Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Functional activation of endogenous p53 by combined, but not individual, p19Arf gene transfer and nutlin-3 drug treatment reduced viability of B16 cells

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 3 December 2009

**Reviewer:** Silvia Soddu

**Reviewer’s report:**

The ms by Merkel and coauthors describes the results obtained in B16 melanoma cells and in C6 glioma cells by p19Arf expression and concomitant treatment with the wtp53 reactivating compound Nutlin-3. The question is clearly posed by the authors but it is not very novel. Nutlin-3 is known to very strongly increase p53 expression, which, in turn should further increase the p19Arf levels in the system employed by the authors. However, no data regarding this relevant molecular aspect have been performed. The data reported in figure 6, 7, and 8 show mild effects of the combined treatment on B16 cells, only weakly supporting the authors’ conclusions.

Overall, this ms is clearly written, but the findings described are rather poor

**Level of interest:** An article of insufficient interest to warrant publication in a scientific/medical journal

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests