinary course of business.

One or more firms, referred to as "remarketing firms," may also offer or sell the securities, if a prospectus supplement so indicates, in connection with a remarketing arrangement upon their purchase. Remarketing firms will act as principals for their own accounts or as our agents. These remarketing firms will offer or sell the securities in accordance with the terms of the securities. Each prospectus supplement will identify and describe any remarketing firm and the terms of its agreement, if any, with us and will describe the remarketing firm's compensation. Remarketing firms may be deemed to be underwriters in connection with the securities they remarket. Remarketing firms may be entitled under agreements that may be entered into with us to indemnification by us against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, and may be customers of, engage in transactions with or perform services for us in the ordinary course of business.

Certain underwriters may use this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement for offers and sales related to market-making transactions in the securities. These underwriters may act as principal or agent in these transactions, and the sales will be made at prices related to prevailing market prices at the time of sale.

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 securities exchange. Underwriters may make a market in these securities, but will not be obligated to do so and may discontinue any market making at any time without notice. We can make no assurance as to the liquidity of, or the existence of trading markets for, any of the securities.

Certain persons participating in an offering may engage in over-allotment, stabilizing transactions, short covering transactions and penalty bids in accordance with rules and regulations under the Securities Exchange Act. Over-allotment involves sales in excess of the offering size, which create a short position. Stabilizing transactions permit bids to purchase the underlying security so long as the stabilizing bids do not exceed a specified maximum.

Short covering transactions involve purchases of the securities in the open market after the distribution is completed to cover short positions. Penalty bids permit the underwriters to reclaim a selling concession from a dealer when the securities originally sold by the dealer are purchased in a short covering transaction to cover short positions. Those activities may cause the price of the securities to be higher than it would otherwise be. If commenced, the underwriters may discontinue any of the activities at any time.

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

General

The following description of our capital stock is intended as a summary only and is qualified in its entirety by reference to our restated certificate of incorporation and amended and restated by-laws,

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which are filed as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part, and to the applicable provisions of the Delaware General Corporation Law. We refer in this section to our restated certificate of incorporation as our certificate of incorporation, and we refer to our amended and restated by-laws as our by-laws.

Our authorized capital stock consists of 175,000,000 shares of our common stock, par value \$0.001 per share, and 25,000,000 shares of our preferred stock, par value \$0.001 per share, all of which preferred stock is undesignated.

As of June 30, 2017, we had issued and outstanding:

38,636,505 shares of our common stock;

options to purchase a total of 3,541,003 shares of our common stock with a weighted-average exercise price of \$28.57 per share; and

warrants to purchase a total of 63,296 shares of our common stock with a weighted-average exercise price of \$5.94 per share.

As of June 30, 2017, we had 92 stockholders of record.

Common Stock

Dividend Rights. Subject to preferences that may apply to shares of preferred stock outstanding at the time, holders of outstanding shares of common stock will be entitled to receive dividends out of assets legally available at the times and in the amounts as the board of directors may from time to time determine.

Voting Rights. Each outstanding share of common stock will be entitled to one vote on all matters submitted to a vote of stockholders. Holders of shares of our common stock shall have no cumulative voting rights.

Preemptive Rights. Our common stock will not be entitled to preemptive or other similar subscription rights to purchase any of our securities.

Conversion or Redemption Rights. Our common stock will be neither convertible nor redeemable.

Liquidation Rights. Upon our liquidation, the holders of our common stock will be entitled to receive

pro rata our assets which are legally available for distribution, after payment of all debts and other liabilities and subject to the prior rights of any holders of preferred stock then outstanding.

Listing. Our common stock is listed on the NASDAQ Global Market under the symbol "XLRN".

