

Prospectus Supplement

(To prospectus dated April 10, 2020)

\$30,000,000
plus 1,000,000 Commitment Shares

NOVAN

Common Stock

Pursuant to this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, we are offering up to \$30,000,000 of shares of our common stock, par value \$0.0001 per share, or our common stock, to Aspire Capital Fund, LLC, or Aspire Capital, pursuant to a common stock purchase agreement, or the Purchase Agreement, entered into with Aspire Capital on July 21, 2020, including 5,555,555 Purchase Shares to be issued to Aspire Capital for an aggregate purchase price of \$5,000,000, or the Initial Purchase Shares, plus 1,000,000 shares of our common stock, or the Commitment Shares, to be issued to Aspire Capital in consideration for entering into the Purchase Agreement. The Purchase Agreement replaces the existing Common Stock Purchase Agreement, dated June 15, 2020, between us and Aspire Capital, which was terminated under the terms of the Purchase Agreement.

The shares offered under this prospectus (other than the 1,000,000 Commitment Shares, which are being issued to Aspire Capital in consideration for entering into the Purchase Agreement) may be sold from time to time to Aspire Capital during the 30-month term of the Purchase Agreement, with an aggregate offering price of up to \$30.0 million, or the Purchase Shares. The purchase price for the Purchase Shares (other than the Initial Purchase Shares) will be based upon one of two formulas set forth in the Purchase Agreement depending on the type of purchase notice we submit to Aspire Capital from time to time.

Shares of our common stock are listed on the Nasdaq Global Market under the symbol “NOVN.” On July 21, 2020, the last reported sale price per share of our common stock, as reported on the Nasdaq Global Market, was \$1.23 per share.

Our business and investment in our common stock involve risks that are described in the “[Risk Factors](#)” section beginning on page S-2 of this prospectus supplement and in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2019, filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on February 24, 2020, as amended by our Annual Report (Amendment No. 1) on Form 10-K/A for the year ended December 31, 2019, filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on May 20, 2020.

We are an “emerging growth company” as defined by the Jumpstart Our Business Startups Act of 2012 and, as such, we have elected to comply with certain reduced public company reporting requirements for this prospectus supplement and future filings.

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

The date of this prospectus supplement is July 22, 2020

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Prospectus

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ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

This document is in two parts. The first part is this prospectus supplement, which describes the specific terms of this offering and also adds to and updates information contained in the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and the base prospectus. The second part, the accompanying prospectus, provides more general information. Generally, when we refer to this prospectus supplement, we are referring to both parts of this document combined. To the extent there is a conflict between the information contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus or any document incorporated by reference herein filed prior to the date of this prospectus supplement, you should rely on the information in this prospectus supplement; provided that 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 the accompanying prospectus—the statement in the document having the later date modifies or supersedes the earlier statement.

We further note that the representations, warranties and covenants made by us in any agreement that is filed as an exhibit to any document that is incorporated by reference herein were made solely for the benefit of the parties to such agreement, including, in some cases, for the purpose of allocating risk among the parties to such agreements, and should not be deemed to be a representation, warranty or covenant to you. Moreover, such representations, warranties or covenants were accurate only as of the date when made. Accordingly, such representations, warranties and covenants should not be relied on as accurately representing the current state of our affairs.

You should rely only on the information contained in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus, or incorporated by reference herein. We have not authorized anyone to provide you with different or additional information. The information contained in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus, or incorporated by reference herein, is accurate only as of the respective dates thereof, regardless of the time of delivery of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus or of any sale of our common stock. Our business, financial condition, results of operations, and prospects may have changed since those dates. It is important for you to read and consider all information contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, including the documents incorporated by reference herein, in making your investment decision. You should also read and consider the information in the documents to which we have referred you in the sections entitled “Where You Can Find More Information” and “Incorporation of Certain Information by Reference” in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus.

