

The information in this preliminary prospectus supplement is not complete and may be changed. This preliminary prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus do not constitute an offer to sell these securities, and we are not soliciting offers to buy these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

SUBJECT TO COMPLETION
PRELIMINARY PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT DATED DECEMBER 20, 2022

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT
(To Prospectus dated March 14, 2022)

\$75,000,000 Shares of Common Stock



Terns Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

We are offering \$75,000,000 of shares of our common stock pursuant to this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. Our common stock is traded on the Nasdaq Global Select Market under the symbol "TERN." On December 19, 2022, the last reported sale price of our common stock was \$8.95.

Investing in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. You should carefully consider the risks and uncertainties described under the heading "[Risk Factors](#)" on page S-11 of this prospectus supplement and in the accompanying prospectus, as well as those contained in the other documents that are incorporated by reference and any related free writing prospectus. You should carefully read this entire prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, including any information incorporated by reference, before deciding whether to purchase shares of our common stock.

We are an "emerging growth company" under the federal securities laws and are subject to reduced public company reporting requirements.

	PER SHARE OF COMMON STOCK	TOTAL
Public offering price	\$	\$
Underwriting discounts and commissions ⁽¹⁾	\$	\$
Proceeds to Terns Pharmaceuticals, Inc., before expenses	\$	\$

⁽¹⁾ See "Underwriting" beginning on page S-21 of this prospectus supplement for additional information regarding underwriting compensation.

The underwriters may also exercise their option to purchase up to an additional _____ shares of common stock from us, at the public offering price, less the underwriting discounts and commissions, for 30 days after the date of this prospectus supplement.

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

The shares of common stock will be ready for delivery on or about December _____, 2022.

Joint Book-Running Managers

Jefferies

Cowen

Bookrunner

UBS Investment Bank

Co-Lead Managers

Mizuho

JMP Securities
A CITIZENS COMPANY

TABLE OF CONTENTS
PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT	S-1
MARKET, INDUSTRY AND OTHER DATA	S-2
PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT SUMMARY	S-3
THE OFFERING	S-9
RISK FACTORS	S-11
SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS	S-12
USE OF PROCEEDS	S-14
DILUTION	S-15
MATERIAL U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES TO NON-U.S. HOLDERS	S-17
UNDERWRITING	S-21
LEGAL MATTERS	S-30
EXPERTS	S-31
WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION	S-32
INFORMATION INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE	S-33

PROSPECTUS

	<u>PAGE</u>
ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS	1
WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION; INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE	2
ABOUT TERNS	4
RISK FACTORS	5
USE OF PROCEEDS	6
DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK	7
DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES	13
DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS	21
DESCRIPTION OF UNITS	23
GLOBAL SECURITIES	24
PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION	28
LEGAL MATTERS	30
EXPERTS	30

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

This prospectus supplement is part of a registration statement that we have filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, or the SEC, utilizing a “shelf” registration process. Under this shelf registration process, we may offer from time to time various securities, of which this offering of shares of our common stock is a part. Such registration statement also includes exhibits that provide more detail on the matters discussed in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus.

We provide information to you about this offering of shares of our common stock in two separate documents that are bound together: (1) this prospectus supplement, which describes the specific details regarding this offering; and (2) the accompanying prospectus, which provides general information, some of which may not apply to this offering. Generally, when we refer to this “prospectus,” we are referring to both documents combined. If information in this prospectus supplement is inconsistent with the accompanying prospectus, you should rely on this prospectus supplement. However, if any statement in one of these documents is inconsistent with a statement in another document having a later date—for example, a document incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement—the statement in the document having the later date modifies or supersedes the earlier statement as our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since the earlier dates.

We have not, and the underwriters have not, authorized anyone to provide any information other than that contained in or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and any free writing prospectus prepared by or on behalf of us or to which we have referred you. We and the underwriters take no responsibility for, and can provide no assurance as to the reliability of, any other information that others may give you. We are not, and the underwriters are not, making an offer to sell or soliciting an offer to buy our securities in any jurisdiction where an offer or solicitation is not authorized or in which the person making that offer or solicitation is not qualified to do so or to anyone to whom it is unlawful to make an offer or solicitation. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus, and in any free writing prospectus that we may authorize for use in connection with this offering, is accurate only as of the date of those respective documents. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates. You should read this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus, and any free writing prospectus that we may authorize for use in connection with this offering, in their entirety before making an investment decision. You should also read and consider the information in the documents to which we have referred you in the sections of this prospectus supplement entitled “Where You Can Find More Information” and “Information Incorporated by Reference.”

We are offering to sell, and seeking offers to buy, shares of common stock only in jurisdictions where offers and sales are permitted. The distribution of this prospectus and the offering of the common stock in certain jurisdictions may be restricted by law. Persons outside the United States who come into possession of this prospectus must inform themselves about, and observe any restrictions relating to, the offering of the common stock and the distribution of this prospectus outside the United States. This prospectus does not constitute, and may not be used in connection with, an offer to sell, or a solicitation of an offer to buy, any securities offered by this prospectus by any person in any jurisdiction in which it is unlawful for such person to make such an offer or solicitation.

When we refer to “Terns,” “we,” “our,” “us” and the “Company” in this prospectus, we mean Terns Pharmaceuticals, Inc., unless otherwise specified. When we refer to “you,” we mean the holders of securities of the Company.

“Terns,” “Terns Pharmaceuticals,” the Terns logo and other trademarks, trade names or service marks of Terns Pharmaceuticals, Inc. appearing in this prospectus are the property of Terns Pharmaceuticals, Inc. All other trademarks, trade names and service marks appearing in this prospectus are the property of their respective owners. Solely for convenience, the trademarks and trade names in this prospectus may be referred to without the ® and ™ symbols, but such references should not be construed as any indicator that their respective owners will not assert their rights thereto.

MARKET, INDUSTRY AND OTHER DATA

This prospectus supplement, including the information incorporated by reference herein, contains estimates, projections and other information concerning our industry, our business, and the markets for certain drugs, including data regarding the estimated size of those markets. Information that is based on estimates, forecasts, projections or similar methodologies is inherently subject to uncertainties and actual events or circumstances may differ materially from events and circumstances reflected in this information. Unless otherwise expressly stated, we obtained this industry, business, market and other data from reports, research surveys, studies and similar data prepared by third parties, industry, medical and general publications, government data and similar sources. In some cases, we do not expressly refer to the sources from which this data is derived. In that regard, when we refer to one or more sources of this type of data in any paragraph, you should assume that other data of this type appearing in the same paragraph is derived from the same sources, unless otherwise expressly stated or the context otherwise requires.

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT SUMMARY

This summary provides a general overview of selected information and does not contain all of the information you should consider before buying our common stock. Therefore, you should read the entire prospectus supplement, accompanying prospectus and any free writing prospectus that we have authorized for use in connection with this offering carefully, including the information incorporated by reference herein and therein, before deciding to invest in our common stock. Investors should carefully consider the information set forth under "Risk Factors" beginning on page S-11 of this prospectus supplement and in the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement.

Terns Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

Company Overview

We are a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company developing a portfolio of small-molecule product candidates to address serious diseases, including oncology, obesity and non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH). Our programs are based on mechanisms of action that have achieved proof-of-concept in clinical trials in indications with large unmet needs.

The most advanced product candidates in our pipeline – TERN-701, TERN-601 and TERN-501 – were internally discovered. TERN-701 is our allosteric BCR-ABL tyrosine kinase inhibitor (TKI) that is in clinical development in China for chronic myeloid leukemia (CML), a form of cancer that starts in bone marrow. We intend to initiate a Phase 1 clinical trial for TERN-701 in the United States in the second half of 2023. TERN-601 is our small-molecule glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor (GLP-1R) agonist for metabolic diseases such as obesity, with the goal of initiating a first-in-human clinical trial in 2023. TERN-501 is our highly selective thyroid hormone receptor beta (THR- β) agonist for NASH in Phase 2a development. We expect our existing cash and cash equivalents to support our operations into 2025 and be sufficient to generate three key clinical data readouts from our three programs in CML, obesity and NASH. Additionally, we are conducting pre-clinical studies exploring TERN-201, our vascular adhesion protein-1 (VAP-1) inhibitor, in combination with immune checkpoint inhibitors for solid tumor indications, and have an ongoing discovery effort for the TERN-800 series of small-molecule glucose-dependent insulinotropic polypeptide receptor (GIPR) modulators for obesity.

TERN-701: Oral, allosteric BCR-ABL tyrosine kinase inhibitor for chronic myeloid leukemia

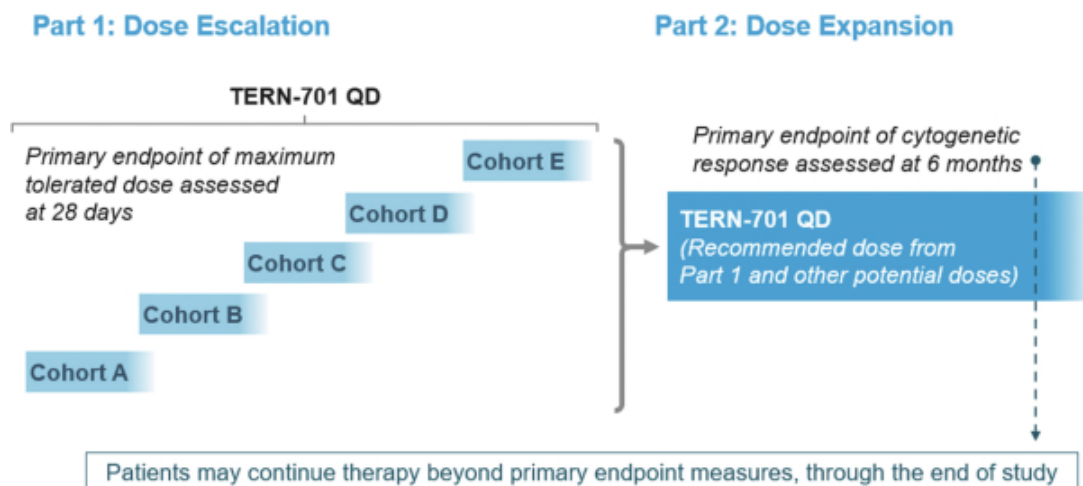
TERN-701 is our proprietary, oral, potent, allosteric BCR-ABL TKI specifically targeting the ABL myristoyl pocket for chronic myeloid leukemia. CML is a form of cancer that begins in the bone marrow and leads to growth of leukemic cells. CML accounts for approximately 15% of newly diagnosed cases of leukemia in adults. In the United States, the prevalence of CML is approximately 90,000 and is expected to reach 180,000 cases by 2030. In 2022, approximately 9,000 new cases of CML will be diagnosed, with a mortality rate of 1,200 patients expected. The standard of care (SOC) for CML includes active-site TKIs including imatinib, nilotinib, dasatinib, bosutinib and ponatinib. However, an unmet medical need remains due to (1) an increasing number of patients becoming refractory or intolerant to the current SOC, (2) BCR-ABL mutations that are difficult for active-site TKIs to treat (e.g., T315I), or (3) safety warnings for active-site TKIs used in CML patients who are resistant or intolerant to prior TKI therapy.

Allosteric TKIs, which bind to the myristoyl-binding pocket, represent a new treatment class for CML and have the potential to address active-site TKI shortcomings, including off-target activity and limited efficacy against active site resistance mutations. Asciminib is the only allosteric TKI that has been approved by the FDA for use in third-line CML patients and is being evaluated in clinical trials for earlier lines of treatment. In a Phase 3 trial, asciminib was shown to be more than twice as effective as bosutinib, a second generation active-site TKI, in achieving a major molecular response (MMR) in third-line CML patients after 96 weeks of treatment (37.6% asciminib v. 15.8% bosutinib; $p=0.001$). The discontinuation rate after 96 weeks due to the lack of efficacy or adverse events in patients on asciminib was nearly half of the rate of patients on bosutinib (31.2% asciminib v. 60.5% bosutinib).

Similar to asciminib, TERN-701 aims to address the limitations of active-site TKIs with the goal of achieving improved tumor suppression through a combination of (1) potent activity against BCR-ABL including a broad range of mutations, and (2) improved safety and tolerability profiles. As CML patient survival rates and treatment durations continue to increase, physicians are seeking additional efficacious CML therapies for patients whose tolerability, co-morbidity and/or drug-drug interaction profiles change over time, limiting their available treatment options and the effectiveness of mainstay therapies. We intend to initiate a clinical trial for TERN-701 in the second half of 2023 in the United States, with potential interim top-line readouts from initial cohorts in 2024.

We retain all worldwide development and commercialization rights for TERN-701 outside of greater China. In July 2020, Hansoh Pharmaceuticals in-licensed TERN-701 for development in the greater China region. TERN-701 is referred to by Hansoh Pharmaceuticals as HS-10382. Hansoh is responsible for all development costs in the greater China region, including the ongoing Phase 1 trial.

In May 2022, Hansoh initiated an open-label, multicenter, dose-escalation and expansion, first-in-human study in chronic or accelerated phase CML patients, who are resistant or intolerant to prior active-site BCR-ABL TKI treatment. The trial is comprised of two parts, with dose escalation being conducted in Part 1 to determine the maximum tolerated or maximum applicable dose followed by dose expansion in Part 2 of the trial, in which additional CML patients will be enrolled to receive one or more doses selected from Part 1. Part 2 of the trial will evaluate major cytogenetic response at six months as its primary endpoint, with key secondary endpoints including molecular response, hematologic response, measures of PK and an evaluation of safety and tolerability. The Phase 1 trial for TERN-701, which is conducted and funded by Hansoh in China, is illustrated below:



TERN-601: Oral, small-molecule glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) receptor agonist for obesity

We are also developing an oral small-molecule glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor (GLP-1R) agonist for the treatment of obesity known as TERN-601. Obesity represents a large unmet medical need, with recent studies estimating the aggregate U.S. national cost of obesity to exceed \$260 billion. While approximately 50% of Americans meet the criteria for medical obesity, only 2% of adults receive therapies for weight loss. GLP-1R agonism has many potentially beneficial effects including increased insulin secretion by the pancreas, reduced glucagon secretion in the liver, slowed gastric emptying into the gut, increased sense of satiety in the brain and reduced inflammation. Synthetic GLP-1 peptides have been approved for obesity and diabetes. Semaglutide (Wegovy), a GLP-1R peptide agonist recently approved for chronic weight management in overweight or obese patients, appears to be expanding the primary care market for obesity treatment, as 75% of Wegovy patients are receiving anti-obesity medication for the first time. However, approved synthetic GLP-1R peptide agonists

are biologic molecules with complex manufacturing processes and may require higher doses for weight loss or NASH treatment than for management of diabetes. These GLP-1R peptide agonists also require frequent subcutaneous injections, and titration or drug holidays for management of their poor tolerability profiles. These barriers are likely to limit their widespread use for chronic weight management, particularly if efficacious oral treatments become available.

We aim to develop small molecule, orally administered GLP-1R agonists with a convenient oral dosing schedule for the treatment of obesity. Our GLP-1R agonist program has screened more than 20,000 molecular permutations through our proprietary quantitative structure activity relationship (QSAR) model to identify several potentially suitable small-molecule scaffolds with potentially improved properties relative to other GLP-1R agonism-based approaches. We have optimized these series of compounds and identified structures that we believe are suitable for oral administration as a single-agent or in combination with other drug candidates within our pipeline, including small-molecule GIPR modulators.

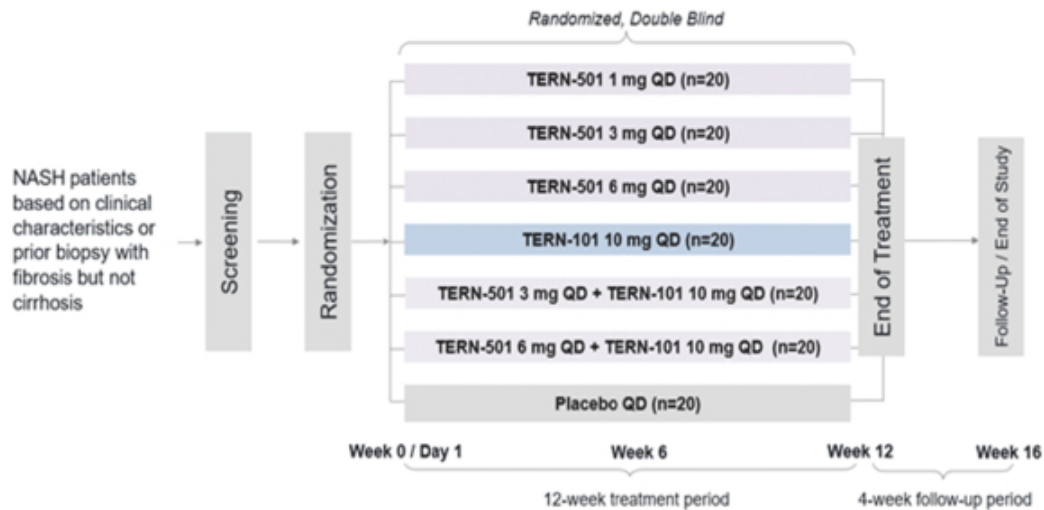
We designated a lead development candidate for our GLP-1R agonist program as TERN-601 in the fourth quarter of 2021. We are conducting IND-enabling activities for TERN-601 with the goal of initiating a first-in-human clinical trial in 2023 and receiving top-line data in 2024. We expect that the Phase 1 clinical program for TERN-601 will include a single ascending dose (SAD) trial in healthy volunteers and a multiple ascending dose (MAD) proof-of-concept trial in obese healthy volunteers and/or people with Type 2 diabetes that would potentially assess changes in body weight and glycemic control parameters, such as HbA1c. We also continue to evaluate other small-molecule GLP-1R agonists that have the potential to exhibit differentiated properties from TERN-601 and other GLP-1 product candidates.