Preferred Stock

Our board of directors may, without further action by our stockholders, from time to time, direct the issuance of shares of preferred stock in series and may, at the time of issuance, determine the designations, powers, preferences, privileges, and relative participating, optional or special rights as well as the qualifications, limitations or restrictions thereof, including dividend rights, conversion rights, voting rights, terms of redemption and liquidation preferences, any or all of which may be greater than the rights of the common stock. Satisfaction of any dividend preferences of outstanding shares of preferred stock would reduce the amount of funds available for the payment of dividends on shares of our common stock. Holders of shares of preferred stock may be entitled to receive a preference payment in the event of our liquidation before any payment is made to the holders of shares of our common stock. Under certain circumstances, the issuance of shares of preferred stock may render more difficult or tend to discourage a merger, tender offer or proxy contest, the assumption of control by a holder of a large block of our securities or the removal of incumbent management.

Upon the

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affirmative vote of a majority of the total number of directors then in office, our board of directors, without stockholder approval, may issue shares of preferred stock with voting and conversion rights which could adversely affect the holders of shares of our common stock and the market value of our common stock. There are no shares of preferred stock outstanding, and we have no present intention to issue any shares of preferred stock.

Registration Rights

We are party to an amended and restated registration rights agreement with certain holders of our common stock.

Under the amended and restated registration rights agreement, holders of registrable shares can demand that we file a registration statement or request that their shares be included on a registration statement that we are otherwise filing, in either case, registering the resale of their shares of common stock. These registration rights are subject to conditions and limitations, including the right, in certain circumstances, of the underwriters of an offering to limit the number of shares included in such registration and our right, in certain circumstances, not to effect a requested S-1 or S-3 registration within 60 days before the Company's estimated date of filing a registration statement or six months following the effective date of a registration statement pertaining to an underwritten public offering of securities for the account of the Company, including this offering.

Demand Registration Rights

The holders of at least a majority of the registrable shares may require us to file a registration statement under the Securities Act at our expense with respect to the resale of their registrable shares, and we are required to use our best efforts to effect the registration.

Piggyback Registration Rights

If we propose to register any of our securities under the Securities Act for our own account or the account of any other holder, the holders of registrable shares are entitled to notice of such registration and to request that we include registrable shares for resale on such registration statement, subject to the right of any underwriter to limit the number of shares included in such registration.

We will pay all registration expenses, other than underwriting discounts and commissions, related to any demand or piggyback registration. The amended and restated registration rights agreement contains customary cross-indemnification provisions, pursuant to which we are obligated to indemnify the selling stockholders, in the event of misstatements or omissions in the registration

statement attributable to us and they are obligated to indemnify us for misstatements or omissions attributable to them, in each case, except in the event of fraud. The registration rights will not terminate until all registrable shares have been sold or no longer qualify as registrable shares.

Anti-Takeover Effects of Our Certificate of Incorporation and Our By-Laws

Our certificate of incorporation and by-laws contain certain provisions that are intended to enhance the likelihood of continuity and stability in the composition of our board of directors and which may have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a future takeover or change in control of the company unless such takeover or change in control is approved by our board of directors.

These provisions include:

Classified Board. Our certificate of incorporation provides that our board of directors be divided into three classes of directors, with the classes as nearly equal in number as possible. As a result, approximately one-third of our board of directors will be elected each year. The classification of directors has the effect of making it more difficult for stockholders to change the composition of our

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board. Our certificate of incorporation also provides that, subject to any rights of holders of preferred stock to elect additional directors under specified circumstances, the number of directors is fixed exclusively pursuant to a resolution adopted by our board of directors.

Action by Written Consent; Special Meetings of Stockholders. Our certificate of incorporation provides that, except as otherwise provided for by a resolution of the board of directors providing for the issuance of a series of preferred stock, stockholder action can be taken only at an annual or special meeting of stockholders and cannot be taken by written consent in lieu of a meeting. Our certificate of incorporation and the by-laws also provide that, except as otherwise required by law, and subject to any special rights of the holders of preferred stock, special meetings of the stockholders can only be called pursuant to a resolution adopted by a majority of the board of directors. Except as described above, stockholders are not permitted to call a special meeting or to require the board of directors to call a special meeting.