We are offering to sell, and seeking offers to buy, shares of our common stock only in jurisdictions where offers and sales are permitted. The distribution of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying 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 supplement and the accompanying prospectus must inform themselves about, and observe any restrictions relating to, the offering of the common stock and the distribution of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus outside the United States. This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus do 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 supplement and the accompanying 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 “Novan,” “NOVN,” “we,” “our,” “us” and the “Company” in this prospectus supplement, we mean Novan, Inc. and its subsidiaries, unless otherwise specified.

The Offering

Common stock offered by us in this offering	Up to an aggregate of \$25.0 million of shares of our common stock, plus (i) 1,000,000 Commitment Shares issued to Aspire Capital as consideration for its commitment to purchase shares of our common stock under the Purchase Agreement and (ii) 5,555,555 Initial Purchase Shares issued to Aspire Capital for an aggregate sale price of approximately \$5.0 million.
Common stock to be outstanding after this offering	176,110,050 shares, assuming the issuance of 1,000,000 Commitment Shares and 5,555,555 Initial Purchase Shares and 42,322,668 Purchase Shares at a price of \$0.5907 per share, which was the arithmetic average of the five closing sale prices for our common stock on the Nasdaq Global Market immediately preceding the execution of the Purchase Agreement on July 21, 2020. The number of actual Purchase Shares that may be issued will vary depending on the sales prices under this offering. The number of shares that may be issued in this offering is limited to 25,433,642 shares, except in certain circumstances. See “The Aspire Transaction-Purchase of Shares under the Purchase Agreement” below for a description of the share limitation.
Manner of offering	Issuance to Aspire Capital of 1,000,000 Commitment Shares, 5,555,555 Initial Purchase Shares to Aspire Capital for an aggregate sale price of approximately \$5.0 million and sales of Purchase Shares to Aspire Capital from time to time, subject to certain minimum stock price requirements and daily caps up to an aggregate of \$30.0 million of shares of our common stock (including the Initial Purchase Shares). See “The Aspire Transaction” and “Plan of Distribution.”
Use of proceeds	We intend to use the net proceeds from this offering for advancement of our research and development programs and for general corporate purposes, capital expenditures and working capital. As of the date of this prospectus supplement, we cannot specify with certainty all of the particular uses of the proceeds from this offering. Accordingly, we will retain broad discretion over how these offering proceeds are used. See “Use of Proceeds.”
Nasdaq Global Market Symbol	NOVN
Risk factors	This investment involves a high degree of risk. See “Risk Factors” of this prospectus supplement, as well as the other information included in or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, for a discussion of certain factors that you should consider carefully before deciding to invest in shares of our common stock.

The number of shares of our common stock shown above to be outstanding after this offering is based on 127,231,827 shares of our common stock issued and outstanding, of which 9,500 shares are held as treasury shares, as of July 21, 2020 and excludes the following:

- 3,138,600 shares of our common stock that are reserved for future issuance pursuant to our equity incentive plans and standalone inducement stock option grants, of which approximately 563,603 shares remain available for future option grants or stock awards; and
- 13,964,765 shares of common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding warrants, having a weighted average exercise price of \$3.43 per share.

Unless otherwise indicated, all information contained in this prospectus supplement assumes no exercise of options or stock appreciation rights issued under our equity incentive plans or the exercise of any outstanding warrants.

RISK FACTORS

Investing in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. You should carefully consider the following risk factors, as well as the other information set forth in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein, before deciding whether to invest in our common stock. Additional risks and uncertainties that we are unaware of may become important factors that affect us. If any of these risks actually occur, our business, financial condition or operating results may suffer, the trading price of our common stock could decline, and you may lose all or part of your investment.

Risks Related to This Offering

We will need to raise substantial additional capital in the future to fund our operations and we may be unable to raise such funds when needed and on acceptable terms.