TERN-501: Oral, thyroid hormone receptor-beta (THR- β) agonist for NASH

TERN-501 is an orally administered THR- β agonist with high metabolic stability, enhanced liver distribution and greater selectivity for THR- β compared to other THR- β agonists in development. In November 2021, we announced positive top-line data from a Phase 1 clinical trial of TERN-501 in healthy volunteers with mildly elevated low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol. This Phase 1 trial included single ascending dose (SAD), multiple ascending dose (MAD) and drug-drug interaction (DDI) cohorts evaluating the safety, tolerability, pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics of TERN-501. In the SAD and MAD cohorts, single and multiple doses of TERN-501 were generally well-tolerated with a similar incidence of adverse events (AEs) across all TERN-501 treatment groups and placebo. All AEs were mild to moderate with no apparent dose relationship, no treatment-emergent serious AEs and no discontinuations of study or study drug due to any AE. There were no cardiac safety signals, no incidence of diarrhea and no differences between TERN-501 groups and placebo in change from baseline in heart rate, blood pressure or other vital signs. Thyroid function test results were consistent with THR- β agonists currently in clinical development, and there were no findings of clinical hyper- or hypo-thyroidism. There were no differences between placebo and any TERN-501 dose group in liver function abnormalities or mean change from baseline in liver transaminases at Day 15 in the MAD cohorts. TERN-501 demonstrated a predictable pharmacokinetic profile with low variability: study drug plasma exposures were linear and approximately dose-proportional with no overlap between dose strengths. Significant effects on sex hormone binding globulin (SHBG), a key pharmacodynamic marker of THR- β engagement linked to NASH histologic efficacy, were observed following treatment with TERN-501. The SHBG increases observed with 14 days of TERN-501 treatment were significant, dose dependent and have been associated with robust reductions in magnetic resonance imaging proton density fat fraction (MRI-PDFF) and NAFLD Activity Score in a precedent late-stage clinical NASH trial. The overall pharmacokinetic profile from this trial indicates that TERN-501 is well-suited for co-formulation with other small-molecule NASH agents as an oral, once-daily fixed dose combination. In the DDI cohort, the combination of TERN-501 and TERN-101, our liver-distributed, non-bile acid FXR agonist, was well-tolerated. Preliminary pharmacokinetic results support the co-administration of TERN-501 and TERN-101 in NASH patients, with no apparent need for dose adjustment.

In April 2022, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) cleared our investigational new drug (IND) application for our clinical-stage combination therapy candidates in NASH, including combinations of TERN-501 and TERN-101 as well as future studies of other potential combination therapy regimens. Under

the IND, we are proceeding with a multicenter randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled Phase 2a clinical trial in noncirrhotic NASH patients using a factorial design, which includes both monotherapy and combination arms of TERN-501 and TERN-101. This Phase 2a trial, known as the DUET trial, is expected to enroll approximately 140 adult patients with elevated body mass index (BMI \geq 25 kg/m²) and NASH with fibrosis, but not cirrhosis, based on prior liver biopsy and/or imaging criteria and clinical criteria. All patients must have liver fat content measured by MRI-PDFF of \geq 10%, MRI corrected T1 (cT1) relaxation time of \geq 800 msec, and meet other inclusion and exclusion criteria. The clinical trial includes a 12-week treatment period and a 4-week follow-up period. The primary endpoint will be the relative change from baseline in MRI-PDFF at Week 12 for TERN-501 monotherapy compared with placebo. Secondary endpoints include assessment of changes in PDFF (combination vs. placebo) and cT1 (TERN-501 monotherapy vs. placebo as well as TERN-501 and TERN-101 combination vs. placebo). Dosing in the DUET trial started in July 2022, and top-line data are expected in the second half of 2023. The Phase 2a DUET trial design is illustrated in the figure below:



TERN-201: Oral, vascular adhesion protein-1 (VAP-1) inhibitor in combination with immune checkpoint inhibitors for solid tumors

TERN-201 is a highly-selective inhibitor of VAP-1 that has demonstrated sustained target engagement in clinical trials without the off-target liabilities associated with other VAP-1 inhibitors in development. As part of our oncology pipeline development, we are engaging in preclinical research to evaluate the use of TERN-201 in combination with immune checkpoint inhibitors for solid tumor indications.

VAP-1 is an adhesion molecule and amine oxidase enzyme expressed on the surface of endothelial cells that supports rolling, adhesion, and transmigration of certain leukocytes into sites of inflammation. VAP-1 has also been associated with the recruitment of certain lymphocytes to several human tumors, including hepatocellular carcinoma and head and neck cancer, where VAP-1 expressed on tumor endothelium supports lymphocyte binding. Additionally, bioinformatic analyses have shown that VAP-1 expression is associated with poor prognosis of glioma patients. An analysis of various human cancers revealed that VAP-1 expression was a negative prognostic factor in patients with colorectal, renal, and urothelial cancers. In mouse models of melanoma and lymphoma, VAP-1 inhibition was also shown to decrease the number of CD11b-positive cells, which may suppress immune response, potentially resulting in the slowing of tumor growth.

Efficacy of cancer immunotherapy utilizing immune checkpoint inhibitors such as anti-CTLA4 and PD-1/PD-L1 antibodies is often diminished by underlying immunosuppressive resistance to the therapies in the tumor microenvironment. VAP-1 may contribute to tumor progression through migration of such immunosuppressive myeloid cells. In a recent publication, VAP-1 inhibition was shown to reduce tumor growth in murine colon

cancer models. Furthermore, synergistic effects were observed with VAP-1 inhibition in combination with anti-CTLA4 or anti-PD-1 antibodies.

TERN-800 Series: Discovery series of small-molecule glucose-dependent insulinotropic polypeptide receptor (GIPR) modulators for obesity

As part of our ongoing discovery efforts, we are evaluating a family of small-molecule glucose-dependent insulinotropic polypeptide (GIP) receptor modulators, designated as the TERN-800 series, for obesity. GIP is secreted in response to nutrient ingestion to enhance meal-stimulated insulin secretion in a glucose-dependent manner by activating its associated GIP receptor (GIPR) in pancreatic beta cells and other cells in various tissues. In preclinical studies, GIPR activation appears to reduce food intake and promote weight loss when combined with its incretin partner GLP-1. The overlapping body weight-lowering actions of both GIP and GLP-1 suggests that combining the actions of these two peptide hormones may bolster glucose-lowering and appetite-suppressing effects beyond those observed with individual agents.

In a preclinical study, two weeks of simultaneous administration of equimolar amounts of a GLP-1R and a GIPR agonist reduced food intake, body weight, and fat mass in mice to a greater extent than either agent alone. Late stage dual GLP-1/GIP receptor agonists, tirzepatide (Lilly) and NNC0090-2746 (Novo Nordisk), have shown improved glycemic control compared to GLP-1 agonist alone, and decreased body weight in clinical trials. Additionally, a monomolecular combination of a GIPR antagonist/GLP-1R agonist, AMG 133 (Amgen), enhanced the observed weight loss in animal obesity models. In a Phase 1 clinical study of AMG 133, a single high dose resulted in approximately 8 kilograms of weight loss.

Similar to our discovery process for GLP-1, we have synthesized small molecule ligands targeting the GIP receptor and are currently assessing their activity at relevant G-protein coupled receptors. We plan to combine GIPR modulators with GLP-1 receptor agonists, such as TERN-601, for the treatment of obesity and metabolic diseases. We believe our small molecules have the advantage of oral bioavailability and the ability to dose adjust to achieve an optimal response. Combining GIPR modulators with GLP-1 represents a promising strategy under investigation for the treatment of obesity.

Recent Developments

In March 2022, we entered into a sales agreement, or the Sales Agreement, for an “at the market” offering with Cowen and Company, LLC, or Cowen, relating to shares of our common stock having an aggregate offering price of up to \$75.0 million. Subsequent to September 30, 2022 and through the date of this prospectus supplement, we have issued 4,122,628 shares of common stock pursuant to the Sales Agreement for gross proceeds of \$25.8 million. As of the date of this prospectus supplement, approximately \$49.2 million of shares of common stock remains available for sale under the Sales Agreement. There can be no assurance as to whether or, if so, how many or when, additional shares will be issued by us thereunder.

About Terns

We were incorporated under the laws of the Cayman Islands on December 9, 2016. On December 29, 2020, we effected a de-registration under the Cayman Islands Companies Law (2020 Revision) and a domestication under Section 388 of the Delaware General Corporation Law (by means of filing a certificate of domestication with the Secretary of State of Delaware), pursuant to which our jurisdiction of incorporation was changed from the Cayman Islands to the State of Delaware.

Our principal executive offices are located at 1065 East Hillsdale Boulevard, Suite 100, Foster City, California 94404, and our telephone number is (650) 525-5535. Our corporate website address is www.ternspharma.com. Information contained on, or accessible through, our website shall not be deemed incorporated into and is not a part of this prospectus or the registration statement of which it forms a part. We have included our website in this prospectus solely as an inactive textual reference.

Implications of Being an Emerging Growth Company

We are an emerging growth company as defined in the Jumpstart Our Business Startups Act of 2012, or the JOBS Act. We will remain an emerging growth company until the earliest of (i) the last day of the fiscal year

following the fifth anniversary of the consummation of our initial public offering, (ii) the last day of the fiscal year in which we have total annual gross revenue of at least \$1.235 billion, (iii) the last day of the fiscal year in which we are deemed to be a “large accelerated filer” as defined in Rule 12b-2 under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or the Exchange Act, which would occur if the market value of our common stock held by non-affiliates exceeded \$700.0 million as of the last business day of the second fiscal quarter of such year or (iv) the date on which we have issued more than \$1.0 billion in non-convertible debt securities during the prior three-year period. An emerging growth company may take advantage of specified reduced reporting requirements and is relieved of certain other significant requirements that are otherwise generally applicable to public companies. As an emerging growth company:

- We will present in this prospectus only two years of audited consolidated financial statements, plus unaudited condensed consolidated financial statements for any interim period, and related management’s discussion and analysis of financial condition and results of operations;
- We will avail ourselves of the exemption from the requirement to obtain an attestation and report from our auditors on the assessment of our internal control over financial reporting pursuant to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002;
- We will provide less extensive disclosure about our executive compensation arrangements; and
- We will not require stockholder non-binding advisory votes on executive compensation or golden parachute arrangements.

Accordingly, the information contained herein may be different than the information you receive from our competitors that are public companies or other public companies in which you hold stock.

In addition, the JOBS Act provides that an emerging growth company can take advantage of an extended transition period for complying with new or revised accounting standards. This provision allows an emerging growth company to delay the adoption of some accounting standards until those standards would otherwise apply to private companies. We have elected to avail ourselves of this exemption from new or revised accounting standards, and therefore we will not be subject to the same requirements to adopt new or revised accounting standards as other public companies that are not emerging growth companies.

THE OFFERING

Common Stock Offered by Us	shares of our common stock.
Underwriters' Option to Purchase Additional Shares	The underwriters have the option to purchase up to an additional shares of our common stock, which they may exercise, from time to time, in whole or in part, for a period of 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement.
Common Stock Outstanding After This Offering	shares (or shares if the underwriters exercise their option to purchase additional shares in full).
Use of Proceeds	We intend to use the net proceeds from this offering, together with our existing cash and cash equivalents, as follows: (1) to advance our clinical-stage development pipeline, including the TERN-501, TERN-701 and TERN-601 clinical programs and (2) for working capital and general corporate purposes. See "Use of Proceeds" on page S-14.
Risk Factors	You should read the "Risk Factors" section of this prospectus supplement and in the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement for a discussion of factors to consider before deciding to invest in shares of our common stock.
Symbol on the Nasdaq Global Select Market	"TERN".

The number of shares of common stock to be outstanding after this offering is based on 37,613,829 shares of our common stock outstanding as of September 30, 2022 and excludes, in each case as of September 30, 2022 (unless otherwise indicated):

- \$75.0 million of shares of our common stock remaining available for sale by us as of September 30, 2022 under our "at the market" offering facility with Cowen, of which 4,122,628 shares of our common stock (or \$25.8 million in gross proceeds) were sold subsequent to September 30, 2022;
- 4,760,085 shares of our common stock issuable upon the exercise of stock options to purchase common stock that were outstanding as of September 30, 2022, with a weighted average exercise price of \$8.24 per share;
- 100,880 shares of our common stock issuable upon the vesting of restricted stock units that were unvested as of September 30, 2022;
- 1,108,605 shares of our common stock reserved for issuance pursuant to future awards under our 2021 Incentive Award Plan, as well as any automatic increases in the number of shares of our common stock reserved for future issuance under this plan;
- 408,134 shares of our common stock reserved for issuance pursuant to future awards under our Employee Stock Purchase Plan, as well as any automatic increases in the number of shares of our common stock reserved for future issuance under this plan;
- 1,400,000 shares of our common stock reserved for issuance pursuant to future awards under our Employee Inducement Award Plan; and
- 14,630,000 shares of our common stock issuable upon the exercise of pre-funded warrants with an exercise price of \$0.0001 per pre-funded warrant.

[Table of Contents](#)

In addition, unless we specifically state otherwise, all information in this prospectus supplement assumes no exercise of outstanding pre-funded warrants or stock options or settlement of outstanding restricted stock units subsequent to September 30, 2022.

Except as otherwise indicated, all information in this prospectus supplement assumes no exercise by the underwriters of their option to purchase additional shares of our common stock.

In March 2022, we entered into the Sales Agreement for an “at the market” offering with Cowen relating to shares of our common stock having an aggregate offering price of up to \$75.0 million. Subsequent to September 30, 2022 and through the date of this prospectus supplement, we have issued 4,122,628 shares of common stock pursuant to the Sales Agreement for gross proceeds of \$25.8 million. As of the date of this prospectus supplement, approximately \$49.2 million of shares of common stock remains available for sale under the Sales Agreement. There can be no assurance as to whether or, if so, how many or when, additional shares will be issued by us thereunder.

RISK FACTORS

You should consider carefully the risks described below and discussed under the section captioned "Risk Factors" contained in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2021, as updated by our subsequent filings under the Exchange Act, each of which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement in its entirety, together with other information in this prospectus supplement, and the information and documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement, and any free writing prospectus that we have authorized for use in connection with this offering before you make a decision to invest in our common stock. If any of the following events actually occur, our business, operating results, prospects or financial condition could be materially and adversely affected. This could cause the trading price of our common stock to decline and you may lose all or part of your investment. The risks described below are not the only ones that we face. Additional risks not presently known to us or that we currently deem immaterial may also affect our business operations.

Risks Relating to this Offering

Our management team may invest or spend the proceeds of this offering in ways with which you may not agree or in ways which may not yield a significant return.

Our management will have broad discretion over the use of proceeds from this offering. We intend to use the net proceeds from this offering, together with our existing cash and cash equivalents, (1) to advance our clinical-stage development pipeline, including the TERN-501, TERN-701 and TERN-601 clinical programs and (2) for working capital and general corporate purposes. Our management will have considerable discretion in the application of the net proceeds, and you will not have the opportunity, as part of your investment decision, to assess whether the proceeds are being used appropriately. In particular, management may determine to prioritize resources to develop certain programs based on a variety of factors, including, among others, the receipt of clinical and pre-clinical data, changes in the regulatory landscape, commercial potential of a program, additional financial commitments and competitive factors. The net proceeds may be used for corporate purposes that do not increase our operating results or enhance the value of our common stock.

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

The price per share of our common stock being offered may be higher than the net tangible book value per share of our common stock outstanding prior to this offering. Assuming aggregate proceeds of \$ million in this offering, and after deducting commissions and estimated aggregate offering expenses payable by us, you will suffer immediate and substantial dilution of \$ per share, representing the difference between the as adjusted net tangible book value per share of our common stock as of September 30, 2022 after giving effect to this offering and the offering price of \$ per share. See the section entitled "Dilution" below for a more detailed discussion of the dilution you will incur if you purchase common stock in this offering.

You may experience dilution as a result of future equity offerings.

In order to raise additional capital, we expect to in the future offer additional shares of our common stock or other securities convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock. For example, on March 14, 2022, we filed a Registration Statement on Form S-3 (File No. 333-263370), covering the offering of up to \$250.0 million of shares of common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, warrants and units. On March 17, 2022, we filed a prospectus supplement and entered into the Sales Agreement with Cowen to sell shares of our common stock, from time to time, with aggregate gross sales proceeds of up to \$75.0 million through an "at the market" offering facility under which Cowen will act as our sales agent. Pursuant to the Sales Agreement, we have sold 4,122,628 shares of our common stock subsequent to September 30, 2022. We cannot assure you that we will be able to sell shares or other securities in any other offering at a price per share that is equal to or greater than the price per share paid by investors in this offering, and investors purchasing shares or other securities in the future could have rights superior to existing stockholders. The price per share at which we sell additional shares of our common stock or other securities convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock in future transactions may be higher or lower than the price per share in this offering. As of September 30, 2022, approximately 22.4 million shares of our common stock are subject to outstanding pre-funded warrants, subject to outstanding options, issuable upon vesting of outstanding restricted stock units, or are reserved for future issuance under our equity incentive plans and are eligible for sale in the public market to the extent permitted by the provisions of various vesting schedules and Rule 144 and Rule 701 under the Securities Act.

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus supplement contains forward-looking statements concerning our business, operations and financial performance and condition, as well as our plans, objectives and expectations for our business, operations and financial performance and condition. Any statements contained herein that are not statements of historical facts may be deemed to be forward-looking statements. These statements involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties related to the global COVID-19 pandemic and other important factors that are in some cases beyond our control and may cause our actual results, performance or achievements to be materially different from any future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements.

In some cases, you can identify forward-looking statements by terminology such as “aim,” “anticipate,” “assume,” “believe,” “contemplate,” “continue,” “could,” “due,” “estimate,” “expect,” “goal,” “intend,” “may,” “objective,” “plan,” “predict,” “potential,” “positioned,” “seek,” “should,” “target,” “will,” “would” and other similar expressions that are predictions of or indicate future events and future trends, or the negative of these terms or other comparable terminology. These forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, statements about:

- our expectations with regard to the results of our clinical studies, preclinical studies and research and development programs, including the timing and availability of data from such studies;
- the timing of commencement of future nonclinical studies and clinical trials and research and development programs;
- our clinical and regulatory development plans;
- our anticipated use of proceeds from this offering;
- our expectations regarding the potential market size and size of the potential patient populations for our product candidates and any future product candidates if approved for commercial use;
- our ability to acquire, discover, develop and advance product candidates into, and successfully complete, clinical trials;
- our intentions and our ability to establish collaborations and/or partnerships;
- the timing or likelihood of regulatory filings and approvals for our product candidates;
- our commercialization, marketing and manufacturing capabilities and expectations;
- our intentions with respect to the commercialization of our product candidates;
- the pricing and reimbursement of our product candidates, if approved;
- the potential effects of COVID-19, inflation and economic uncertainty on our preclinical and clinical programs and business;
- the implementation of our business model and strategic plans for our business and product candidates, including additional indications which we may pursue;
- the scope of protection we are able to establish, maintain, protect and enforce for intellectual property rights covering our product candidates including the projected terms of patent protection;
- estimates of our expenses, future revenue, capital requirements, our needs for additional financing and our ability to obtain additional capital and the timing of the sufficiency of our capital resources;
- our future financial performance;
- developments and projections relating to our competitors and our industry, including competing products; and
- other risks and uncertainties, including those listed under the caption “Risk Factors.”

You should read this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, and the documents incorporated by reference herein completely and with the understanding that our actual results may differ materially from what we expect as expressed or implied by our forward-looking statements. In light of the significant risks and uncertainties to which our forward-looking statements are subject, you should not place undue reliance on or regard these statements as a representation or warranty by us or any other person that we will achieve our objectives and plans in any specified timeframe, or at all. We discuss many of these risks in greater detail in the documents incorporated by reference herein, including under the heading “Risk Factors.” These forward-looking statements represent our

[Table of Contents](#)

estimates and assumptions only as of the dates of this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein, and any free writing prospectus, as applicable, regardless of the time of delivery of this prospectus supplement or any sale of our securities and, except as required by law, we undertake no obligation to update or revise publicly any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise after the date of this prospectus supplement. For all forward-looking statements, we claim the protection of the safe harbor for forward-looking statements contained in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995.

USE OF PROCEEDS

We estimate that we will receive net proceeds of approximately \$ _____ million, after deducting the underwriting discounts and commissions and estimated offering expenses payable by us. If the underwriters exercise their option to purchase up to an additional _____ shares in full, we estimate that the net proceeds from the sale of the shares in this offering will be approximately \$ _____ million.

We intend to use the net proceeds from this offering, together with our existing cash and cash equivalents, as follows: (1) to advance our clinical-stage development pipeline, including the TERN-501, TERN-701 and TERN-601 clinical programs; and (2) for working capital and general corporate purposes.

The amounts and timing of our actual expenditures will depend on numerous factors, including our research and development efforts with respect to our product candidates, as well as the amount of cash used in our operations and the factors described under “Risk Factors” in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and in the documents incorporated by reference herein. We therefore cannot estimate with certainty the amount of net proceeds to be used for the purposes described above. We may find it necessary or advisable to use the net proceeds for other purposes, and we will have broad discretion in the application of the net proceeds. Pending the uses described above, we plan to invest the net proceeds, if any, from this offering in short-term, investment-grade, interest-bearing securities.

DILUTION

Our net tangible book value as of September 30, 2022 was approximately \$183.7 million, or \$4.88 per share. Net tangible book value per share is determined by dividing our total tangible assets, less total liabilities, by the number of shares of our common stock outstanding as of September 30, 2022. Dilution in net tangible book value per share represents the difference between the amount per share paid by purchasers of shares of our common stock in this offering and the as adjusted net tangible book value per share of our common stock immediately after giving effect to this offering.

After giving effect to the sale of shares of our common stock at the public offering price of \$ _____ per share of common stock and after deducting underwriting discounts and commissions and estimated offering expenses payable by us, our as adjusted net tangible book value as of September 30, 2022 would have been \$ _____ million, or \$ _____ per share. This represents an immediate increase in net tangible book value of \$ _____ per share to existing stockholders and immediate dilution of \$ _____ 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:

Public offering price per share	\$ _____
Net tangible book value per share as of September 30, 2022	\$ 4.88
Increase per share attributable to new investors	\$ _____
As adjusted net tangible book value per share after this offering	_____
Dilution per share to new investors	\$ _____

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

To the extent that outstanding pre-funded warrants or options are exercised or outstanding restricted stock awards vest, investors purchasing our common stock in this offering may experience further dilution. In addition, we may choose to raise additional capital due to market conditions or strategic considerations even if we believe we have sufficient funds for our current or future operating plans. To the extent that we raise additional capital through the sale of equity or convertible debt securities, the issuance of these securities could result in further dilution to our stockholders.

The above discussion and table are based on 37,613,829 shares of our common stock outstanding as of September 30, 2022 and excludes, in each case as of September 30, 2022 (unless otherwise indicated):

- \$75.0 million of shares of our common stock remaining available for sale by us as of September 30, 2022 under our “at the market” offering facility with Cowen, of which 4,122,628 shares of our common stock (or \$25.8 million in gross proceeds) were sold subsequent to September 30, 2022;
- 4,760,085 shares of our common stock issuable upon the exercise of stock options to purchase common stock that were outstanding as of September 30, 2022, with a weighted average exercise price of \$8.24 per share;
- 100,880 shares of our common stock issuable upon the vesting of restricted stock units that were invested as of September 30, 2022;
- 1,108,605 shares of our common stock reserved for issuance pursuant to future awards under our 2021 Incentive Award Plan, as well as any automatic increases in the number of shares of our common stock reserved for future issuance under this plan;

[Table of Contents](#)

- 408,134 shares of our common stock reserved for issuance pursuant to future awards under our Employee Stock Purchase Plan, as well as any automatic increases in the number of shares of our common stock reserved for future issuance under this plan;
- 1,400,000 shares of our common stock reserved for issuance pursuant to future awards under our Employee Inducement Award Plan; and
- 14,630,000 shares of our common stock issuable upon the exercise of pre-funded warrants with an exercise price of \$0.0001 per pre-funded warrant.

In March 2022, we entered into the Sales Agreement for an “at the market” offering with Cowen relating to shares of our common stock having an aggregate offering price of up to \$75.0 million. Subsequent to September 30, 2022 and through the date of this prospectus supplement, we have issued 4,122,628 shares of common stock pursuant to the Sales Agreement for gross proceeds of \$25.8 million. As of the date of this prospectus supplement, approximately \$49.2 million of shares of common stock remains available for sale under the Sales Agreement. There can be no assurance as to whether or, if so, how many or when, additional shares will be issued by us thereunder.

MATERIAL U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES TO NON-U.S. HOLDERS

The following discussion is a summary of the material U.S. federal income tax consequences to Non-U.S. Holders (as defined below) of the purchase, ownership and disposition of our common stock issued pursuant to this offering, but does not purport to be a complete analysis of all potential tax effects. The effects of other U.S. federal tax laws, such as estate and gift tax laws, and any applicable state, local or non-U.S. tax laws are not discussed. This discussion is based on the U.S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or the Code, Treasury Regulations promulgated thereunder, judicial decisions, and published rulings and administrative pronouncements of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, or the IRS, in each case in effect as of the date hereof. These authorities may change or be subject to differing interpretations. Any such change or differing interpretation may be applied retroactively in a manner that could adversely affect a Non-U.S. Holder. We have not sought and will not seek any rulings from the IRS regarding the matters discussed below. There can be no assurance the IRS or a court will not take a contrary position to that discussed below regarding the tax consequences of the purchase, ownership and disposition of our common stock.

This discussion is limited to Non-U.S. Holders that hold our common stock as a “capital asset” within the meaning of Section 1221 of the Code (generally, property held for investment). This discussion does not address all U.S. federal income tax consequences relevant to a Non-U.S. Holder’s particular circumstances, including the impact of the Medicare contribution tax on net investment income and the alternative minimum tax. In addition, it does not address consequences relevant to Non-U.S. Holders subject to special rules, including, without limitation:

- U.S. expatriates and former citizens or long-term residents of the United States;
- persons holding our common stock as part of a hedge, straddle or other risk reduction strategy or as part of a conversion transaction or other integrated investment;
- banks, insurance companies, and other financial institutions;
- brokers, dealers or traders in securities;
- “controlled foreign corporations,” “passive foreign investment companies,” and corporations that accumulate earnings to avoid U.S. federal income tax;
- partnerships or other entities or arrangements treated as partnerships for U.S. federal income tax purposes (and investors therein);
- tax-exempt organizations or governmental organizations;
- persons deemed to sell our common stock under the constructive sale provisions of the Code;
- persons who hold or receive our common stock pursuant to the exercise of any employee stock option or otherwise as compensation;
- tax-qualified retirement plans; and
- “qualified foreign pension funds” as defined in Section 897(l)(2) of the Code and entities all of the interests of which are held by qualified foreign pension funds.

If an entity or arrangement treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes holds our common stock, the tax treatment of a partner in the partnership will depend on the status of the partner, the activities of the partnership (or such other entity or arrangement) and certain determinations made at the partner level. Accordingly, partnerships holding our common stock and the partners in such partnerships should consult their tax advisors regarding the U.S. federal income tax consequences to them.

THIS DISCUSSION IS NOT TAX ADVICE. INVESTORS SHOULD CONSULT THEIR TAX ADVISORS WITH RESPECT TO THE APPLICATION OF THE U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX LAWS TO THEIR PARTICULAR SITUATIONS AS WELL AS ANY TAX CONSEQUENCES OF THE PURCHASE, OWNERSHIP AND DISPOSITION OF OUR COMMON STOCK ARISING UNDER THE U.S. FEDERAL ESTATE OR GIFT TAX LAWS OR UNDER THE LAWS OF ANY STATE, LOCAL OR NON-U.S. TAXING JURISDICTION OR UNDER ANY APPLICABLE INCOME TAX TREATY.

Definition of a Non-U.S. Holder

For purposes of this discussion, a “Non-U.S. Holder” is any beneficial owner of our common stock that is neither a “U.S. person” nor an entity or arrangement treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes. A U.S. person is any person that, for U.S. federal income tax purposes, is or is treated as any of the following:

- (a) an individual who is a citizen or resident of the United States;
- (b) a corporation created or organized under the laws of the United States, any state thereof or the District of Columbia;
- (c) an estate, the income of which is subject to U.S. federal income tax regardless of its source; or
- (d) a trust that (1) is subject to the primary supervision of a U.S. court and all substantial decisions of which are subject to the control of one or more “United States persons” (within the meaning of Section 7701(a)(30) of the Code), or (2) has a valid election in effect to be treated as a United States person for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

Distributions

We do not currently intend to pay any cash dividends on our common stock in the foreseeable future. However, if we do make distributions of cash or property on our common stock, such distributions will constitute dividends for U.S. federal income tax purposes to the extent paid from our current or accumulated earnings and profits, as determined under U.S. federal income tax principles. Amounts not treated as dividends for U.S. federal income tax purposes will constitute a return of capital and first be applied against and reduce a Non-U.S. Holder’s adjusted tax basis in its common stock, but not below zero. Any excess will be treated as capital gain and will be treated as described below under “-Sale or Other Taxable Disposition.”

Subject to the discussion below regarding effectively connected income, dividends paid to a Non-U.S. Holder will be subject to U.S. federal withholding tax at a rate of 30% of the gross amount of the dividends (or such lower rate specified by an applicable income tax treaty, provided the Non-U.S. Holder furnishes a valid IRS Form W-8BEN or W-8BEN-E (or other applicable documentation) certifying qualification for the lower treaty rate). A Non-U.S. Holder that does not timely furnish the required documentation, but that qualifies for a reduced treaty rate, may obtain a refund of any excess amounts withheld by timely filing an appropriate claim for refund with the IRS. Non-U.S. Holders should consult their tax advisors regarding their entitlement to benefits under any applicable tax treaties.

If dividends paid to a Non-U.S. Holder are effectively connected with the Non-U.S. Holder’s conduct of a trade or business within the United States (and, if required by an applicable income tax treaty, the Non-U.S. Holder maintains a permanent establishment in the United States to which such dividends are attributable), the Non-U.S. Holder will be exempt from the U.S. federal withholding tax described above. To claim the exemption, the Non-U.S. Holder must furnish to the applicable withholding agent a valid IRS Form W-8ECI, certifying that the dividends are effectively connected with the Non-U.S. Holder’s conduct of a trade or business within the United States.

Any such effectively connected dividends will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on a net income basis at the regular rates applicable to U.S. persons. A Non-U.S. Holder that is a corporation also may be subject to a branch profits tax at a rate of 30% (or such lower rate specified by an applicable income tax treaty) on such effectively connected dividends, as adjusted for certain items. Non-U.S. Holders should consult their tax advisors regarding any applicable tax treaties that may provide for different rules.

Sale or Other Taxable Disposition

A Non-U.S. Holder will not be subject to U.S. federal income tax on any gain realized upon the sale or other taxable disposition of our common stock unless:

- the gain is effectively connected with the Non-U.S. Holder’s conduct of a trade or business within the United States (and, if required by an applicable income tax treaty, the Non-U.S. Holder maintains a permanent establishment in the United States to which such gain is attributable);
- the Non-U.S. Holder is a nonresident alien individual present in the United States for 183 days or more during the taxable year of the disposition and certain other requirements are met; or

[Table of Contents](#)

- our common stock constitutes a U.S. real property interest, orUSRPI, by reason of our status as a U.S. real property holding corporation, orUSRPHC, for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

Gain described in the first bullet point above generally will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on a net income basis at the regular rates applicable to U.S. persons. A Non-U.S. Holder that is a corporation also may be subject to a branch profits tax at a rate of 30% (or such lower rate specified by an applicable income tax treaty) on such effectively connected gain, as adjusted for certain items.

A Non-U.S. Holder described in the second bullet point above will be subject to U.S. federal income tax at a rate of 30% (or such lower rate specified by an applicable income tax treaty) on gain realized upon the sale or other taxable disposition of our common stock, which may be offset by certain U.S. source capital losses of the Non-U.S. Holder (even though the individual is not considered a resident of the United States), provided the Non-U.S. Holder has timely filed U.S. federal income tax returns with respect to such losses.

With respect to the third bullet point above, we believe we currently are not, and do not anticipate becoming, a USRPHC. Because the determination of whether we are a USRPHC depends, however, on the fair market value of our USRPIs relative to the fair market value of our non-U.S. real property interests and our other business assets, there can be no assurance we currently are not a USRPHC or will not become one in the future. Even if we are or were to become a USRPHC, gain arising from the sale or other taxable disposition of our common stock by a Non-U.S. Holder will not be subject to U.S. federal income tax if our common stock is "regularly traded," as defined by applicable Treasury Regulations, on an established securities market, and such Non-U.S. Holder owned, actually and constructively, 5% or less of our common stock throughout the shorter of the five-year period ending on the date of the sale or other taxable disposition or the Non-U.S. Holder's holding period.

Non-U.S. Holders should consult their tax advisors regarding any applicable tax treaties that may provide for different rules.

Information Reporting and Backup Withholding

Payments of dividends on our common stock will not be subject to backup withholding, provided the Non-U.S. Holder certifies its non-U.S. status, such as by furnishing a valid IRS Form W-8BEN, W-8BEN-E or W-8ECI, or otherwise establishes an exemption. However, information returns are required to be filed with the IRS in connection with any distributions on our common stock paid to the Non-U.S. Holder, regardless of whether such distributions constitute dividends or whether any tax was actually withheld. In addition, proceeds of the sale or other taxable disposition of our common stock within the United States or conducted through certain U.S.-related brokers generally will not be subject to backup withholding or information reporting if the applicable withholding agent receives the certification described above or the Non-U.S. Holder otherwise establishes an exemption. Proceeds of a disposition of our common stock conducted through a non-U.S. office of a non-U.S. broker that does not have certain enumerated relationships with the United States generally will not be subject to backup withholding or information reporting.

Copies of information returns that are filed with the IRS may also be made available under the provisions of an applicable treaty or agreement to the tax authorities of the country in which the Non-U.S. Holder resides or is established.

Backup withholding is not an additional tax. Any amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules may be allowed as a refund or a credit against a Non-U.S. Holder's U.S. federal income tax liability, provided the required information is timely furnished to the IRS.

Additional Withholding Tax on Payments Made to Foreign Accounts

Withholding taxes may be imposed under Sections 1471 to 1474 of the Code (such Sections commonly referred to as the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act, or FATCA) on certain types of payments made to non-U.S. financial institutions and certain other non-U.S. entities. Specifically, a 30% withholding tax may be imposed on dividends on, and, subject to the proposed Treasury Regulations discussed below, gross proceeds from the sale or other disposition of, our common stock paid to a "foreign financial institution" or a "non-financial foreign entity" (each as

[Table of Contents](#)

defined in the Code), unless (1) the foreign financial institution undertakes certain diligence and reporting obligations, (2) the non-financial foreign entity either certifies it does not have any “substantial United States owners” (as defined in the Code) or furnishes identifying information regarding each substantial United States owner, or (3) the foreign financial institution or non-financial foreign entity otherwise qualifies for an exemption from these rules. If the payee is a foreign financial institution and is subject to the diligence and reporting requirements in (1) above, it must enter into an agreement with the U.S. Department of the Treasury requiring, among other things, that it undertake to identify accounts held by certain “specified United States persons” or “United States owned foreign entities” (each as defined in the Code), annually report certain information about such accounts, and withhold 30% on certain payments to non-compliant foreign financial institutions and certain other account holders. Foreign financial institutions located in jurisdictions that have an intergovernmental agreement with the United States governing FATCA may be subject to different rules.

Under applicable Treasury Regulations and administrative guidance, withholding under FATCA generally applies to payments of dividends on our common stock. While withholding under FATCA would have applied also to payments of gross proceeds from the sale or other disposition of our common stock beginning on January 1, 2019, proposed Treasury Regulations eliminate FATCA withholding on payments of gross proceeds entirely. Taxpayers generally may rely on these proposed Treasury Regulations until final Treasury Regulations are issued.

Prospective investors should consult their tax advisors regarding the potential application of withholding under FATCA to their investment in our common stock.

UNDERWRITING

We are offering the shares of common stock described in this prospectus supplement through a number of underwriters. Jefferies LLC and Cowen and Company, LLC are acting as joint book-running managers of the offering and as representatives of the underwriters. We intend to enter into an underwriting agreement with the underwriters. Subject to the terms and conditions of the underwriting agreement, we have agreed to sell to the underwriters, and each underwriter has severally agreed to purchase, at the public offering price less the underwriting discounts and commissions set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement, the number of shares of common stock listed next to its name in the following table:

NAME	NUMBER OF SHARES
Jefferies LLC	
Cowen and Company, LLC	
UBS Securities LLC	
Mizuho Securities USA LLC	
JMP Securities LLC	
Total	

The underwriters are committed to purchase all the shares of common stock offered by us if they purchase any shares. The underwriting agreement also provides that if an underwriter defaults, the purchase commitments of non-defaulting underwriters may also be increased or the offering may be terminated.

The underwriters propose to offer the shares of common stock directly to the public at the public offering price set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement and to certain dealers at that price less a concession not in excess of \$ _____ per share. After the initial offering of the shares to the public, if all of the shares are not sold at the public offering price, the underwriters may change the offering price and the other selling terms. Sales of any shares made outside of the United States may be made by affiliates of the underwriters. The offering of the shares by the underwriters is subject to receipt and acceptance and subject to the underwriters' right to reject any order in whole or in part.