Removal of Directors. Our certificate of incorporation provides that, subject to any special rights of holders of preferred stock, our directors may be removed only for cause by the affirmative vote of at least 75% of the voting power of our outstanding shares of capital stock, voting together as a single class. This requirement of a supermajority vote to remove directors could enable holders of a minority of our capital stock to prevent a change in the composition of our board.

Advance Notice Procedures. Our by-laws establish an advance notice procedure for stockholder proposals to be brought before an annual meeting of our stockholders, including proposed nominations of persons for election to the board of directors. Stockholders at an annual meeting will only be able to consider proposals or nominations specified in the notice of meeting or brought before the meeting by or at the direction of the board of directors or by a stockholder who was a stockholder of record on the record date for the meeting, who is entitled to vote at the meeting and who has given our Secretary timely written notice, in proper form, of the stockholder's intention to bring that business before the meeting. Although the by-laws do not give the board of directors the power to approve or disapprove stockholder nominations of candidates or proposals regarding other business to be conducted at a special or annual meeting, the by-laws may have the effect of precluding the conduct of certain business at a meeting if the proper procedures are not followed or may discourage or deter a potential acquiror from conducting a solicitation of proxies to elect its own slate of directors or otherwise attempting to obtain control of the company.

Supermajority Approval Requirements. The Delaware General Corporation Law generally provides that the affirmative vote of a majority of the shares entitled

to vote on any matter is required to amend a corporation's certificate of incorporation or by-laws, unless either a corporation's certificate of incorporation or by-laws require a greater percentage. Our certificate of incorporation provides that the affirmative vote of holders of at least 75% of the voting power of the outstanding shares of our capital stock is required to amend, alter, change or repeal our by-laws. This requirement of a supermajority vote to approve amendments to our by-laws could enable holders of a minority of our capital stock to exercise veto power over any such amendments.

Authorized but Unissued Shares. Our authorized but unissued shares of common stock and preferred stock will be available for future issuance without stockholder approval. These additional shares may be utilized for a variety of corporate purposes, including future public offerings to raise additional capital, corporate acquisitions and employee benefit plans. The existence of authorized but unissued shares of common stock and preferred stock could render more difficult or discourage an attempt to obtain control of a majority of our common stock by means of a proxy contest, tender offer, merger or otherwise.

Exclusive Forum. Our certificate of incorporation provides that, subject to limited exceptions, the state or federal court located within the State of Delaware is the sole and exclusive forum for (1) any

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derivative action or proceeding brought on our behalf, (2) any action asserting a claim of breach of a fiduciary duty owed by any of our directors, officers or other employees to us or our stockholders, (3) any action asserting a claim against us arising pursuant to any provision of the Delaware General Corporation Law, our certificate of incorporation or our by-laws, or (4) any other action asserting a claim against us that is governed by the internal affairs doctrine. Any person or entity purchasing or otherwise acquiring any interest in shares of our capital stock shall be deemed to have notice of and to have consented to the provisions of our certificate of incorporation described above. Although we believe these provisions benefit us by providing increased consistency in the application of Delaware law for the specified types of actions and proceedings, the provisions may have the effect of discouraging lawsuits against our directors and officers. The enforceability of similar choice of forum provisions in other companies' certificates of incorporation has been challenged in legal proceedings, and it is possible that, in connection with one or more actions or proceedings described above, a court could find the choice of forum provisions contained in our certificate of incorporation to be inapplicable or unenforceable.

Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law. We are subject to the provisions of Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law. In general, Section 203 prohibits a publicly held Delaware corporation from engaging in a "business combination" with an "interested stockholder" for a three-year period following the time that this stockholder becomes an interested stockholder, unless the business combination is approved in a prescribed manner. A "business combination" includes, among other things, a merger, asset or stock sale or other transaction resulting in a financial benefit to the interested stockholder. An "interested stockholder" is a person who, together with affiliates and associates, owns, or did own within three years prior to the determination of interested stockholder status, 15% or more of the corporation's voting stock.