We will need to raise substantial additional capital in the future to fund our operations. The extent to which we utilize the Purchase Agreement with Aspire Capital as a source of funding will depend on a number of factors, including the prevailing market price of our common stock, the volume of trading in our common stock and the extent to which we are able to secure funds from other sources. The number of shares of our Common Stock that we may sell to Aspire Capital under the Purchase Agreement on any given day and during the term of the Purchase Agreement is limited. See “The Aspire Capital Transaction” for additional information. Additionally, we and Aspire Capital may not effect any sales of shares of our common stock under the Purchase Agreement during the continuance of an event of default or on any trading day that the closing sale price of our common stock is less than \$0.15 per share. Even if we are able to access the full \$30.0 million under the Purchase Agreement (including the Initial Purchase Shares), we will still need additional capital to fully implement our business, operating and development plans.

If you purchase shares of our common stock in this offering, you may suffer immediate dilution of your investment and the sale of the shares of our common stock acquired in this offering could cause the price of our common stock to decline.

The shares sold in this offering, if any, may be sold from time to time at various prices; however the offering price for the Purchase Shares may be substantially higher than the net tangible book value per share of our common stock. If you purchase shares of our common stock in this offering, you may pay a price per share that substantially exceeds our net tangible book value per share after this offering.

In addition, this prospectus supplement relates to up to an aggregate of \$30.0 million of shares of our common stock, including \$5,000,000 for the Initial Purchase Shares, and 1,000,000 Commitment Shares, the sale and issuance of which may result in substantial dilution to the interests of other holders of our common stock, and such sales and issuances, or the anticipation of such sales and issuances, may cause the trading price of our common stock to decline. Our market liquidity is limited and resales by you of the shares that you acquire in this offering may also cause the trading price of our common stock to decline.

The number of shares ultimately sold by us under this prospectus is dependent upon the number of shares we elect to sell to Aspire Capital under the Purchase Agreement. We have the right under the Purchase Agreement to control the timing and amount of sales of our shares to Aspire Capital, and the Purchase Agreement may be terminated by us at any time at our discretion without any penalty or cost to us. Aspire Capital may ultimately purchase all, some or none of the \$25.0 million of shares of our common stock remaining after the 5,555,555 Initial Purchase Shares that, together with the 1,000,000 Commitment Shares and the Initial Purchase Shares, is the subject of this prospectus supplement and registered in this offering. Aspire Capital may sell all, some or none of our shares that it acquires under the Purchase Agreement and any such sales may cause the trading price of our common stock to decline.

We will need to raise substantial additional capital in the future to fund our operations and you may experience further dilution if we issue additional equity securities in future fundraising transactions.

We will need to raise substantial additional capital in the future to fund our operations. To raise additional capital, we may in the future offer additional shares of our common stock or other securities convertible into or exchangeable for

our common stock at prices that may not be the same as the price per share in this offering. We may sell shares or other securities in any other offering at a price per share that is less 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 securities convertible or exchangeable into common stock, in future transactions may be higher or lower than the price per share paid by investors in this offering. Further, the exercise of outstanding stock options and warrants may result in further dilution of your investment.

We have broad discretion in the use of the net proceeds from this offering and may not use them effectively.

Our management will have broad discretion in the application of the net proceeds from this offering and could spend the proceeds in ways that do not improve our results of operations or enhance the value of our common stock. The failure by our management to apply these funds effectively could result in financial losses that could have a material adverse effect on our business and cause the price of our common stock to decline. Pending their use, we may invest such proceeds or cash in a manner that does not produce income or that loses value. You will not have the opportunity to influence our decisions on how to use our net proceeds from this offering.

Our restated certificate of incorporation provides that, unless we consent in writing to the selection of an alternative forum, the Court of Chancery of the State of Delaware will be the sole and exclusive forum for substantially all disputes between us and our stockholders, which could limit our stockholders' ability to obtain a favorable judicial forum for disputes with us or our directors, officers, or employees or agents.