The underwriters have an option to buy up to _____ additional shares of common stock from us to cover sales of shares by the underwriters which exceed the number of shares specified in the table above. The underwriters have 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement to exercise this option to purchase additional shares. If any shares are purchased with this option to purchase additional shares, the underwriters will purchase shares in approximately the same proportion as shown in the table above. If any additional shares of common stock are purchased, the underwriters will offer the additional shares on the same terms as those on which the shares are being offered.

The underwriting fee is equal to the public offering price per share of common stock less the amount paid by the underwriters to us per share of common stock. The underwriting fee is \$ _____ per share. The following table shows the per share and total underwriting discounts and commissions to be paid to the underwriters, assuming both no exercise and full exercise of the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares.

	WITHOUT OPTION TO PURCHASE ADDITIONAL SHARES EXERCISE	WITH FULL OPTION TO PURCHASE ADDITIONAL SHARES EXERCISE
Per Share	\$ _____	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____	\$ _____

We estimate that the total expenses of this offering, including registration, filing and listing fees, printing fees and legal and accounting expenses, but excluding the underwriting discounts and commissions, will be approximately

Table of Contents

\$. We have also agreed to reimburse the underwriters for certain of their expenses in an amount of up to \$25,000.

A prospectus supplement in electronic format may be made available on the websites maintained by one or more underwriters, or selling group members, if any, participating in the offering. The underwriters may agree to allocate a number of shares to underwriters and selling group members for sale to their online brokerage account holders. Internet distributions will be allocated by the representatives to underwriters and selling group members that may make Internet distributions on the same basis as other allocations.

We have agreed that we will not (i) offer, pledge, sell, contract to sell, sell any option or contract to purchase, purchase any option or contract to sell, grant any option, right or warrant to purchase, lend or otherwise transfer or dispose of, directly or indirectly, or submit to, or file with, the SEC a registration statement under the Securities Act relating to, any shares of our common stock or securities convertible into or exercisable or exchangeable for any shares of our common stock, or publicly disclose the intention to make any offer, sale, pledge, loan, disposition or filing, or (ii) enter into any swap or other arrangement that transfers all or a portion of the economic consequences associated with the ownership of any shares of common stock or any such other securities (regardless of whether any of these transactions are to be settled by the delivery of shares of common stock or such other securities, in cash or otherwise), in each case without the prior written consent of the representatives for a period of 60 days after the date of this prospectus supplement, other than the shares of our common stock to be sold in this offering.

The restrictions on our actions, as described above, do not apply to certain transactions, including (i) the issuance of shares of common stock or securities convertible into or exercisable for shares of our common stock pursuant to the conversion or exchange of convertible or exchangeable securities or the exercise of pre-funded warrants, warrants or options (including net exercise) or the settlement of restricted stock units, or RSUs, (including net settlement), in each case outstanding on the date of the underwriting agreement and described in this prospectus supplement; (ii) grants of stock options, stock awards, restricted stock, RSUs or other equity awards and the issuance of shares of our common stock or securities convertible into or exercisable or exchangeable for shares of our common stock (whether upon the exercise of stock options or otherwise) to our employees, officers, directors, advisors or consultants pursuant to the terms of an equity compensation plan in effect as of the closing of this offering and described in this prospectus supplement, provided that such recipients enter into a lock-up agreement with the underwriters; (iii) the issuance of up to 10% of the outstanding shares of our common stock, or securities convertible into, exercisable for or which are otherwise exchangeable for, our common stock, immediately following the closing of this offering, in acquisitions or other similar strategic transactions, provided that such recipients enter into a lock-up agreement with the underwriters; (iv) our filing of any registration statement on Form S-8 relating to securities granted or to be granted pursuant to any plan in effect on the date of the underwriting agreement and described in this prospectus supplement or any assumed benefit plan pursuant to an acquisition or similar strategic transaction; or (v) the filing of a registration statement on Form S-3 registering certain of our securities after the 30th day following the date of this prospectus supplement, provided that (i) no sale of any shares of common stock or any securities convertible into or exercisable or exchangeable for common stock shall be made under such registration statement on Form S-3 during the 60-day period following the date of this prospectus supplement and (ii) no prospectus supplement to such registration statement on Form S-3 shall be filed nor any other filing or public announcement of an intent to sell under such registration statement on Form S-3 shall be made during the 60-day period following the date of this prospectus supplement with respect to the offering or proposed offering of any shares of common stock or any securities convertible into or exercisable or exchangeable for common stock.

Our directors and executive officers, or the lock-up parties, have entered into lock-up agreements with the underwriters prior to the commencement of this offering pursuant to which each lock-up party, with limited exceptions, for a period of 60 days after the date of this prospectus supplement, or the restricted period, may not (and may not cause any of their direct or indirect affiliates to), without the prior written consent of the representatives, (1) offer, pledge, sell, contract to sell, sell any option or contract to purchase, purchase any option or contract to sell, grant any option, right or warrant to purchase, lend or otherwise transfer or dispose of, directly or indirectly, any shares of our common stock or any securities convertible into or exercisable or exchangeable for our common stock (including, without limitation, common stock or such other securities which may be deemed to be beneficially owned by such lock-up parties in accordance with the rules and regulations of the SEC and securities

Table of Contents

which may be issued upon exercise of a stock option or warrant, or collectively with the common stock, the lock-up securities), (2) enter into any hedging, swap or other agreement or transaction that transfers, in whole or in part, any of the economic consequences of ownership of the lock-up securities, whether any such transaction described in clause (1) or (2) above is to be settled by delivery of lock-up securities, in cash or otherwise, (3) make any demand for, or exercise any right with respect to, the registration of any lock-up securities, or (4) publicly disclose the intention to do any of the foregoing. Such persons or entities have further acknowledged that these undertakings preclude them from engaging in any hedging or other transactions or arrangements (including, without limitation, any short sale or the purchase or sale of, or entry into, any put or call option, or combination thereof, forward, swap or any other derivative transaction or instrument, however described or defined) designed or intended, or which could reasonably be expected to lead to or result in, a sale or disposition or transfer (by any person or entity, whether or not a signatory to such agreement) of any economic consequences of ownership, in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, of any lock-up securities, whether any such transaction or arrangement (or instrument provided for thereunder) would be settled by delivery of lock-up securities, in cash or otherwise.

The restrictions described in the immediately preceding paragraph and contained in the lock-up agreements between the underwriters and the lock-up parties do not apply, subject in certain cases to various conditions, to certain transactions, including (a) transfers of lock-up securities:

- (i) as a bona fide gift or gifts, or for bona fide estate planning purposes,
- (ii) by will, other testamentary document or intestacy,
- (iii) to any trust for the direct or indirect benefit of the lock-up party or any immediate family member, or if the undersigned is a trust, to a trustor or beneficiary of the trust or to the estate of a beneficiary of such trust,
- (iv) to a partnership, limited liability company or other entity of which the lock-up party and its immediate family members are the legal and beneficial owner of all of the outstanding equity securities or similar interests,
- (v) to a nominee or custodian of a person or entity to whom a disposition or transfer would be permissible under clauses (i) through (iv),
- (vi) if the undersigned is a corporation, partnership, limited liability company, trust or other business entity, (A) to another corporation, partnership, limited liability company, trust or other business entity that is an affiliate of the lock-up party, or to any investment fund or other entity controlling, controlled by, managing or managed by or under common control with the lock-up party or its affiliates or (B) as part of a distribution to members partners, shareholders or other equity holders of the lock-up party,
- (vii) by operation of law, such as pursuant to a qualified domestic order, divorce settlement, divorce decree, separation agreement or other court order,
- (viii) to us from an employee or other service provider upon death, disability or termination of employment or service, in each case, of such employee or service provider,
- (ix) as part of a sale of lock-up securities acquired (A) in open market transactions after the completion of this offering or (B) from the underwriters in this offering,
- (x) to us in connection with the vesting, settlement or exercise of restricted stock units, options, warrants or other rights to purchase shares of our common stock (including, in each case, by way of "net" or "cashless" exercise), including for the payment of exercise price and tax and remittance payments due as a result of the vesting, settlement, or exercise of such restricted stock units, options, warrants or rights, provided that any such shares of common stock received upon such exercise, vesting or settlement shall be subject to the terms of the lock-up agreement, and provided further that any such restricted stock units, options, warrants or rights are held by the lock-up parties pursuant to an agreement or equity awards granted under a stock incentive plan or other equity award plan, each such agreement or plan which is described in this prospectus supplement (including any exhibits filed herewith), or
- (xi) pursuant to a bona fide third-party tender offer, merger, consolidation or other similar transaction approved by our board of directors and made to all shareholders involving a change in control (for purposes hereof, "change of control" shall mean the transfer (whether by tender offer, merger, consolidation or other similar transaction), in one transaction or a series of related transactions, to a person or group of affiliated persons, of shares of capital stock if, after such transfer, such person or group of affiliated persons would hold more than 50% of our outstanding voting securities (or the surviving entity)), provided that if such transaction is not completed, all such lock-up securities would remain subject to the restrictions;

Table of Contents

provided that (A) in the case of any transfer, distribution or other disposition pursuant to clause (a)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v), (vi) and (vii), such transfer shall not involve a disposition for value and each donee, devisee, transferee or distributee shall execute and deliver to the representatives a lock-up agreement, (B) in the case of any transfer, distribution or disposition pursuant to clauses (a)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v), (vi) and (x), no filing by any party (donor, donee, devisee, transferor, transferee, distributor or distributee) under the Exchange Act or other public announcement shall be required or shall be made voluntarily in connection with such transfer or distribution (other than a filing on a Form 5 made after the expiration of the restricted period referred to above) and (C) in the case of any transfer or distribution pursuant to clauses (a)(vii) and (viii) it shall be a condition to such transfer that no public filing, report or announcement shall be voluntarily made and if any filing under Section 16(a) of the Exchange Act, or other public filing, report or announcement reporting a reduction in beneficial ownership of shares of common stock in connection with such transfer or distribution shall be legally required during the restricted period, such filing, report or announcement shall clearly indicate in the footnotes thereto the nature and conditions of such transfer; (b) exercise of the options, settlement of RSUs or other equity awards, or the exercise of warrants granted pursuant to plans described in in this prospectus supplement, provided that any lock-up securities received upon such exercise, vesting or settlement shall be subject to restrictions similar to those in the immediately preceding paragraph; (c) the conversion of outstanding preferred stock, pre-funded warrants to acquire common stock, warrants to acquire preferred stock, or convertible securities into shares of our common stock or warrants to acquire shares of our common stock, provided that any common stock or warrant received upon such conversion shall be subject to restrictions similar to those in the immediately preceding paragraph; (d) the establishment or amendment by lock-up parties of trading plans under Rule 10b5-1 under the Exchange Act, provided that such plan does not provide for the transfer of lock-up securities during the restricted period and no filing by any party under the Exchange Act or other public announcement shall be required or made voluntarily in connection with such trading plan during the restricted period; and (e) the sale of lock-up securities under existing trading plans pursuant to Rule 10b5-1 under the Exchange Act, provided that any filing, report or announcement shall clearly indicate in the footnotes thereto the nature and conditions of such transfer.

The representatives, in their sole discretion, may release the securities subject to any of the lock-up agreements with the underwriters described above, in whole or in part at any time.

We have agreed to indemnify the underwriters against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act.

Our common stock is quoted on the Nasdaq Global Select Market under the symbol "TERN."

In connection with this offering, the underwriters may engage in stabilizing transactions, which involve making bids for, purchasing and selling shares of common stock in the open market for the purpose of preventing or retarding a decline in the market price of the common stock while this offering is in progress. These stabilizing transactions may include making short sales of common stock, which involve the sale by the underwriters of a greater number of shares of common stock than they are required to purchase in this offering, and purchasing shares of common stock on the open market to cover positions created by short sales. Short sales may be "covered" shorts, which are short positions in an amount not greater than the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares referred to above, or may be "naked" shorts, which are short positions in excess of that amount. The underwriters may close out any covered short position either by exercising their option to purchase additional shares, in whole or in part, or by purchasing shares in the open market. In making this determination, the underwriters will consider, among other things, the price of shares available for purchase in the open market compared to the price at which the underwriters may purchase shares through the option to purchase additional shares. 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 common stock in the open market that could adversely affect investors who purchase in this offering. To the extent that the underwriters create a naked short position, they will purchase shares in the open market to cover the position.

The underwriters have advised us that, pursuant to Regulation M of the Securities Act, they may also engage in other activities that stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the price of the common stock, including the imposition of penalty bids. This means that if the representatives of the underwriters purchase common stock in the open market in stabilizing transactions or to cover short sales, the representatives can require the underwriters that sold those shares as part of this offering to repay the underwriting discount received by them.

[Table of Contents](#)

These activities may have the effect of raising or maintaining the market price of the common stock or preventing or retarding a decline in the market price of the common stock, and, as a result, the price of the common stock may be higher than the price that otherwise might exist in the open market. If the underwriters commence these activities, they may discontinue them at any time. The underwriters may carry out these transactions on the Nasdaq Global Select Market, in the over-the-counter market or otherwise.

In addition, in connection with this offering certain of the underwriters (and selling group members) may engage in passive market making transactions in our common stock on The Nasdaq Stock Market prior to the pricing and completion of this offering. Passive market making consists of displaying bids on The Nasdaq Stock Market no higher than the bid prices of independent market makers and making purchases at prices no higher than these independent bids and effected in response to order flow. Net purchases by a passive market maker on each day are generally limited to a specified percentage of the passive market maker's average daily trading volume in the common stock during a specified period and must be discontinued when such limit is reached. Passive market making may cause the price of our common stock to be higher than the price that otherwise would exist in the open market in the absence of these transactions. If passive market making is commenced, it may be discontinued at any time.

Selling Restrictions

Other than in the United States, no action has been taken by us or the underwriters that would permit a public offering of the securities offered by this prospectus supplement in any jurisdiction where action for that purpose is required. The securities offered by this prospectus supplement may not be offered or sold, directly or indirectly, nor may this prospectus supplement or any other offering material or advertisements in connection with the offer and sale of any such securities be distributed or published in any jurisdiction, except under circumstances that will result in compliance with the applicable rules and regulations of that jurisdiction. Persons into whose possession this prospectus supplement comes are advised to inform themselves about and to observe any restrictions relating to the offering and the distribution of this prospectus supplement. This prospectus supplement does not constitute an offer to sell or a solicitation of an offer to buy any securities offered by this prospectus supplement in any jurisdiction in which such an offer or a solicitation is unlawful.

Certain of the underwriters and their affiliates have provided in the past to us and our affiliates and may provide from time to time in the future certain commercial banking, financial advisory, investment banking and other services for us and such affiliates in the ordinary course of their business, for which they have received and may continue to receive customary fees and commissions. In addition, from time to time, certain of the underwriters and their affiliates may effect transactions for their own account or the account of customers, and hold on behalf of themselves or their customers, long or short positions in our debt or equity securities or loans, and may do so in the future.

European Economic Area

In relation to each Member State of the European Economic Area (each a "Relevant State"), no shares have been offered or will be offered pursuant to the offering to the public in that Relevant State prior to the publication of a prospectus in relation to the shares which has been approved by the competent authority in that Relevant State or, where appropriate, approved in another Relevant State and notified to the competent authority in that Relevant State, all in accordance with the Prospectus Regulation, except that offers of shares may be made to the public in that Relevant State at any time under the following exemptions under the Prospectus Regulation:

- (a) to any legal entity which is a qualified investor as defined under Article 2 of the Prospectus Regulation;
- (b) to fewer than 150 natural or legal persons (other than qualified investors as defined under Article 2 of the Prospectus Regulation), subject to obtaining the prior consent of the representatives for any such offer; or
- (c) in any other circumstances falling within Article 1(4) of the Prospectus Regulation,

provided that no such offer of shares shall require us or any underwriter to publish a prospectus pursuant to Article 3 of the Prospectus Regulation or supplement a prospectus pursuant to Article 23 of the Prospectus Regulation and each person who initially acquires any shares or to whom any offer is made will be deemed to have represented,

Table of Contents

acknowledged and agreed to and with each of the underwriters and us that it is a “qualified investor” within the meaning of Article 2(e) of the Prospectus Regulation.

In the case of any shares being offered to a financial intermediary as that term is used in the Prospectus Regulation, each such financial intermediary will be deemed to have represented, acknowledged and agreed that the shares acquired by it in the offer have not been acquired on a non-discretionary basis on behalf of, nor have they been acquired with a view to their offer or resale to, persons in circumstances which may give rise to an offer of any shares to the public other than their offer or resale in a Relevant State to qualified investors as so defined or in circumstances in which the prior consent of the underwriters has been obtained to each such proposed offer or resale.

For the purposes of this provision, the expression an “offer to the public” in relation to the shares in any Relevant State means the communication in any form and by any means of sufficient information on the terms of the offer and any shares to be offered so as to enable an investor to decide to purchase or subscribe for any shares, and the expression “Prospectus Regulation” means Regulation (EU) 2017/1129.

United Kingdom

No shares have been offered or will be offered pursuant to the offering to the public in the United Kingdom prior to the publication of a prospectus in relation to the shares which has been approved by the Financial Conduct Authority, except that the shares may be offered to the public in the United Kingdom at any time:

- (a) to any legal entity which is a qualified investor as defined under Article 2 of the U.K. Prospectus Regulation;
- (b) to fewer than 150 natural or legal persons (other than qualified investors as defined under Article 2 of the U.K. Prospectus Regulation), subject to obtaining the prior consent of the representatives for any such offer; or
- (c) in any other circumstances falling within Section 86 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000, as amended (“FSMA”);

provided that no such offer of the shares shall require us or any underwriter to publish a prospectus pursuant to Section 85 of the FSMA or supplement a prospectus pursuant to Article 23 of the U.K. Prospectus Regulation. For the purposes of this provision, the expression an “offer to the public” in relation to the shares in the United Kingdom means the communication in any form and by any means of sufficient information on the terms of the offer and any shares to be offered so as to enable an investor to decide to purchase or subscribe for any shares and the expression “U.K. Prospectus Regulation” means Regulation (EU) 2017/1129 as it forms part of domestic law by virtue of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018.