Under Section 203, a business combination between a corporation and an interested stockholder is prohibited unless it satisfies one of the following conditions: before the stockholder became interested, the board of directors approved either the business combination or the transaction which resulted in the stockholder becoming an interested stockholder; upon consummation of the transaction which 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 voting stock outstanding, shares owned by persons who are directors and also officers, and employee stock plans, in some instances; or at or after the time the stockholder became interested, the business combination was approved by the board of directors of the corporation and authorized at an

annual or special meeting of the stockholders by the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the outstanding voting stock which is not owned by the interested stockholder.

A Delaware corporation may "opt out" of these provisions with an express provision in its original certificate of incorporation or an express provision in its certificate of incorporation or by-laws resulting from a stockholders' amendment approved by at least a majority of the outstanding voting shares. We have not opted out of these provisions. As a result, mergers or other takeover or change in control attempts of us may be discouraged or prevented.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is Computershare Trust Company, N.A. The transfer agent and registrar's address is 462 South 4th Street, Suite 1600, Louisville, Kentucky 40202.

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

The following description, together with the additional information that we include in any applicable prospectus supplements and in any related free writing prospectuses that we may authorize

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to be distributed to purchasers, summarizes the material terms and provisions of the warrants that we may offer under this prospectus. While the terms we have summarized below will apply generally to any warrants that we may offer under this prospectus, we will describe the particular terms of any series of warrants in more detail in the applicable prospectus supplement. The terms of any warrants offered under a prospectus supplement may differ from the terms described below.

We will file as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part, or will incorporate by reference from reports that we file with the SEC, the form of warrant agreement that describes the terms of the series of warrants we are offering, and any supplemental agreements, before the issuance of the related series of warrants. The following summaries of material terms and provisions of the warrants are subject to, and qualified in their entirety by reference to, all the provisions of the warrant agreement and any supplemental agreements applicable to a particular series of warrants. We urge purchasers to read the applicable prospectus supplements related to the particular series of warrants that we may offer under this prospectus, as well as any related free writing prospectuses and the complete warrant agreement and any supplemental agreements that contain the terms of the warrants.

General Terms. We may issue warrants to purchase common stock or preferred stock. We may offer warrants separately or together with one or more additional warrants, common stock or preferred stock, or any combination of those securities in the form of units, as described in the applicable prospectus supplement. If we issue warrants as part of a unit, the accompanying prospectus supplement will specify whether those warrants may be separated from the other securities in the unit prior to the expiration date of the warrants.

We will specify in a prospectus supplement the terms of the series of warrants, including, if applicable, the following:

the specific designation and aggregate number of, and the offering price at which we will issue, the warrants;

the currency or currency units in which the offering price, if any, and the exercise price are payable;

the date on which the right to exercise the warrants will begin and the date on which that right will expire or, if a holder may not continuously exercise the warrants throughout that period,

the specific date or dates on which such holder may exercise the warrants;

whether the warrants are to be sold separately or with other securities as parts of units;

whether the warrants will be issued in definitive or global form or in any combination of these forms, although, in any case, the form of a warrant included in a unit will correspond to the form of the unit and of any security included in that unit;

any applicable material U.S. federal income tax consequences;

the identity of the warrant agent for the warrants and of any other depositaries, execution or paying agents, transfer agents, registrars or other agents;

the proposed listing, if any, of the warrants or any securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants on any securities exchange;

the designation and terms of any equity securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants;

if applicable, the designation and terms of the preferred stock or common stock with which the warrants are issued and, the number of warrants issued with each security;

if applicable, the date from and after which the warrants and common stock and/or preferred stock will be separately transferable;

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the number of shares of preferred stock or the number of shares of common stock purchasable upon exercise of a warrant and the price at which those shares may be purchased;

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

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

the antidilution provisions of, and other provisions for changes to or adjustment in the exercise price of, the warrants, if any;

any redemption or call provisions; and

any additional terms of the warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange or exercise of the warrants.