Our restated certificate of incorporation provides that, unless we consent in writing to the selection of an alternative forum, the Court of Chancery of the State of Delaware will be the sole and exclusive forum for (i) any derivative action or proceeding brought on behalf of us; (ii) any action asserting a claim of breach of a fiduciary duty owed by any of our directors, officers or other employees or agents to us or our stockholders; (iii) any action asserting a claim against us arising pursuant to any provision of the Delaware General Corporation Law or our amended and restated certificate of incorporation or amended and restated bylaws; or (iv) any action asserting a claim against us governed by the internal affairs doctrine. These choice of forum provisions do not preclude or contract the scope of exclusive federal or concurrent jurisdiction for any actions brought under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the Securities Act, or the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or the Exchange Act. Accordingly, our choice of forum provisions will not relieve us of our duties to comply with the federal securities laws and the rules and regulations thereunder, and our stockholders will not be deemed to have waived our compliance with these laws, rules and regulations.

Any person or entity purchasing or otherwise acquiring any interest in any of our securities shall be deemed to have notice of and consented to these provisions. These choice of forum provisions may limit a stockholder's ability to bring a claim in a judicial forum of its choosing for disputes with us or our directors, officers or other employees or agents, which may discourage lawsuits against us and our directors, officers and other employees or agents.

If a court were to find the choice of forum provision contained in our restated certificate of incorporation to be inapplicable or unenforceable in an action, we may incur additional costs associated with resolving such action in other jurisdictions, which could harm our business, results of operations, and financial condition. Even if we are successful in defending against these claims, litigation could result in substantial costs and be a distraction to management and other employees.

Our operations have been impacted by and we may face further business disruption and related risks resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic which could have a material adverse effect on our business.

The novel strain of a virus named SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2), or coronavirus, which causes novel coronavirus disease 2019, or COVID-19, has continued to spread globally and has resulted in authorities implementing numerous measures to try to contain the virus, such as travel bans and restrictions, quarantines, shelter in place orders, and shutdowns. The COVID-19 pandemic, and the mitigation measures and uncertainty resulting from it, have had and will likely continue to have an adverse impact on economic, public health and behavioral conditions in the United States and worldwide, which in each case could have an adverse effect on our

business and financial condition, including impairing our ability to raise capital when needed or on terms that are favorable to us.

The timetable for development of our product candidates has been impacted and may face further disruption and our business could be further adversely affected by the outbreak of COVID-19. We are still assessing our business plans and the impact COVID-19 may have on our daily operations, our ability to conduct our planned preclinical studies and clinical trials, which also remain subject to available funding, including our ability to recruit patients to participate in clinical trials and access sites and investigators to conduct our clinical trials, and our ability to rely on our current and future third-party relationships (including with third-party manufacturers, vendors, and strategic partners). There can be no assurance that this analysis will enable us to avoid part or all of any impact from the spread of COVID-19 or its consequences, including downturns in business sentiment generally or in our sector in particular. In particular, COVID-19 has impacted the trial execution plans of our B-SIMPLE4 Phase 3 trial for SB206, and we are assessing any further impact of COVID-19 on the B-SIMPLE4 Phase 3 trial for SB206, including delay, postponement or other impacts to the trial. We may face difficulties and/or delays with site initiation and patient enrollment for the B-SIMPLE4 Phase 3 trial for SB206 or our other planned pre-clinical or clinical trials if (i) the prevalence of molluscum contagiosum is reduced as a result of the various measures implemented by authorities to try to contain COVID-19, (ii) the patient populations that are eligible for our planned clinical trials are impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, or (iii) if healthcare resources continue to be prioritized toward the COVID-19 pandemic. Because the greatest incidence of molluscum is in children aged one to 14 years, school and child care center closures or reliance on virtual learning could impact our ability to conduct the B-SIMPLE4 Phase 3 trial for SB206. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic may continue to affect the business of the FDA or other health authorities, which could result in delays in our interactions with the FDA related to our planned clinical trials.