In addition, in the United Kingdom, this document is being distributed only to, and is directed only at, and any offer subsequently made may only be directed at persons who are “qualified investors” (as defined in the U.K. Prospectus Regulation) (i) who have professional experience in matters relating to investments falling within Article 19(5) of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Financial Promotion) Order 2005, as amended, or the “Order,” and/or (ii) who are high net worth companies (or persons to whom it may otherwise be lawfully communicated) falling within Article 49(2)(a) to (d) of the Order (all such persons together being referred to as “relevant persons”) or otherwise in circumstances which have not resulted and will not result in an offer to the public of the shares in the United Kingdom within the meaning of the FSMA. In the United Kingdom, any investment or investment activity to which this document relates is only available to, and will be engaged in with, relevant persons. Any person in the UK who is not a relevant person must not act on or rely upon this document or any of its contents.

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

[Table of Contents](#)

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 Switzerland

The shares may not be publicly offered in Switzerland and will not be listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange, or SIX, or on any other stock exchange or regulated trading facility in Switzerland. This document does not constitute a prospectus within the meaning of, and has been prepared without regard to the disclosure standards for issuance prospectuses under art. 652a or art. 1156 of the Swiss Code of Obligations or the disclosure standards for listing prospectuses under art. 27 ff. of the SIX Listing Rules or the listing rules of any other stock exchange or regulated trading facility in Switzerland. Neither this document nor any other offering or marketing material relating to the shares or the offering may be publicly distributed or otherwise made publicly available in Switzerland.

Neither this document nor any other offering or marketing material relating to the offering, the Company, the shares have been or will be filed with or approved by any Swiss regulatory authority. In particular, this document will not be filed with, and the offer of shares will not be supervised by, the Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority, or FINMA, and the offer of shares has not been and will not be authorized under the Swiss Federal Act on Collective Investment Schemes, or CISA. The investor protection afforded to acquirers of interests in collective investment schemes under the CISA does not extend to acquirers of shares.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Hong Kong

The shares have not been offered or sold and will not be offered or sold in Hong Kong, by means of any document, other than (a) to "professional investors" as defined in the Securities and Futures Ordinance (Cap. 571 of the Laws of Hong Kong), or the SFO, of Hong Kong and any rules made thereunder; or (b) in other circumstances which do not result in the document being a "prospectus" as defined in the Companies (Winding Up and Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance (Cap. 32) of Hong Kong, or the CO, or which do not constitute an offer to the public within the meaning of the CO. No advertisement, invitation or document relating to the shares has been or may be issued or has been or may be in the possession of any person for the purposes of issue, 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 of Hong Kong (except if permitted to do so under the securities 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" as defined in the SFO and any rules made thereunder.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Singapore

The representatives have acknowledged that this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus have not been registered as a prospectus with the Monetary Authority of Singapore. Accordingly, the representatives have represented and agreed that it has not offered or sold any shares or caused the shares to be made the subject of an invitation for subscription or purchase and will not offer or sell any shares or cause the shares to be made the subject of an invitation for subscription or purchase, and has not circulated or distributed, nor will it circulate or distribute, this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus or any other document or material in connection with the offer or sale, or invitation for subscription or purchase, of the shares, whether directly or indirectly, to any person in Singapore other than:

- (a) to an institutional investor (as defined in Section 4A of the Securities and Futures Act (Chapter 289) of Singapore, as modified or amended from time to time, or the SFA) pursuant to Section 274 of the SFA;
- (b) to a relevant person (as defined in Section 275(2) of the SFA) pursuant to Section 275(1) of the SFA, or any person pursuant to Section 275(1A) of the SFA, and in accordance with the conditions specified in Section 275 of the SFA; or

Table of Contents

- (c) otherwise pursuant to, and in accordance with the conditions of, any other applicable provision of the SFA.

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

- (a) 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
- (b) 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,

securities or securities-based derivatives contracts (each term as defined in Section 2(1) of the SFA) of that corporation or the beneficiaries' rights and interest (howsoever described) in that trust shall not be transferred within six months after that corporation or that trust has acquired the shares pursuant to an offer made under Section 275 of the SFA except:

- (i) to an institutional investor or to a relevant person, or to any person arising from an offer referred to in Section 275(1A) or Section 276(4)(i) (B) of the SFA;
- (ii) where no consideration is or will be given for the transfer;
- (iii) where the transfer is by operation of law;
- (iv) as specified in Section 276(7) of the SFA; or
- (v) as specified in Regulation 37A of the Securities and Futures (Offers of Investments) (Securities and Securities-based Derivatives Contracts) Regulations 2018.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Japan

The shares have not been and will not be registered pursuant to Article 4, Paragraph 1 of the Financial Instruments and Exchange Act. Accordingly, none of the shares, nor any interest therein may be offered or sold, directly or indirectly, in Japan or to, or for the benefit of, any "resident" of Japan (which term as used herein means any person resident in Japan, including any corporation or other entity organized under the laws of Japan), or to others for re-offering or resale, directly or indirectly, in Japan or to or for the benefit of a resident of Japan, except pursuant to an exemption from the registration requirements of, and otherwise in compliance with, the Financial Instruments and Exchange Act and any other applicable laws, regulations and ministerial guidelines of Japan in effect at the relevant time.

Notice to Prospective Investors in the United Arab Emirates

The shares have not been, and are not being, publicly offered, sold, promoted or advertised in the United Arab Emirates (including the Dubai International Financial Centre) other than in compliance with the laws of the United Arab Emirates (and the Dubai International Financial Centre) governing the issue, offering and sale of securities. Further, this prospectus supplement does not constitute a public offer of securities in the United Arab Emirates (including the Dubai International Financial Centre) and is not intended to be a public offer. This prospectus supplement has not been approved by or filed with the Central Bank of the United Arab Emirates, the Securities and Commodities Authority or the Dubai Financial Services Authority.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Israel

In the State of Israel this prospectus supplement shall not be regarded as an offer to the public to purchase shares of common stock under the Israeli Securities Law, 5728—1968, which requires a prospectus to be published and authorized by the Israel Securities Authority, if it complies with certain provisions of Section 15 of the Israeli Securities Law, 5728—1968, including, inter alia, if: (i) the offer is made, distributed or directed to not more than 35 investors, subject to certain conditions, or the Addressed Investors, or (ii) the offer is made, distributed or directed to certain qualified investors defined in the First Addendum of the Israeli Securities Law, 5728—1968, subject to certain conditions, or the Qualified Investors. The Qualified Investors shall not be taken into account in the count of the Addressed Investors and may be offered to purchase securities in addition to the 35 Addressed Investors. The company has not and will not take any action that would require it to publish a prospectus in accordance with and subject to the Israeli Securities Law, 5728—1968. We have not and will not distribute this

prospectus supplement or make, distribute or direct an offer to subscribe for our common stock to any person within the State of Israel, other than to Qualified Investors and up to 35 Addressed Investors.

Qualified Investors may have to submit written evidence that they meet the definitions set out in of the First Addendum to the Israeli Securities Law, 5728—1968. In particular, we may request, as a condition to be offered common stock, that Qualified Investors will each represent, warrant and certify to us and/or to anyone acting on our behalf: (i) that it is an investor falling within one of the categories listed in the First Addendum to the Israeli Securities Law, 5728—1968; (ii) which of the categories listed in the First Addendum to the Israeli Securities Law, 5728—1968 regarding Qualified Investors is applicable to it; (iii) that it will abide by all provisions set forth in the Israeli Securities Law, 5728—1968 and the regulations promulgated thereunder in connection with the offer to be issued common stock; (iv) that the shares of common stock that it will be issued are, subject to exemptions available under the Israeli Securities Law, 5728—1968: (a) for its own account; (b) for investment purposes only; and (c) not issued with a view to resale within the State of Israel, other than in accordance with the provisions of the Israeli Securities Law, 5728—1968; and (v) that it is willing to provide further evidence of its Qualified Investor status. Addressed Investors may have to submit written evidence in respect of their identity and may have to sign and submit a declaration containing, inter alia, the Addressed Investor's name, address and passport number or Israeli identification number.

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the issuance of the securities offered hereby will be passed upon by our counsel, Latham & Watkins LLP, Menlo Park, California. The underwriters are being represented in connection with this offering by Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP, New York, New York.

EXPERTS

Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, has audited our consolidated financial statements included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2021, as set forth in their report which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and elsewhere in the registration statement. Our financial statements are incorporated by reference in reliance on Ernst & Young LLP's report, given on their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We have filed with the SEC a registration statement on Form S-3 under the Securities Act, of which this prospectus forms a part. The rules and regulations of the SEC allow us to omit from this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus certain information included in the registration statement. For further information about us and the securities we are offering under this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, you should refer to the registration statement and the exhibits and schedules filed with the registration statement. With respect to the statements contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus regarding the contents of any agreement or any other document, in each instance, the statement is qualified in all respects by the complete text of the agreement or document, a copy of which has been filed as an exhibit to the registration statement.

We file reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC under the Exchange Act. The SEC maintains an Internet website that contains reports, proxy statements and other information about issuers, like us, that file electronically with the SEC. The address of that website is www.sec.gov.

INFORMATION INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to “incorporate by reference” the information we file with them which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents instead of having to repeat the information in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be part of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, and later information that we file with the SEC will automatically update and supersede this information. Any statement contained in a previously filed document incorporated by reference will be deemed to be modified or superseded for purposes of this prospectus to the extent that a statement contained in this prospectus modifies or replaces that statement. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and any future information filed (rather than furnished) with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14, or 15(d) of the Exchange Act between the date of this prospectus and the termination of this offering, provided, however, that we are not incorporating any information furnished under Item 2.02 or Item 7.01 of any current report on Form 8-K:

- our Annual Report on [Form 10-K](#) for the year ended December 31, 2021, filed with the SEC on March 7, 2022;
- the information specifically incorporated by reference into our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2021, from our Definitive Proxy Statement on [Schedule 14A](#), filed with the SEC on April 29, 2022;
- our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2022, filed with the SEC on [May 16, 2022](#), for the quarter ended June 30, 2022, filed with the SEC on [August 8, 2022](#), and for the quarter ended September 30, 2022, filed with the SEC on [November 9, 2022](#);
- our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on [January 19, 2022](#), [March 21, 2022](#), [June 17, 2022](#), [July 27, 2022](#) and [August 16, 2022](#); and
- the description of our common stock contained in our registration statement on [Form 8-A](#) filed with the SEC on January 22, 2021, including any amendments or reports filed with the SEC for the purposes of updating this description.

These documents may also be accessed on our website at www.ternspharma.com. Except as otherwise specifically incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, information contained in, or accessible through, our website is not a part of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus.

We will furnish without charge to you, upon written or oral request, a copy of any or all of the documents incorporated by reference, including exhibits to these documents by writing or telephoning us at the following address:

Terns Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
1065 East Hillsdale Blvd., Suite 100
Foster City, California 94404
(650) 275-4254
Attention: Investor Relations

PROSPECTUS

\$250,000,000



Terns Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

**Common Stock
Preferred Stock
Debt Securities
Warrants
Units**

We may offer and sell up to \$250,000,000 in the aggregate of the securities identified above from time to time in one or more offerings. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities.

Each time we offer and sell securities, we will provide a supplement to this prospectus that contains specific information about the offering and the amounts, prices and terms of the securities. The supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus with respect to that offering. You should carefully read this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement before you invest in any of our securities.

We may offer and sell the securities described in this prospectus and any prospectus supplement to or through one or more underwriters, dealers and agents, or directly to purchasers, or through a combination of these methods. If any underwriters, dealers or agents are involved in the sale of any of the securities, their names and any applicable purchase price, fee, commission or discount arrangement between or among them will be set forth, or will be calculable from the information set forth, in the applicable prospectus supplement. See the sections of this prospectus entitled "About this Prospectus" and "Plan of Distribution" for more information. No securities may be sold without delivery of this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement describing the method and terms of the offering of such securities.

INVESTING IN OUR SECURITIES INVOLVES RISKS. SEE THE "[RISK FACTORS](#)" ON PAGE 5 OF THIS PROSPECTUS AND ANY SIMILAR SECTION CONTAINED IN THE APPLICABLE PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT CONCERNING FACTORS YOU SHOULD CONSIDER BEFORE INVESTING IN OUR SECURITIES.

Our common stock is listed on the Nasdaq Global Select Market under the symbol "TERN." On March 7, 2022, the last reported sale price of our common stock on the Nasdaq Global Select Market was \$3.14 per share.

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 March 14, 2022.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS	1
WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION; INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE	2
ABOUT TERMS	4
RISK FACTORS	5
USE OF PROCEEDS	6
DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK	7
DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES	13
DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS	21
DESCRIPTION OF UNITS	23
GLOBAL SECURITIES	24
PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION	28
LEGAL MATTERS	30
EXPERTS	30

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, or the SEC, using a “shelf” registration process. By using a shelf registration statement, we may sell securities from time to time and in one or more offerings up to a total dollar amount of \$250,000,000 as described in this prospectus. Each time that we offer and sell securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement to this prospectus that contains specific information about the securities being offered and sold and the specific terms of that offering. We may also authorize one or more free writing prospectuses to be provided to you that may contain material information relating to these offerings. The prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus with respect to that offering. If there is any inconsistency between the information in this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus, you should rely on the prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus, as applicable. Before purchasing any securities, you should carefully read both this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement (and any applicable free writing prospectuses), together with the additional information described under the heading “Where You Can Find More Information; Incorporation by Reference.”

We have not authorized anyone to provide you with any information or to make any representations other than those contained in, or incorporated by reference into, this prospectus, any applicable prospectus supplement or any free writing prospectuses prepared by or on behalf of us or to which we have referred you. We take no responsibility for, and can provide no assurance as to the reliability of, any other information that others may give you. We will not make an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement to this prospectus is accurate only as of the date on its respective cover, that the information appearing in any applicable free writing prospectus is accurate only as of the date of that free writing prospectus, and that any information incorporated by reference is accurate only as of the date of the document incorporated by reference, unless we indicate otherwise. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates. This prospectus incorporates by reference, and any prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus may contain and incorporate by reference, market data and industry statistics and forecasts that are based on independent industry publications and other publicly available information. Although we believe these sources are reliable, we do not guarantee the accuracy or completeness of this information and we have not independently verified this information. In addition, the market and industry data and forecasts that may be included or incorporated by reference in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement or any applicable free writing prospectus may involve estimates, assumptions and other risks and uncertainties and are subject to change based on various factors, including those discussed under the heading “Risk Factors” contained in this prospectus, the applicable prospectus supplement and any applicable free writing prospectus, and under similar headings in other documents that are incorporated by reference into this prospectus. Accordingly, investors should not place undue reliance on this information.

When we refer to “Terns,” “we,” “our,” “us” and the “Company” in this prospectus, we mean Terns Pharmaceuticals, Inc., unless otherwise specified. When we refer to “you,” we mean the potential holders of the applicable series of securities.

“Terns,” “Terns Pharmaceuticals,” the Terns logo and other trademarks, trade names or service marks of Terns Pharmaceuticals, Inc. appearing in this prospectus are the property of Terns Pharmaceuticals, Inc. All other trademarks, trade names and service marks appearing in this prospectus are the property of their respective owners. Solely for convenience, the trademarks and trade names in this prospectus may be referred to without the ® and ™ symbols, but such references should not be construed as any indicator that their respective owners will not assert their rights thereto.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION; INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

Available Information

We file reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. The SEC maintains a website that contains reports, proxy and information statements and other information about issuers, such as us, who file electronically with the SEC. The address of that website is <http://www.sec.gov>.

Our website address is <https://www.ternspharma.com>. The information on, or accessible through, our website, however, is not, and should not be deemed to be, a part of this prospectus or any prospectus supplement. We have included our website address as an inactive textual reference only.

This prospectus and any prospectus supplement are part of a registration statement that we filed with the SEC and do not contain all of the information in the registration statement. The full registration statement may be obtained from the SEC or us, as provided above. Forms of the indenture and other documents establishing the terms of the offered securities are or may be filed as exhibits to the registration statement or documents incorporated by reference in the registration statement. Statements in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement about these documents are summaries and each statement is qualified in all respects by reference to the document to which it refers. You should refer to the actual documents for a more complete description of the relevant matters.

Incorporation by Reference

The SEC's rules allow us to "incorporate by reference" information into this prospectus, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to another document filed separately with the SEC. The information incorporated by reference is deemed to be part of this prospectus, and subsequent information that we file with the SEC will automatically update and supersede that information. Any statement contained in this prospectus or a previously filed document incorporated by reference will be deemed to be modified or superseded for purposes of this prospectus to the extent that a statement contained in this prospectus or a subsequently filed document incorporated by reference modifies or replaces that statement.

We incorporate by reference our documents listed below and any future filings made by us with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, which we refer to as the "Exchange Act" in this prospectus, between the date of this prospectus and the termination of the offering of the securities described in this prospectus. We are not, however, incorporating by reference any documents or portions thereof, whether specifically listed below or filed in the future, that are not deemed "filed" with the SEC, including any Compensation Committee report and performance graph or any information furnished pursuant to Items 2.02 or 7.01 of Form 8-K or related exhibits furnished pursuant to Item 9.01 of Form 8-K.

This prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement incorporate by reference the documents set forth below that have previously been filed with the SEC:

- our Annual Report on [Form 10-K](#) for the year ended December 31, 2021, filed with the SEC on March 7, 2022;
- our Current Report on [Form 8-K](#) filed with the SEC on January 19, 2022; and
- the description of our common stock contained in our registration statement on [Form 8-A](#) filed with the SEC on January 22, 2021, including any amendments or reports filed with the SEC for the purposes of updating this description.

All reports and other documents we subsequently file pursuant to Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act prior to the termination of this offering, including all such documents we may file with the SEC after the date of the initial registration statement and prior to the effectiveness of the registration statement, but

[Table of Contents](#)

excluding any information furnished to, rather than filed with, the SEC, will also be incorporated by reference into this prospectus and deemed to be part of this prospectus from the date of the filing of such reports and documents.

You may request a free copy of any of the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus by writing or telephoning us at the following address:

Terns Pharmaceuticals, Inc.,
1065 East Hillsdale Blvd., Suite 100
Foster City, California 94404
Phone: +1 (650) 525-5535 Ext.101
Fax: +1 (650) 275-4254
E-mail: investors@ternspharma.com

Exhibits to the filings will not be sent, however, unless those exhibits have specifically been incorporated by reference in this prospectus or any accompanying prospectus supplement.