Before exercising their warrants, holders of warrants will not have any of the rights of holders of the securities purchasable upon such exercise, including, in the case of warrants to purchase common stock or preferred stock, the right to receive dividends, if any, or payments upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up or to exercise voting rights, if any.

The provisions described in this section, as well as those described under "Description of Capital Stock" will apply to each warrant, as applicable, and to any common stock or preferred stock included in each warrant, as applicable.

Enforceability of Rights by Holders of Warrants. Each warrant agent will act solely as our agent under the applicable warrant agreement and will not assume any obligation or relationship of agency or trust with any holder or any warrant. A single bank or trust company may act as a warrant agent for more than one issue of warrants. A warrant agent will have no duty or responsibility in case of any default by us under the applicable warrant agreement or warrant, including any duty or responsibility to initiate any proceedings at law or otherwise, or to make any demand upon us. Any holder of a warrant may, without the consent of the related warrant

agent or the holder of any other warrant, enforce by appropriate legal action its right to exercise, and receive the securities purchasable upon exercise of, its warrants.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual and quarterly reports, current reports, proxy statements, and other information with the SEC. We make these documents publicly available, free of charge, on our website at www.acceleronpharma.com as soon as reasonably practicable after filing such documents with the SEC.

You may read and copy any materials that we file with the SEC at its Public Reference Room, 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 (800) 732-0330. Our filings are also available to the public from the website maintained by the SEC at <http://www.sec.gov>.

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to "incorporate by reference" into this prospectus the information we file with it, 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, and information in documents that we file later with the SEC will automatically update and supersede information in this prospectus. We incorporate by reference into this prospectus the documents listed below 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 we terminate or complete this offering (other than documents or information deemed to have

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been furnished and not filed in accordance with SEC rules). We hereby incorporate by reference the following documents:

Our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2016, filed with the SEC on March 1, 2017;

Our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the quarters ended March 31, 2017 and June 30, 2017, filed with the SEC on May 8, 2017 and August 3, 2017, respectively;

The information specifically incorporated by reference into our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2016 from our Definitive Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A, filed with the SEC on April 13, 2017;

Our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on April 27, 2017, May 2, 2017, May 10, 2017, June 6, 2017, June 15, 2017, June 30, 2017, July 19, 2017 and September 19, 2017; and

The description of our common stock contained in our Registration Statement on Form 8-A, filed with the SEC on September 13, 2013, including any amendments or reports filed for the purpose of updating such description.

A statement contained in a document incorporated by reference into this prospectus shall be deemed to be modified or superseded for purposes of this prospectus to the extent that a statement contained in this prospectus, any future prospectus supplement or in any other subsequently filed document that is also incorporated in this prospectus modifies or replaces such statement. Any statements so modified or superseded shall not be deemed, except as so modified or superseded, to constitute a part of this prospectus. You should not assume that the information in this prospectus or in the documents incorporated by reference is accurate as of any date other than the date on the front of this prospectus or those documents.

You may request a copy of these documents, which will be provided to you at no cost, by contacting:

Accelaron Pharma Inc.
128 Sidney Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139
(617) 649-9200

Copies of these filings are also available, without charge, through the "Investors/Media" section of our website (www.accelaronpharma.com) as soon as reasonably practicable after they are filed electronically with the SEC. The information contained on our website is not a part of this prospectus.

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the issuance of the securities offered hereby will be passed upon for us by Ropes & Gray LLP, Boston, Massachusetts. The validity of any securities will be passed upon for any underwriters or agents by counsel that we will name in the applicable prospectus supplement.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements of Accelaron Pharma Inc. appearing in Accelaron Pharma Inc.'s Annual Report (Form 10-K) for the year ended December 31, 2016, and the effectiveness of Accelaron Pharma Inc.'s internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2016 have been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, as set forth in their reports thereon, included therein, and incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements are incorporated herein by reference in reliance upon such reports given on the authority of such firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

5,405,406 Shares

Acceleron Pharma Inc.

Common stock

Prospectus supplement

**J.P. Citigroup Leerink
Morgan September 20, 2017 Partners**