If we or any future third-parties with whom we partner (including manufacturers, vendors, strategic partners, clinical trial sites, and CROs), or the FDA or other health authorities, experience delays or other disruptions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, our ability to conduct our business and operations could be further adversely affected, which could prevent or delay us continuing development of our product candidates, and ultimately of reviews and approvals of our product candidates. The extent to which COVID-19 and global efforts to contain its spread will impact our business including our operations, preclinical studies, clinical trials, and financial condition will depend on future developments, which are highly uncertain and cannot be predicted at this time, and include the duration, severity, and scope of the pandemic and the actions taken by other parties, such as governmental authorities, to contain and treat COVID-19.

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein contain 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 that are not statements of historical facts may be deemed to be forward-looking statements. In some cases, you can identify forward-looking statements by terminology such as “believe,” “assume,” “contemplate,” “continue,” “due,” “goal,” “objective,” “plan,” “seek,” “target,” “expect,” “believe,” “anticipate,” “intend,” “positioned,” “may,” “will,” “would,” “could,” “should,” “potential,” “predict,” “project,” “estimate,” or “continue,” 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, although not all forward-looking statements contain these words. In addition, statements such as “we believe” and similar statements reflect our beliefs and opinions on the relevant subject. The forward-looking statements and opinions contained in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein are based upon information available to us as of the date hereof (or thereof, as applicable) and, while we believe such information forms a reasonable basis for such statements, such information may be limited or incomplete, and our statements should not be read to indicate that we have conducted an exhaustive inquiry into, or review of, all potentially available relevant information. These forward-looking statements include statements about:

- our ability to sell shares of our common stock to Aspire Capital pursuant to the Purchase Agreement and our ability to register and maintain the registration of the shares issued and issuable thereunder;
- our plans to develop and commercialize our product candidates;
- our plans to conduct clinical trials and preclinical studies and the timing thereof;
- the timing of the availability of data from our clinical trials and preclinical studies;
- our plans to enter into strategic partnerships for the development and commercialization of our product candidates
- the timing of our regulatory filings for our product candidates;
- the clinical utility, potential benefits and market acceptance of our product candidates;
- our commercialization, marketing and manufacturing capabilities and strategy;
- our intellectual property position; and
- our estimates regarding future revenue, expenses, liquidity, capital requirements and our strategies and needs for additional financing.

Forward-looking statements are based on management’s current expectations, estimates, forecasts and projections about our business and the industry in which we operate, and management’s beliefs and assumptions are not guarantees of future performance or development and involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that are in some cases beyond our control. As a result, any or all of our forward-looking statements in this prospectus supplement, accompanying prospectus or the documents incorporated herein by reference may turn out to be inaccurate. Furthermore, if the forward-looking statements prove to be inaccurate, the inaccuracy may be material. Our forward-looking statements do not reflect the potential impact of any future acquisitions, mergers, dispositions, strategic partnerships, collaborations, joint ventures or investments that we may make or enter into. In light of the significant uncertainties in these forward-looking statements, you should not 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 time frame, or at all. Factors that may cause actual results to differ materially from current expectations include, among other things, those risks, uncertainties and assumptions described under the sections in our periodic reports,

including our Annual Report (Amendment No. 1) on Form 10-K/A for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2019, filed with the SEC on May 20, 2020, entitled “Risk Factors” and “Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations,” as well as other sections elsewhere in this prospectus supplement, accompanying prospectus and the documents or reports incorporated herein by reference. Potential investors are urged to consider these factors carefully in evaluating these forward-looking statements. Except as required by law, we assume no obligation to update or revise these forward-looking statements for any reason, even if new information becomes available in the future. You should, however, review the risk factors and other information we describe in the reports we file from time to time with the SEC after the date of this prospectus supplement and incorporate by reference herein.

USE OF PROCEEDS

We intend to use the net proceeds of this offering for advancement of our research and development programs and for general corporate purposes, capital expenditures and working capital.