ABOUT TERNS

We are a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company developing a portfolio of small-molecule single-agent and combination therapy candidates to address serious diseases, such as NASH and obesity. Our approach is to develop drug candidates based on mechanisms of action that have achieved proof-of-concept in clinical trials. Our most advanced drug candidates are under development for the treatment of non-alcoholic steatohepatitis, or NASH, using clinically-validated and complementary mechanisms of action to drive meaningful clinical benefits for patients. In our NASH programs, these mechanisms have demonstrated significant improvements on histological and non-invasive markers of the disease, though no drug has been approved for the treatment of NASH in the United States or Europe. In addition, by developing combination therapies, we are aiming to expand the reach of our single-agent drug candidates through improved response rates, better tolerability and improved compliance as compared to monotherapy regimens. We also have an oral small-molecule glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor (GLP-1R) agonist in pre-clinical development that may target metabolic diseases such as obesity as well as NASH. Beyond NASH, we plan to explore other indications with high unmet need using our pipeline drug candidates.

We were incorporated under the laws of the Cayman Islands on December 9, 2016. On December 29, 2020, we effected a de-registration under the Cayman Islands Companies Law (2020 Revision) and a domestication under Section 388 of the Delaware General Corporation Law (by means of filing a certificate of domestication with the Secretary of State of Delaware), pursuant to which our jurisdiction of incorporation was changed from the Cayman Islands to the State of Delaware. Our principal executive offices are located at 1065 East Hillsdale Boulevard, Suite 100, Foster City, California 94404, and our telephone number is (650) 525-5535.

RISK FACTORS

Investment in any securities offered pursuant to this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement involves risks. You should carefully consider the risk factors included in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, our most recent Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q and any subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q or Current Reports on Form 8-K we file after the date of this prospectus, and all other information contained or incorporated by reference into this prospectus, as updated by our subsequent filings under the Exchange Act, and the risk factors and other information contained in the applicable prospectus supplement and any applicable free writing prospectus before acquiring any of such securities. The occurrence of any of these risks might cause you to lose all or part of your investment in the offered securities.

USE OF PROCEEDS

We intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of the securities as set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

The following summary describes the capital stock of Terns Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (the “Company,” “we,” “us” and “our”) and the material provisions of our amended and restated certificate of incorporation, our amended and restated bylaws, the amended and restated investors’ rights agreement to which we and certain of our stockholders are parties and of the Delaware General Corporation Law. Because the following is only a summary, it does not contain all of the information that may be important to you. For a complete description, you should refer to our amended and restated certificate of incorporation, amended and restated bylaws and amended and restated investors’ rights agreement, copies of which are incorporated by reference as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part.

General

Our authorized capital stock consists of 150,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$0.0001 per share, and 10,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value \$0.0001 per share. As of December 31, 2021, there were outstanding:

- 25,269,271 shares of our common stock held by approximately 25 stockholders of record; and
- 3,577,485 shares of our common stock issuable upon exercise of outstanding stock options.

The actual number of stockholders is greater than the number of record holders and includes stockholders who are beneficial owners but whose shares are held in street name by brokers and other nominees. This number of holders of record also does not include stockholders whose shares may be held in trust by other entities.

The following description of our capital stock and provisions of our amended and restated certificate of incorporation and amended and restated bylaws are summaries of material terms and provisions and are qualified by reference to our amended and restated certificate of incorporation and amended and restated bylaws, copies of which have been filed with the SEC and are incorporated by reference as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part.

Common Stock

Voting Rights

Each holder of common stock is entitled to one vote for each share on all matters submitted to a vote of the stockholders, including the election of directors. Our stockholders do not have cumulative voting rights in the election of directors. Accordingly, holders of a majority of the voting shares are able to elect all of the directors. In addition, the affirmative vote of holders of 66 2/3% of the voting power of all of the then outstanding voting stock is required to take certain actions, including amending certain provisions of our amended and restated certificate of incorporation, including the provisions relating to amending our amended and restated bylaws, the classified board and director liability.

Dividends

Subject to preferences that may be applicable to any then outstanding preferred stock, holders of our common stock are entitled to receive dividends as may be declared from time to time by our board of directors out of legally available funds.

Liquidation

In the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, holders of our common stock are entitled to share ratably in the net assets legally available for distribution to stockholders after the payment of all of our debts and other liabilities, subject to the satisfaction of any liquidation preference granted to the holders of any then outstanding shares of preferred stock.

[Table of Contents](#)

Rights and Preferences

Holders of our common stock have no preemptive, conversion or subscription or other rights, and there are no redemption or sinking fund provisions applicable to our common stock. The rights, preferences and privileges of the holders of our common stock are subject to, and may be adversely affected by, the rights of the holders of shares of any series of our preferred stock that we may designate and issue in the future.

Fully Paid and Nonassessable

All of our outstanding shares of common stock are fully paid and nonassessable.

Preferred Stock

Our board of directors has the authority, without further action by our stockholders, to issue up to 10,000,000 shares of preferred stock in one or more series and to fix the rights, preferences, privileges and restrictions thereof. These rights, preferences and privileges could include dividend rights, conversion rights, voting rights, terms of redemption, liquidation preferences, sinking fund terms and the number of shares constituting, or the designation of, such series, any or all of which may be greater than the rights of our common stock. The issuance of our preferred stock could adversely affect the voting power of holders of common stock and the likelihood that such holders will receive dividend payments and payments upon our liquidation. In addition, the issuance of preferred stock could have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a change in control of our company or other corporate action.

Registration Rights

Certain holders of shares of our common stock, are entitled to certain rights with respect to registration of such shares under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, (the "Securities Act"). These shares are referred to as registrable securities. The holders of these registrable securities possess registration rights pursuant to the terms of our amended and restated investors' rights agreement and are described in additional detail below. The registration of shares of our common stock pursuant to the exercise of the registration rights described below would enable the holders to trade these shares without restriction under the Securities Act when the applicable registration statement is declared effective. We will pay the registration expenses, other than underwriting discounts, selling commissions and stock transfer taxes, of the shares registered pursuant to the demand, piggyback and Form S-3 registrations described below.

The demand, piggyback and Form S-3 registration rights described below will terminate upon the earliest of (i) with respect to each stockholder, such date, on or after the closing of our initial public offering in February 2021, on which all registrable shares held by such stockholder may immediately be sold during any 90-day period pursuant to Rule 144 of the Securities Act, or Rule 144, and (ii) the occurrence of a deemed liquidation event, as defined in our amended and restated certificate of incorporation, as currently in effect.

Demand Registration Rights

Certain holders of shares of our common stock are entitled to certain demand registration rights. Certain investors holding, collectively, 20% of registrable securities may, on not more than two occasions, request that we register all or a portion of their shares, subject to certain specified exceptions. If any of these holders exercises its demand registration rights, then these holders will be entitled to register their shares, subject to specified conditions and limitations in the corresponding offering.

Piggyback Registration Rights

In the event that we propose to register any of our securities under the Securities Act, either for our own account or for the account of other security holders, certain holders of shares of our common stock will be entitled to certain "piggyback" registration rights allowing them to include their shares in such registration, subject to specified conditions and limitations.

S-3 Registration Rights

Certain holders of shares of our common stock are entitled to certain Form S-3 registration rights. Certain investors holding at least 10% of registrable securities may, on not more than two registrations on Form S-3 within any 12-month period, request that we register all or a portion of their shares on Form S-3 if we are qualified to file a registration statement on Form S-3, subject to specified exceptions. Such request for registration on Form S-3 must cover securities with an aggregate offering price which equals or exceeds \$1.0 million, net of selling expenses. The right to have such shares registered on Form S-3 is further subject to other specified conditions and limitations.

Anti-Takeover Effects of Provisions of Delaware Law and Our Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation and our Amended and Restated Bylaws

Certain provisions of Delaware law and our amended and restated certificate of incorporation and our amended and restated bylaws contain provisions that could make the following transactions more difficult: acquisition of us by means of a tender offer; acquisition of us by means of a proxy contest or otherwise; or removal of our incumbent officers and directors. It is possible that these provisions could make it more difficult to accomplish or could deter transactions that stockholders may otherwise consider to be in their best interest or in our best interests, including transactions that might result in a premium over the market price for our shares.

These provisions, summarized below, are expected to discourage coercive takeover practices and inadequate takeover bids. These provisions are also designed to encourage persons seeking to acquire control of us to first negotiate with our board of directors. We believe that the benefits of increased protection of our potential ability to negotiate with the proponent of an unfriendly or unsolicited proposal to acquire or restructure us outweigh the disadvantages of discouraging these proposals because negotiation of these proposals could result in an improvement of their terms.

Delaware Anti-Takeover Statute

We are subject to Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law, which prohibits persons deemed “interested stockholders” from engaging in a “business combination” with a publicly-held Delaware corporation for three years following the date these persons become interested stockholders unless the business combination is, or the transaction in which the person became an interested stockholder was, approved in a prescribed manner or another prescribed exception applies. Generally, an “interested stockholder” is a person who, together with affiliates and associates, owns, or within three years prior to the determination of interested stockholder status did own, 15% or more of a corporation’s voting stock. Generally, a “business combination” includes a merger, asset or stock sale, or other transaction resulting in a financial benefit to the interested stockholder. The existence of this provision may have an anti-takeover effect with respect to transactions not approved in advance by the board of directors, such as discouraging takeover attempts that might result in a premium over the market price of our common stock.

Undesignated Preferred Stock

The ability to authorize undesignated preferred stock makes it possible for our board of directors to issue preferred stock with voting or other rights or preferences that could impede the success of any attempt to effect a change in control of our company. These and other provisions may have the effect of deterring hostile takeovers or delaying changes in control or management of our company.

Special Stockholder Meetings

Our amended and restated certificate of incorporation provides that a special meeting of stockholders may be called at any time by our board of directors but such special meetings may not be called by the stockholders or any other person or persons.

[Table of Contents](#)

Requirements for Advance Notification of Stockholder Nominations and Proposals

Our amended and restated bylaws establish advance notice procedures with respect to stockholder proposals and the nomination of candidates for election as directors, other than nominations made by or at the direction of the board of directors or a committee of the board of directors.

Elimination of Stockholder Action by Written Consent

Our amended and restated certificate of incorporation eliminates the right of stockholders to act by written consent without a meeting.

Classified Board; Election and Removal of Directors; Filling Vacancies

Our board of directors is divided into three classes, divided as nearly as equal in number as possible. The directors in each class will serve for a three-year term, one class being elected each year by our stockholders, with staggered three-year terms. Only one class of directors is elected at each annual meeting of our stockholders, with the other classes continuing for the remainder of their respective three-year terms. Because our stockholders do not have cumulative voting rights, our stockholders holding a majority of the shares of common stock outstanding are able to elect all of our directors. Our amended and restated certificate of incorporation provides for the removal of any of our directors only for cause and requires a stockholder vote by the holders of at least a 66 2/3% of the voting power of the then outstanding voting stock. Furthermore, any vacancy on our board of directors, however occurring, including a vacancy resulting from an increase in the size of the board, may only be filled by a resolution of the board of directors unless the board of directors determines that such vacancies shall be filled by the stockholders. This system of electing and removing directors and filling vacancies may tend to discourage a third party from making a tender offer or otherwise attempting to obtain control of us, because it generally makes it more difficult for stockholders to replace a majority of the directors.

Choice of Forum

Our amended and restated certificate of incorporation and amended and restated bylaws provide that, unless we consent in writing to the selection of an alternative forum, the Court of Chancery of the State of Delaware is the exclusive forum for the following types of actions or proceedings under Delaware statutory or common law: any derivative action or proceeding brought on our behalf; any action asserting a claim of breach of fiduciary duty owed by any of our directors, officers or stockholders to us or to our stockholders; any action asserting a claim against us arising pursuant to the Delaware General Corporation Law, our amended and restated certificate of incorporation or our amended and restated bylaws (as either may be amended from time to time); or any action asserting a claim against us that is governed by the internal affairs doctrine. As a result, any action brought by any of our stockholders with regard to any of these matters will need to be filed in the Court of Chancery of the State of Delaware and cannot be filed in any other jurisdiction; provided that, the exclusive forum provision will not apply to suits brought to enforce any liability or duty created by the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the "Exchange Act"), as amended, or any other claim for which the federal courts have exclusive jurisdiction; and provided further that, if and only if the Court of Chancery of the State of Delaware dismisses any such action for lack of subject matter jurisdiction, such action may be brought in another state or federal court sitting in the State of Delaware. Our amended and restated certificate of incorporation and amended and restated bylaws also provide that the federal district courts of the United States of America are the exclusive forum for the resolution of any complaint asserting a cause of action against us or any of our directors, officers, employees or agents and arising under the Securities Act. Nothing in our amended and restated certificate of incorporation and amended and restated bylaws preclude stockholders that assert claims under the Exchange Act from bringing such claims in state or federal court, subject to applicable law.

If any action the subject matter of which is within the scope described above is filed in a court other than a court located within the State of Delaware, or a Foreign Action, in the name of any stockholder, such stockholder shall be deemed to have consented to the personal jurisdiction of the state and federal courts located within the

[Table of Contents](#)

State of Delaware in connection with any action brought in any such court to enforce the applicable provisions of our amended and restated certificate of incorporation and amended and restated bylaws and having service of process made upon such stockholder in any such action by service upon such stockholder's counsel in the Foreign Action as agent for such stockholder. Although our amended and restated certificate of incorporation and amended and restated bylaws contain the choice of forum provision described above, it is possible that a court could find that such a provision is inapplicable for a particular claim or action or that such provision is unenforceable.

This choice of forum provision may limit a stockholder's ability to bring a claim in a judicial forum that it finds favorable for disputes with us or any of our directors, officers, other employees or stockholders, which may discourage lawsuits with respect to such claims, although our stockholders will not be deemed to have waived our compliance with federal securities laws and the rules and regulations thereunder.

Amendment of Charter Provisions

The amendment of any of the above provisions in our amended and restated certificate of incorporation, except for the provision making it possible for our board of directors to issue undesignated preferred stock, would require approval by a stockholder vote by the holders of at least a 66 2/3% of the voting power of the then outstanding voting stock.

The provisions of the Delaware General Corporation Law, our amended and restated certificate of incorporation and our amended and restated bylaws could have the effect of discouraging others from attempting hostile takeovers and, as a consequence, they may also inhibit temporary fluctuations in the market price of our common stock that often result from actual or rumored hostile takeover attempts. These provisions may also have the effect of preventing changes in our management. It is possible that these provisions could make it more difficult to accomplish transactions that stockholders may otherwise deem to be in their best interests.

Nasdaq Global Select Market Listing

Our common stock is listed on the Nasdaq Global Select Market under the trading symbol "TERN."

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is Computershare, Inc. The transfer agent and registrar's address is 250 Royall Street, Canton, Massachusetts 02021.

Limitations of Liability and Indemnification Matters

Our amended and restated certificate of incorporation contains provisions that limit the liability of our directors for monetary damages to the fullest extent permitted by Delaware law. Consequently, our directors will not be personally liable to us or our stockholders for monetary damages for any breach of fiduciary duties as directors, except liability for:

- any breach of the director's duty of loyalty to us or our stockholders;
- any act or omission not in good faith or that involves intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law;
- unlawful payments of dividends or unlawful stock repurchases or redemptions as provided in Section 174 of the Delaware General Corporation Law; or
- any transaction from which the director derived an improper personal benefit.

Each of our amended and restated certificate of incorporation and amended and restated bylaws provide that we are required to indemnify our directors and officers, in each case to the fullest extent permitted by Delaware

[Table of Contents](#)

law. Our amended and restated bylaws also obligate us to advance expenses incurred by a director or officer in advance of the final disposition of any action or proceeding, and permit us to secure insurance on behalf of any officer, director, employee or other agent for any liability arising out of his or her actions in that capacity regardless of whether we would otherwise be permitted to indemnify him or her under Delaware law. We have entered and expect to continue to enter into agreements to indemnify our directors, executive officers and other employees as determined by our board of directors. With specified exceptions, these agreements provide for indemnification for related expenses including, among other things, attorneys' fees, judgments, fines and settlement amounts incurred by any of these individuals in any action or proceeding. We believe that these bylaw provisions and indemnification agreements are necessary to attract and retain qualified persons as directors and officers. We also maintain directors' and officers' liability insurance.

The limitation of liability and indemnification provisions in our amended and restated certificate of incorporation and amended and restated bylaws may discourage stockholders from bringing a lawsuit against our directors and officers for breach of their fiduciary duty. They may also reduce the likelihood of derivative litigation against our directors and officers, even though an action, if successful, might benefit us and our stockholders. Further, a stockholder's investment may be adversely affected to the extent that we pay the costs of settlement and damages.

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

The following description, together with the additional information we include in any applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus, summarizes certain general terms and provisions of the debt securities that we may offer under this prospectus. When we offer to sell a particular series of debt securities, we will describe the specific terms of the series in a supplement to this prospectus. We will also indicate in the supplement to what extent the general terms and provisions described in this prospectus apply to a particular series of debt securities.

We may issue debt securities either separately, or together with, or upon the conversion or exercise of or in exchange for, other securities described in this prospectus. Debt securities may be our senior, senior subordinated or subordinated obligations and, unless otherwise specified in a supplement to this prospectus, the debt securities will be our direct, unsecured obligations and may be issued in one or more series.

The debt securities will be issued under an indenture between us and a third party to be identified therein, as trustee. We have summarized select portions of the indenture below. The summary is not complete. The form of the indenture has been filed as an exhibit to the registration statement and you should read the indenture for provisions that may be important to you. In the summary below, we have included references to the section numbers of the indenture so that you can easily locate these provisions. Capitalized terms used in the summary and not defined herein have the meanings specified in the indenture.

As used in this section only, “Terns,” “we,” “our” or “us” refer to Terns Pharmaceuticals, Inc., unless expressly stated or the context otherwise requires.

General

The terms of each series of debt securities will be established by or pursuant to a resolution of our board of directors and set forth or determined in the manner provided in a resolution of our board of directors, in an officer’s certificate or by a supplemental indenture. (Section 2.2) The particular terms of each series of debt securities will be described in a prospectus supplement relating to such series (including any pricing supplement or term sheet).

We can issue an unlimited amount of debt securities under the indenture that may be in one or more series with the same or various maturities, at par, at a premium, or at a discount. (Section 2.1) We will set forth in a prospectus supplement (including any pricing supplement or term sheet) relating to any series of debt securities being offered, the aggregate principal amount and the following terms of the debt securities, if applicable:

- the title and ranking of the debt securities (including the terms of any subordination provisions);
- the price or prices (expressed as a percentage of the principal amount) at which we will sell the debt securities;
- any limit on the aggregate principal amount of the debt securities;
- the date or dates on which the principal of the securities of the series is payable;
- the rate or rates (which may be fixed or variable) per annum or the method used to determine the rate or rates (including any commodity, commodity index, stock exchange index or financial index) at which the debt securities will bear interest, the date or dates from which interest will accrue, the date or dates on which interest will commence and be payable and any regular record date for the interest payable on any interest payment date;
- the place or places where principal of, and interest, if any, on the debt securities will be payable (and the method of such payment), where the securities of such series may be surrendered for registration of transfer or exchange, and where notices and demands to us in respect of the debt securities may be delivered;

Table of Contents

- the period or periods within which, the price or prices at which and the terms and conditions upon which we may redeem the debt securities;
- any obligation we have to redeem or purchase the debt securities pursuant to any sinking fund or analogous provisions or at the option of a holder of debt securities and the period or periods within which, the price or prices at which and in the terms and conditions upon which securities of the series shall be redeemed or purchased, in whole or in part, pursuant to such obligation;
- the dates on which and the price or prices at which we will repurchase debt securities at the option of the holders of debt securities and other detailed terms and provisions of these repurchase obligations;
- the denominations in which the debt securities will be issued, if other than denominations of \$1,000 and any integral multiple thereof;
- whether the debt securities will be issued in the form of certificated debt securities or global debt securities;
- the portion of principal amount of the debt securities payable upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity date, if other than the principal amount;
- the currency of denomination of the debt securities, which may be United States Dollars or any foreign currency, and if such currency of denomination is a composite currency, the agency or organization, if any, responsible for overseeing such composite currency;
- the designation of the currency, currencies or currency units in which payment of principal of, premium and interest on the debt securities will be made;
- if payments of principal of, premium or interest on the debt securities will be made in one or more currencies or currency units other than that or those in which the debt securities are denominated, the manner in which the exchange rate with respect to these payments will be determined;
- the manner in which the amounts of payment of principal of, premium, if any, or interest on the debt securities will be determined, if these amounts may be determined by reference to an index based on a currency or currencies or by reference to a commodity, commodity index, stock exchange index or financial index;
- any provisions relating to any security provided for the debt securities;
- any addition to, deletion of or change in the Events of Default described in this prospectus or in the indenture with respect to the debt securities and any change in the acceleration provisions described in this prospectus or in the indenture with respect to the debt securities;
- any addition to, deletion of or change in the covenants described in this prospectus or in the indenture with respect to the debt securities;
- any depositaries, interest rate calculation agents, exchange rate calculation agents or other agents with respect to the debt securities;
- the provisions, if any, relating to conversion or exchange of any debt securities of such series, including if applicable, the conversion or exchange price and period, provisions as to whether conversion or exchange will be mandatory, the events requiring an adjustment of the conversion or exchange price and provisions affecting conversion or exchange;
- any other terms of the debt securities, which may supplement, modify or delete any provision of the indenture as it applies to that series, including any terms that may be required under applicable law or regulations or advisable in connection with the marketing of the securities; and
- whether any of our direct or indirect subsidiaries will guarantee the debt securities of that series, including the terms of subordination, if any, of such guarantees. (Section 2.2)

Table of Contents

We may issue debt securities that provide for an amount less than their stated principal amount to be due and payable upon declaration of acceleration of their maturity pursuant to the terms of the indenture. We will provide you with information on the federal income tax considerations and other special considerations applicable to any of these debt securities in the applicable prospectus supplement.

If we denominate the purchase price of any of the debt securities in a foreign currency or currencies or a foreign currency unit or units, or if the principal of and any premium and interest on any series of debt securities is payable in a foreign currency or currencies or a foreign currency unit or units, we will provide you with information on the restrictions, elections, general tax considerations, specific terms and other information with respect to that issue of debt securities and such foreign currency or currencies or foreign currency unit or units in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Transfer and Exchange

Each debt security will be represented by either one or more global securities registered in the name of The Depository Trust Company, or the Depository, or a nominee of the Depository (we will refer to any debt security represented by a global debt security as a “book-entry debt security”), or a certificate issued in definitive registered form (we will refer to any debt security represented by a certificated security as a “certificated debt security”) as set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. Except as set forth under the heading “Global Debt Securities and Book-Entry System” below, book-entry debt securities will not be issuable in certificated form.

Certificated Debt Securities. You may transfer or exchange certificated debt securities at any office we maintain for this purpose in accordance with the terms of the indenture. (Section 2.4) No service charge will be made for any transfer or exchange of certificated debt securities, but we may require payment of a sum sufficient to cover any tax or other governmental charge payable in connection with a transfer or exchange. (Section 2.7)

You may effect the transfer of certificated debt securities and the right to receive the principal of, premium and interest on certificated debt securities only by surrendering the certificate representing those certificated debt securities and either reissuance by us or the trustee of the certificate to the new holder or the issuance by us or the trustee of a new certificate to the new holder.

Global Debt Securities and Book-Entry System. Each global debt security representing book-entry debt securities will be deposited with, or on behalf of, the Depository, and registered in the name of the Depository or a nominee of the Depository. Please see “Global Securities.”

Covenants

We will set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement any restrictive covenants applicable to any issue of debt securities. (Article IV)

No Protection in the Event of a Change of Control

Unless we state otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, the debt securities will not contain any provisions which may afford holders of the debt securities protection in the event we have a change in control or in the event of a highly leveraged transaction (whether or not such transaction results in a change in control) which could adversely affect holders of debt securities.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets

We may not consolidate with or merge with or into, or convey, transfer or lease all or substantially all of our properties and assets to any person (a “successor person”) unless:

- we are the surviving corporation or the successor person (if other than Terns) is a corporation organized and validly existing under the laws of any U.S. domestic jurisdiction and expressly assumes our obligations on the debt securities and under the indenture; and

Table of Contents

- immediately after giving effect to the transaction, no Default or Event of Default, shall have occurred and be continuing.

Notwithstanding the above, any of our subsidiaries may consolidate with, merge into or transfer all or part of its properties to us. (Section 5.1)

Events of Default

“Event of Default” means with respect to any series of debt securities, any of the following:

- default in the payment of any interest upon any debt security of that series when it becomes due and payable, and continuance of such default for a period of 30 days (unless the entire amount of the payment is deposited by us with the trustee or with a paying agent prior to the expiration of the 30-day period);
- default in the payment of principal of any security of that series at its maturity;
- default in the performance or breach of any other covenant or warranty by us in the indenture (other than a covenant or warranty that has been included in the indenture solely for the benefit of a series of debt securities other than that series), which default continues uncured for a period of 60 days after we receive written notice from the trustee or Terns and the trustee receive written notice from the holders of not less than 25% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series as provided in the indenture;
- certain voluntary or involuntary events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization of Terns;
- any other Event of Default provided with respect to debt securities of that series that is described in the applicable prospectus supplement. (Section 6.1)

No Event of Default with respect to a particular series of debt securities (except as to certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization) necessarily constitutes an Event of Default with respect to any other series of debt securities. (Section 6.1) The occurrence of certain Events of Default or an acceleration under the indenture may constitute an event of default under certain indebtedness of ours or our subsidiaries outstanding from time to time.

We will provide the trustee written notice of any Default or Event of Default within 30 days of becoming aware of the occurrence of such Default or Event of Default, which notice will describe in reasonable detail the status of such Default or Event of Default and what action we are taking or propose to take in respect thereof. (Section 6.1)

If an Event of Default with respect to debt securities of any series at the time outstanding occurs and is continuing, then the trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series may, by a notice in writing to us (and to the trustee if given by the holders), declare to be due and payable immediately the principal of (or, if the debt securities of that series are discount securities, that portion of the principal amount as may be specified in the terms of that series) and accrued and unpaid interest, if any, on all debt securities of that series. In the case of an Event of Default resulting from certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization, the principal (or such specified amount) of and accrued and unpaid interest, if any, on all outstanding debt securities will become and be immediately due and payable without any declaration or other act on the part of the trustee or any holder of outstanding debt securities. At any time after a declaration of acceleration with respect to debt securities of any series has been made, but before a judgment or decree for payment of the money due has been obtained by the trustee, the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series may rescind and annul the acceleration if all Events of Default, other than the non-payment of accelerated principal and interest, if any, with respect to debt securities of that series, have been cured or waived as provided in the indenture. (Section 6.2) We refer you to the prospectus

Table of Contents

supplement relating to any series of debt securities that are discount securities for the particular provisions relating to acceleration of a portion of the principal amount of such discount securities upon the occurrence of an Event of Default.

The indenture provides that the trustee may refuse to perform any duty or exercise any of its rights or powers under the indenture unless the trustee receives indemnity satisfactory to it against any cost, liability or expense which might be incurred by it in performing such duty or exercising such right or power. (Section 7.1(e)) Subject to certain rights of the trustee, the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series will have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the trustee or exercising any trust or power conferred on the trustee with respect to the debt securities of that series. (Section 6.12)

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

- that holder has previously given to the trustee written notice of a continuing Event of Default with respect to debt securities of that series; and
- the holders of not less than 25% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series have made written request, and offered indemnity or security satisfactory to the trustee, to the trustee to institute the proceeding as trustee, and the trustee has not received from the holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series a direction inconsistent with that request and has failed to institute the proceeding within 60 days. (Section 6.7)

Notwithstanding any other provision in the indenture, the holder of any debt security will have an absolute and unconditional right to receive payment of the principal of, premium and any interest on that debt security on or after the due dates expressed in that debt security and to institute suit for the enforcement of payment. (Section 6.8)

The indenture requires us, within 120 days after the end of our fiscal year, to furnish to the trustee a statement as to compliance with the indenture. (Section 4.3) If a Default or Event of Default occurs and is continuing with respect to the securities of any series and if it is known to a responsible officer of the trustee, the trustee shall mail to each Securityholder of the securities of that series notice of a Default or Event of Default within 90 days after it occurs or, if later, after a responsible officer of the trustee has knowledge of such Default or Event of Default. The indenture provides that the trustee may withhold notice to the holders of debt securities of any series of any Default or Event of Default (except in payment on any debt securities of that series) with respect to debt securities of that series if the trustee determines in good faith that withholding notice is in the interest of the holders of those debt securities. (Section 7.5)

Modification and Waiver

We and the trustee may modify, amend or supplement the indenture or the debt securities of any series without the consent of any holder of any debt security:

- to cure any ambiguity, defect or inconsistency;
- to comply with covenants in the indenture described above under the heading “Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets”;
- to provide for uncertificated securities in addition to or in place of certificated securities;
- to add guarantees with respect to debt securities of any series or secure debt securities of any series;
- to surrender any of our rights or powers under the indenture;
- to add covenants or events of default for the benefit of the holders of debt securities of any series;

Table of Contents

- to comply with the applicable procedures of the applicable depository;
- to make any change that does not adversely affect the rights of any holder of debt securities;
- to provide for the issuance of and establish the form and terms and conditions of debt securities of any series as permitted by the indenture;
- to effect the appointment of a successor trustee with respect to the debt securities of any series and to add to or change any of the provisions of the indenture to provide for or facilitate administration by more than one trustee; or
- to comply with requirements of the SEC in order to effect or maintain the qualification of the indenture under the Trust Indenture Act. (Section 9.1)

We may also modify and amend the indenture with the consent of the holders of at least a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of each series affected by the modifications or amendments. We may not make any modification or amendment without the consent of the holders of each affected debt security then outstanding if that amendment will:

- reduce the amount of debt securities whose holders must consent to an amendment, supplement or waiver;
- reduce the rate of or extend the time for payment of interest (including default interest) on any debt security;
- reduce the principal of or premium on or change the fixed maturity of any debt security or reduce the amount of, or postpone the date fixed for, the payment of any sinking fund or analogous obligation with respect to any series of debt securities;
- reduce the principal amount of discount securities payable upon acceleration of maturity;
- waive a default in the payment of the principal of, premium or interest on any debt security (except a rescission of acceleration of the debt securities of any series by the holders of at least a majority in aggregate principal amount of the then outstanding debt securities of that series and a waiver of the payment default that resulted from such acceleration);
- make the principal of or premium or interest on any debt security payable in currency other than that stated in the debt security;
- make any change to certain provisions of the indenture relating to, among other things, the right of holders of debt securities to receive payment of the principal of, premium and interest on those debt securities and to institute suit for the enforcement of any such payment and to waivers or amendments; or
- waive a redemption payment with respect to any debt security. (Section 9.3)

Except for certain specified provisions, the holders of at least a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series may on behalf of the holders of all debt securities of that series waive our compliance with provisions of the indenture. (Section 9.2) The holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series may on behalf of the holders of all the debt securities of such series waive any past default under the indenture with respect to that series and its consequences, except a default in the payment of the principal of, premium or any interest on any debt security of that series; provided, however, that the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series may rescind an acceleration and its consequences, including any related payment default that resulted from the acceleration. (Section 6.13)

Defeasance of Debt Securities and Certain Covenants in Certain Circumstances

Legal Defeasance. The indenture provides that, unless otherwise provided by the terms of the applicable series of debt securities, we may be discharged from any and all obligations in respect of the debt securities of any series (subject to certain exceptions). We will be so discharged upon the irrevocable deposit with the trustee, in trust, of money and/or U.S. government obligations or, in the case of debt securities denominated in a single currency other than U.S. Dollars, government obligations of the government that issued or caused to be issued such currency, that, through the payment of interest and principal in accordance with their terms, will provide money or U.S. government obligations in an amount sufficient in the opinion of a nationally recognized firm of independent public accountants or investment bank to pay and discharge each installment of principal, premium and interest on and any mandatory sinking fund payments in respect of the debt securities of that series on the stated maturity of those payments in accordance with the terms of the indenture and those debt securities.

This discharge may occur only if, among other things, we have delivered to the trustee an opinion of counsel stating that we have received from, or there has been published by, the United States Internal Revenue Service a ruling or, since the date of execution of the indenture, there has been a change in the applicable U.S. federal income tax law, in either case to the effect that, and based thereon such opinion shall confirm that, the holders of the debt securities of that series will not recognize income, gain or loss for U.S. federal income tax purposes as a result of the deposit, defeasance and discharge and will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on the same amounts, in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if the deposit, defeasance and discharge had not occurred. (Section 8.3)

Defeasance of Certain Covenants. The indenture provides that, unless otherwise provided by the terms of the applicable series of debt securities, upon compliance with certain conditions:

- we may omit to comply with the covenant described under the heading “Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets” and certain other covenants set forth in the indenture, as well as any additional covenants which may be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement; and
- any omission to comply with those covenants will not constitute a Default or an Event of Default with respect to the debt securities of that series (“covenant defeasance”).

The conditions include:

- depositing with the trustee money and/or U.S. government obligations or, in the case of debt securities denominated in a single currency other than U.S. Dollars, government obligations of the government that issued or caused to be issued such currency, that, through the payment of interest and principal in accordance with their terms, will provide money in an amount sufficient in the opinion of a nationally recognized firm of independent public accountants or investment bank to pay and discharge each installment of principal of, premium and interest on and any mandatory sinking fund payments in respect of the debt securities of that series on the stated maturity of those payments in accordance with the terms of the indenture and those debt securities; and
- delivering to the trustee an opinion of counsel to the effect that the holders of the debt securities of that series will not recognize income, gain or loss for U.S. federal income tax purposes as a result of the deposit and related covenant defeasance and will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on the same amounts, in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if the deposit and related covenant defeasance had not occurred. (Section 8.4)

No Personal Liability of Directors, Officers, Employees or Securityholders

None of our past, present or future directors, officers, employees or securityholders, as such, will have any liability for any of our obligations under the debt securities or the indenture or for any claim based on, or in respect or by reason of, such obligations or their creation. By accepting a debt security, each holder waives and

[Table of Contents](#)

releases all such liability. This waiver and release is part of the consideration for the issue of the debt securities. However, this waiver and release may not be effective to waive liabilities under U.S. federal securities laws, and it is the view of the SEC that such a waiver is against public policy.

Governing Law

The indenture and the debt securities, including any claim or controversy arising out of or relating to the indenture or the securities, will be governed by the laws of the State of New York.

The indenture will provide that we, the trustee and the holders of the debt securities (by their acceptance of the debt securities) irrevocably waive, to the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, any and all right to trial by jury in any legal proceeding arising out of or relating to the indenture, the debt securities or the transactions contemplated thereby.

The indenture will provide that any legal suit, action or proceeding arising out of or based upon the indenture or the transactions contemplated thereby may be instituted in the federal courts of the United States of America located in the City of New York or the courts of the State of New York in each case located in the City of New York, and we, the trustee and the holder of the debt securities (by their acceptance of the debt securities) irrevocably submit to the non-exclusive jurisdiction of such courts in any such suit, action or proceeding. The indenture will further provide that service of any process, summons, notice or document by mail (to the extent allowed under any applicable statute or rule of court) to such party's address set forth in the indenture will be effective service of process for any suit, action or other proceeding brought in any such court. The indenture will further provide that we, the trustee and the holders of the debt securities (by their acceptance of the debt securities) irrevocably and unconditionally waive any objection to the laying of venue of any suit, action or other proceeding in the courts specified above and irrevocably and unconditionally waive and agree not to plead or claim any such suit, action or other proceeding has been brought in an inconvenient forum. (Section 10.10)

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

We may issue warrants for the purchase of shares of our common stock or preferred stock or of debt securities. We may issue warrants independently or together with other securities, and the warrants may be attached to or separate from any offered securities. Each series of warrants will be issued under a separate warrant agreement to be entered into between us and the investors or a warrant agent. The following summary of material provisions of the warrants and warrant agreements are subject to, and qualified in their entirety by reference to, all the provisions of the warrant agreement and warrant certificate applicable to a particular series of warrants. The terms of any warrants offered under a prospectus supplement may differ from the terms described below. We urge you to read the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus, as well as the complete warrant agreements and warrant certificates that contain the terms of the warrants.

The particular terms of any issue of warrants will be described in the prospectus supplement relating to the issue. Those terms may include:

- the number of shares of common stock or preferred stock purchasable upon the exercise of warrants to purchase such shares and the price at which such number of shares may be purchased upon such exercise;
- the designation, stated value and terms (including, without limitation, liquidation, dividend, conversion and voting rights) of the series of preferred stock purchasable upon exercise of warrants to purchase preferred stock;
- the principal amount of debt securities that may be purchased upon exercise of a debt warrant and the exercise price for the warrants, which may be payable in cash, securities or other property;
- the date, if any, on and after which the warrants and the related debt securities, preferred stock or common stock will be separately transferable;
- the terms of any rights to redeem or call the warrants;
- the date on which the right to exercise the warrants will commence and the date on which the right will expire;
- U.S. federal income tax consequences applicable to the warrants; and
- any additional terms of the warrants, including terms, procedures, and limitations relating to the exchange, exercise and settlement of the warrants.