This anticipated use of net proceeds from the sale of our common stock to Aspire Capital under the Purchase Agreement represents our intentions based upon our current plans and business conditions. The amounts and timing of our actual expenditures may vary significantly depending on numerous factors, including the progress of our development, the status of and results from clinical trials of our product candidates, our success in entering into strategic partnerships for the development and commercialization of our product candidates, and any unforeseen cash needs. As of the date of this prospectus supplement, we cannot specify with certainty all of the particular uses of the proceeds from this offering. We may find it necessary or advisable to use the net proceeds from this offering for other purposes than those described above, and our management will have broad discretion in the application of the net proceeds.

Pending the uses described above, we plan to invest the net proceeds from this offering in short-and intermediate-term, interest-bearing obligations, investment-grade instruments, demand deposits, certificates of deposit or direct or guaranteed obligations of the U.S. government.

DILUTION

Our net tangible book value as of March 31, 2020, was approximately \$(12.4) million, or \$(0.17) per share of our common stock. Net tangible book value per share of our common stock is calculated by subtracting our total liabilities from our total tangible assets, which is total assets less intangible assets, and dividing this amount by the number of shares of our common stock outstanding.

After giving effect to (i) the issuance of 5,555,555 Initial Purchase Shares for gross proceeds of approximately \$5.0 million, (ii) the issuance of 1,000,000 Commitment Shares, and (iii) the assumed sale of 42,322,668 Purchase Shares in the aggregate amount of \$25.0 million at an assumed offering price of \$0.5907 per share, which was the arithmetic average of the five closing sale prices for our common stock immediately preceding the execution of the Purchase Agreement on July 21, 2020, and after deducting the estimated offering expenses payable by us, our as-adjusted net tangible book value as of March 31, 2020, would have been approximately \$17.6 million, or \$0.15 per share of our common stock. This represents an immediate increase in net tangible book value of \$0.32 per share to our existing stockholders and an immediate dilution in net tangible book value of \$0.46 per share to investors participating in this offering.

The following table illustrates this dilution on a per share basis:

Assumed offering price per share		\$	0.61
Historical net tangible book value per share as of March 31, 2020	\$	(0.17)	
Increase in net tangible book value per share attributable to this offering		0.32	
As adjusted net tangible book value per share after this offering			0.15
Dilution in net tangible book value per share to new investor	\$		0.46

The foregoing dilution information assumes an offering price for the Purchase Shares equal to the arithmetic average of the five closing sale prices for our common stock immediately preceding the execution of the Purchase Agreement on July 21, 2020, and the sale of an aggregate of \$25.0 million in Purchase Shares and gives effect to the issuance of 5,555,555 Initial Purchase Shares for gross proceeds of approximately \$5.0 million. The actual price at which we sell Purchase Shares in this offering, in addition to the 1,000,000 Commitment Shares and the 5,555,555 Initial Purchase Shares, may be higher or lower than this assumed price and the total amount of Purchase Shares that we sell in this offering may be lower than \$30.0 million. An increase of \$0.50 per share in the price at which the Purchase Shares are sold from the assumed average offering price of \$0.5907 per share shown in the table above, assuming we sell an aggregate of \$25.0 million in Purchase Shares at that price, would increase our adjusted net tangible book value per share after this offering to \$0.17 per share and would result in an immediate dilution in net tangible book value per share to the new investor in this offering of \$0.85 per share, after deducting estimated aggregate offering expenses payable by us.