Holders of equity warrants will not be entitled:

- to vote, consent or receive dividends;
- receive notice as stockholders with respect to any meeting of stockholders for the election of our directors or any other matter; or
- exercise any rights as stockholders of Terns.

Each warrant will entitle its holder to purchase the principal amount of debt securities or the number of shares of preferred stock or common stock at the exercise price set forth in, or calculable as set forth in, the applicable prospectus supplement. Unless we otherwise specify in the applicable prospectus supplement, holders of the warrants may exercise the warrants at any time up to the specified time on the expiration date that we set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. After the close of business on the expiration date, unexercised warrants will become void.

A holder of warrant certificates may exchange them for new warrant certificates of different denominations, present them for registration of transfer and exercise them at the corporate trust office of the warrant agent or any other office indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement. Until any warrants to purchase debt securities are

[Table of Contents](#)

exercised, the holder of the warrants will not have any rights of holders of the debt securities that can be purchased upon exercise, including any rights to receive payments of principal, premium or interest on the underlying debt securities or to enforce covenants in the applicable indenture. Until any warrants to purchase common stock or preferred stock are exercised, the holders of the warrants will not have any rights of holders of the underlying common stock or preferred stock, including any rights to receive dividends or payments upon any liquidation, dissolution or winding up on the common stock or preferred stock, if any.

DESCRIPTION OF UNITS

We may issue units consisting of any combination of the other types of securities offered under this prospectus in one or more series. We may evidence each series of units by unit certificates that we will issue under a separate agreement. We may enter into unit agreements with a unit agent. Each unit agent will be a bank or trust company that we select. We will indicate the name and address of the unit agent in the applicable prospectus supplement relating to a particular series of units.

The following description, together with the additional information included in any applicable prospectus supplement, summarizes the general features of the units that we may offer under this prospectus. You should read any prospectus supplement and any free writing prospectus that we may authorize to be provided to you related to the series of units being offered, as well as the complete unit agreements that contain the terms of the units. Specific unit agreements will contain additional important terms and provisions and we will file as an exhibit to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part, or will incorporate by reference from another report that we file with the SEC, the form of each unit agreement relating to units offered under this prospectus.

If we offer any units, certain terms of that series of units will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement, including, without limitation, the following, as applicable:

- the title of the series of units;
- identification and description of the separate constituent securities comprising the units;
- the price or prices at which the units will be issued;
- the date, if any, on and after which the constituent securities comprising the units will be separately transferable;
- a discussion of certain U.S. federal income tax considerations applicable to the units; and
- any other terms of the units and their constituent securities.

GLOBAL SECURITIES

Book-Entry, Delivery and Form

Unless we indicate differently in any applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus, the securities initially will be issued in book-entry form and represented by one or more global notes or global securities, or, collectively, global securities. The global securities will be deposited with, or on behalf of, The Depository Trust Company, New York, New York, as depository, or “DTC”, and registered in the name of Cede & Co., the nominee of DTC. Unless and until it is exchanged for individual certificates evidencing securities under the limited circumstances described below, a global security may not be transferred except as a whole by the depository to its nominee or by the nominee to the depository, or by the depository or its nominee to a successor depository or to a nominee of the successor depository.

DTC has advised us that it is:

- a limited-purpose trust company organized under the New York Banking Law;
- a “banking organization” within the meaning of the New York Banking Law;
- a member of the Federal Reserve System;
- a “clearing corporation” within the meaning of the New York Uniform Commercial Code; and
- a “clearing agency” registered pursuant to the provisions of Section 17A of the Exchange Act.

DTC holds securities that its participants deposit with DTC. DTC also facilitates the settlement among its participants of securities transactions, such as transfers and pledges, in deposited securities through electronic computerized book-entry changes in participants’ accounts, thereby eliminating the need for physical movement of securities certificates. “Direct participants” in DTC include securities brokers and dealers, including underwriters, banks, trust companies, clearing corporations and other organizations. DTC is a wholly-owned subsidiary of The Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation, or DTCC. DTCC is the holding company for DTC, National Securities Clearing Corporation and Fixed Income Clearing Corporation, all of which are registered clearing agencies. DTCC is owned by the users of its regulated subsidiaries. Access to the DTC system is also available to others, which we sometimes refer to as indirect participants, that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a direct participant, either directly or indirectly. The rules applicable to DTC and its participants are on file with the SEC.

Purchases of securities under the DTC system must be made by or through direct participants, which will receive a credit for the securities on DTC’s records. The ownership interest of the actual purchaser of a security, which we sometimes refer to as a beneficial owner, is in turn recorded on the direct and indirect participants’ records. Beneficial owners of securities will not receive written confirmation from DTC of their purchases. However, beneficial owners are expected to receive written confirmations providing details of their transactions, as well as periodic statements of their holdings, from the direct or indirect participants through which they purchased securities. Transfers of ownership interests in global securities are to be accomplished by entries made on the books of participants acting on behalf of beneficial owners. Beneficial owners will not receive certificates representing their ownership interests in the global securities, except under the limited circumstances described below.

To facilitate subsequent transfers, all global securities deposited by direct participants with DTC will be registered in the name of DTC’s partnership nominee, Cede & Co., or such other name as may be requested by an authorized representative of DTC. The deposit of securities with DTC and their registration in the name of Cede & Co. or such other nominee will not change the beneficial ownership of the securities. DTC has no knowledge of the actual beneficial owners of the securities. DTC’s records reflect only the identity of the direct participants to whose accounts the securities are credited, which may or may not be the beneficial owners. The participants are responsible for keeping account of their holdings on behalf of their customers.

Table of Contents

So long as the securities are in book-entry form, you will receive payments and may transfer securities only through the facilities of the depository and its direct and indirect participants. We will maintain an office or agency in the location specified in the prospectus supplement for the applicable securities, where notices and demands in respect of the securities and the indenture may be delivered to us and where certificated securities may be surrendered for payment, registration of transfer or exchange.

Conveyance of notices and other communications by DTC to direct participants, by direct participants to indirect participants and by direct participants and indirect participants to beneficial owners will be governed by arrangements among them, subject to any legal requirements in effect from time to time.

Redemption notices will be sent to DTC. If less than all of the securities of a particular series are being redeemed, DTC's practice is to determine by lot the amount of the interest of each direct participant in the securities of such series to be redeemed.

Neither DTC nor Cede & Co. (or such other DTC nominee) will consent or vote with respect to the securities. Under its usual procedures, DTC will mail an omnibus proxy to us as soon as possible after the record date. The omnibus proxy assigns the consenting or voting rights of Cede & Co. to those direct participants to whose accounts the securities of such series are credited on the record date, identified in a listing attached to the omnibus proxy.

So long as securities are in book-entry form, we will make payments on those securities to the depository or its nominee, as the registered owner of such securities, by wire transfer of immediately available funds. If securities are issued in definitive certificated form under the limited circumstances described below and if not otherwise provided in the description of the applicable securities herein or in the applicable prospectus supplement, we will have the option of making payments by check mailed to the addresses of the persons entitled to payment or by wire transfer to bank accounts in the United States designated in writing to the applicable trustee or other designated party at least 15 days before the applicable payment date by the persons entitled to payment, unless a shorter period is satisfactory to the applicable trustee or other designated party.

Redemption proceeds, distributions and dividend payments on the securities will be made to Cede & Co., or such other nominee as may be requested by an authorized representative of DTC. DTC's practice is to credit direct participants' accounts upon DTC's receipt of funds and corresponding detail information from us on the payment date in accordance with their respective holdings shown on DTC records. Payments by participants to beneficial owners will be governed by standing instructions and customary practices, as is the case with securities held for the account of customers in bearer form or registered in "street name." Those payments will be the responsibility of participants and not of DTC or us, subject to any statutory or regulatory requirements in effect from time to time. Payment of redemption proceeds, distributions and dividend payments to Cede & Co., or such other nominee as may be requested by an authorized representative of DTC, is our responsibility, disbursement of payments to direct participants is the responsibility of DTC, and disbursement of payments to the beneficial owners is the responsibility of direct and indirect participants.

Except under the limited circumstances described below, purchasers of securities will not be entitled to have securities registered in their names and will not receive physical delivery of securities. Accordingly, each beneficial owner must rely on the procedures of DTC and its participants to exercise any rights under the securities and the indenture.

The laws of some jurisdictions may require that some purchasers of securities take physical delivery of securities in definitive form. Those laws may impair the ability to transfer or pledge beneficial interests in securities.

DTC may discontinue providing its services as securities depository with respect to the securities at any time by giving reasonable notice to us. Under such circumstances, in the event that a successor depository is not obtained, securities certificates are required to be printed and delivered.

Table of Contents

As noted above, beneficial owners of a particular series of securities generally will not receive certificates representing their ownership interests in those securities. However, if:

- DTC notifies us that it is unwilling or unable to continue as a depository for the global security or securities representing such series of securities or if DTC ceases to be a clearing agency registered under the Exchange Act at a time when it is required to be registered and a successor depository is not appointed within 90 days of the notification to us or of our becoming aware of DTC's ceasing to be so registered, as the case may be;
- we determine, in our sole discretion, not to have such securities represented by one or more global securities; or
- an Event of Default has occurred and is continuing with respect to such series of securities,

we will prepare and deliver certificates for such securities in exchange for beneficial interests in the global securities. Any beneficial interest in a global security that is exchangeable under the circumstances described in the preceding sentence will be exchangeable for securities in definitive certificated form registered in the names that the depository directs. It is expected that these directions will be based upon directions received by the depository from its participants with respect to ownership of beneficial interests in the global securities.

Euroclear and Clearstream

If so provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, you may hold interests in a global security through Clearstream Banking S.A., which we refer to as "Clearstream," or Euroclear Bank S.A./N.V., as operator of the Euroclear System, which we refer to as "Euroclear," either directly if you are a participant in Clearstream or Euroclear or indirectly through organizations which are participants in Clearstream or Euroclear. Clearstream and Euroclear will hold interests on behalf of their respective participants through customers' securities accounts in the names of Clearstream and Euroclear, respectively, on the books of their respective U.S. depositories, which in turn will hold such interests in customers' securities accounts in such depositories' names on DTC's books.

Clearstream and Euroclear are securities clearance systems in Europe. Clearstream and Euroclear hold securities for their respective participating organizations and facilitate the clearance and settlement of securities transactions between those participants through electronic book-entry changes in their accounts, thereby eliminating the need for physical movement of certificates.

Payments, deliveries, transfers, exchanges, notices and other matters relating to beneficial interests in global securities owned through Euroclear or Clearstream must comply with the rules and procedures of those systems. Transactions between participants in Euroclear or Clearstream, on one hand, and other participants in DTC, on the other hand, are also subject to DTC's rules and procedures.

Investors will be able to make and receive through Euroclear and Clearstream payments, deliveries, transfers and other transactions involving any beneficial interests in global securities held through those systems only on days when those systems are open for business. Those systems may not be open for business on days when banks, brokers and other institutions are open for business in the United States.

Cross-market transfers between participants in DTC, on the one hand, and participants in Euroclear or Clearstream, on the other hand, will be effected through DTC in accordance with the DTC's rules on behalf of Euroclear or Clearstream, as the case may be, by their respective U.S. depositories; however, such cross-market transactions will require delivery of instructions to Euroclear or Clearstream, as the case may be, by the counterparty in such system in accordance with the rules and procedures and within the established deadlines (European time) of such system. Euroclear or Clearstream, as the case may be, will, if the transaction meets its settlement requirements, deliver instructions to its U.S. depository to take action to effect final settlement on its behalf by delivering or receiving interests in the global securities through DTC, and making or receiving payment in accordance with normal procedures for same-day fund settlement. Participants in Euroclear or Clearstream may not deliver instructions directly to their respective U.S. depositories.

[Table of Contents](#)

Due to time zone differences, the securities accounts of a participant in Euroclear or Clearstream purchasing an interest in a global security from a direct participant in DTC will be credited, and any such crediting will be reported to the relevant participant in Euroclear or Clearstream, during the securities settlement processing day (which must be a business day for Euroclear or Clearstream) immediately following the settlement date of DTC. Cash received in Euroclear or Clearstream as a result of sales of interests in a global security by or through a participant in Euroclear or Clearstream to a direct participant in DTC will be received with value on the settlement date of DTC but will be available in the relevant Euroclear or Clearstream cash account only as of the business day for Euroclear or Clearstream following DTC's settlement date.

Other

The information in this section of this prospectus concerning DTC, Clearstream, Euroclear and their respective book-entry systems has been obtained from sources that we believe to be reliable, but we do not take responsibility for this information. This information has been provided solely as a matter of convenience. The rules and procedures of DTC, Clearstream and Euroclear are solely within the control of those organizations and could change at any time. Neither we nor the trustee nor any agent of ours or of the trustee has any control over those entities and none of us takes any responsibility for their activities. You are urged to contact DTC, Clearstream and Euroclear or their respective participants directly to discuss those matters. In addition, although we expect that DTC, Clearstream and Euroclear will perform the foregoing procedures, none of them is under any obligation to perform or continue to perform such procedures and such procedures may be discontinued at any time. Neither we nor any agent of ours will have any responsibility for the performance or nonperformance by DTC, Clearstream and Euroclear or their respective participants of these or any other rules or procedures governing their respective operations.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the securities from time to time pursuant to underwritten public offerings, “at the market” offerings, negotiated transactions, block trades or a combination of these methods or through underwriters or dealers, through agents and/or directly to one or more purchasers. The securities may be distributed from time to time in one or more transactions:

- at a fixed price or prices, which may be changed;
- at market prices prevailing at the time of sale;
- at prices related to such prevailing market prices; or
- at negotiated prices.

Each time that we sell securities covered by this prospectus, we will provide a prospectus supplement or supplements that will describe the method of distribution and set forth the terms and conditions of the offering of such securities, including the offering price of the securities and the proceeds to us, if applicable.

Offers to purchase the securities being offered by this prospectus may be solicited directly. Agents may also be designated to solicit offers to purchase the securities from time to time. Any agent involved in the offer or sale of our securities will be identified in a prospectus supplement.

If a dealer is utilized in the sale of the securities being offered by this prospectus, the securities will be sold to the dealer, as principal. The dealer may then resell the securities to the public at varying prices to be determined by the dealer at the time of resale.

If an underwriter is utilized in the sale of the securities being offered by this prospectus, an underwriting agreement will be executed with the underwriter at the time of sale and the name of any underwriter will be provided in the prospectus supplement that the underwriter will use to make resales of the securities to the public. In connection with the sale of the securities, we or the purchasers of securities for whom the underwriter may act as agent, may compensate the underwriter in the form of underwriting discounts or commissions. The underwriter may sell the securities to or through dealers, and those dealers may receive compensation in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions from the underwriters and/or commissions from the purchasers for which they may act as agent. Unless otherwise indicated in a prospectus supplement, an agent will be acting on a best efforts basis and a dealer will purchase securities as a principal, and may then resell the securities at varying prices to be determined by the dealer.

Any compensation paid to underwriters, dealers or agents in connection with the offering of the securities, and any discounts, concessions or commissions allowed by underwriters to participating dealers will be provided in the applicable prospectus supplement. Underwriters, dealers and agents participating in the distribution of the securities may be deemed to be underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and any discounts and commissions received by them and any profit realized by them on resale of the securities may be deemed to be underwriting discounts and commissions. We may enter into agreements to indemnify underwriters, dealers and agents against civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, or to contribute to payments they may be required to make in respect thereof and to reimburse those persons for certain expenses.

Any common stock that we issue and sell will be listed on the Nasdaq Global Select Market, but any other securities may or may not be listed on a national securities exchange. To facilitate the offering of securities, certain persons participating in the offering may engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the price of the securities. This may include over-allotments or short sales of the securities, which involve the sale by persons participating in the offering of more securities than were sold to them. In these circumstances, these persons would cover such over-allotments or short positions by making purchases in the open market or by

[Table of Contents](#)

exercising their over-allotment option, if any. In addition, these persons may stabilize or maintain the price of the securities by bidding for or purchasing securities in the open market or by imposing penalty bids, whereby selling concessions allowed to dealers participating in the offering may be reclaimed if securities sold by them are repurchased in connection with stabilization transactions. The effect of these transactions may be to stabilize or maintain the market price of the securities at a level above that which might otherwise prevail in the open market. These transactions may be discontinued at any time.

We may engage in at the market offerings into an existing trading market in accordance with Rule 415(a)(4) under the Securities Act. In addition, we may enter into derivative transactions with third parties, or sell securities not covered by this prospectus to third parties in privately negotiated transactions. If the applicable prospectus supplement so indicates, in connection with those derivatives, the third parties may sell securities covered by this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement, including in short sale transactions. If so, the third party may use securities pledged by us or borrowed from us or others to settle those sales or to close out any related open borrowings of stock, and may use securities received from us in settlement of those derivatives to close out any related open borrowings of stock. The third party in such sale transactions will be an underwriter and, if not identified in this prospectus, will be named in the applicable prospectus supplement (or a post-effective amendment). In addition, we may otherwise loan or pledge securities to a financial institution or other third party that in turn may sell the securities short using this prospectus and an applicable prospectus supplement. Such financial institution or other third party may transfer its economic short position to investors in our securities or in connection with a concurrent offering of other securities.

The specific terms of any lock-up provisions in respect of any given offering will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

The underwriters, dealers and agents may engage in transactions with us, or perform services for us, in the ordinary course of business for which they receive compensation.

LEGAL MATTERS

Latham & Watkins LLP will pass upon certain legal matters relating to the issuance and sale of the securities offered hereby on behalf of Terns Pharmaceuticals, Inc. Additional legal matters may be passed upon for us or any underwriters, dealers or agents, by counsel that we will name in the applicable prospectus supplement.

EXPERTS

Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, has audited our consolidated financial statements included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2021, as set forth in their report which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus and elsewhere in the registration statement. Our financial statements are incorporated by reference in reliance on Ernst & Young LLP's report, given on their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

\$75,000,000 Shares of Common Stock



PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

Joint Book-Running Managers

**Jefferies
Cowen**

Bookrunner

UBS Investment Bank

Co-Lead Managers

**Mizuho
JMP Securities**
A CITIZENS COMPANY

December , 2022