The above discussion and table are based on 72,019,062 shares of our common stock outstanding as of March 31, 2020, and exclude as of that date the following

- 2,106,770 shares of our common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding options as of March 31, 2020, having a weighted average exercise price of \$3.30 per share;
- 10,000,000 shares of our common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding warrants as of March 31, 2020, having an exercise price of \$4.66 per share;
- 11,483,334 shares of our common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding warrants issued in our March 2020 public offering, having an exercise price of \$0.30 per share;
- 594,958 shares of our common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding warrants issued in our March 2020 public offering, having an exercise price of \$0.375 per share;

- 558,140 shares of our common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding warrants issued in our March 2020 registered direct offering, having an exercise price of \$0.5375 per share;
- 3,452,326 shares of our common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding pre-funded warrants issued in our March 2020 registered offering, having an exercise price of \$0.0001 per share;
- 600,000 shares of our common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding stock appreciation rights, or SARs, as of March 31, 2020, having an exercise price of \$0.82 per share; and
- 441,663 shares of our common stock reserved for possible future issuance under the Novan, Inc. 2016 Incentive Award Plan.

Furthermore, we have raised additional capital through the sale of equity securities since March 31, 2020 and we may choose to raise further additional capital through the sale of equity or debt securities 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 any of our outstanding options, stock appreciation rights and warrants described above are exercised, new options are issued and exercised or we issue additional shares of our common stock or other equity or convertible debt securities in the future, there will be further dilution to investors in this offering.

THE ASPIRE TRANSACTION

General

The Purchase Agreement provides that upon the terms and subject to the conditions and limitations set forth therein, Aspire Capital is committed to purchase up to an aggregate of \$30.0 million of Purchase Shares from time to time over the term of the Purchase Agreement from us and that, as consideration for entering into the Purchase Agreement, we are issuing 1,000,000 Commitment Shares to Aspire Capital. The Purchase Agreement replaces the existing Common Stock Purchase Agreement, dated as of June 15, 2020, between us and Aspire Capital, which was terminated under the terms of the Purchase Agreement. In addition, in connection with entering into the Purchase Agreement, Aspire Capital agreed to make the initial purchase of 5,555,555 Initial Purchase Shares at a purchase price of \$0.90 per share, pursuant to the Purchase Agreement. The following is a summary of the Purchase Agreement with Aspire Capital.

Purchase of Shares under the Purchase Agreement

On July 22, 2020, the conditions necessary for purchases under the Purchase Agreement to commence were satisfied. On any trading day over the 30-month term of the Purchase Agreement, we have the right, in our sole discretion, to present Aspire Capital with a purchase notice, or a Purchase Notice, directing Aspire Capital to purchase up to 300,000 Purchase Shares per trading day; however, no sale pursuant to such a Purchase Notice may exceed \$500,000 per trading day, unless we and Aspire Capital mutually agree. We and Aspire Capital also may mutually agree to increase the number of shares that may be sold to as much as an additional 2,000,000 Purchase Shares per trading day. The purchase price per Purchase Share pursuant to such Purchase Notice, or the Purchase Price, is the lower of:

- the lowest sale price of our common stock on the purchase date; or
- the arithmetic average of the three lowest closing sale prices for our common stock during the ten consecutive trading days ending on the trading day immediately preceding the purchase date.

In addition, on any date on which we submit a Purchase Notice to Aspire Capital for the purchase of at least 300,000 shares, we also have the right to direct Aspire Capital to purchase an amount of stock equal to up to 30% of the aggregate shares of our common stock traded on the Nasdaq Global Market on the next trading day, subject to the VWAP Purchase Share Volume Maximum and the VWAP Minimum Price Threshold, which is equal to the greater of (a) 80% of the closing price of our common stock on the business day immediately preceding the VWAP Purchase Date or (b) such higher price as set forth by the Company in the VWAP Purchase Notice. The VWAP Purchase Price of such shares is the lower of:

- the Closing Sale Price on the VWAP Purchase Date; or
- 97% of the volume-weighted average price for our common stock traded on the Nasdaq Global Market:
 - on the VWAP Purchase Date, if the aggregate shares to be purchased on that date have not exceeded the VWAP Purchase Share Volume Maximum or
 - during that portion of the VWAP Purchase Date until such time as the sooner to occur of (i) the time at which the aggregate shares traded on the Nasdaq Global Market exceed the VWAP Purchase Share Volume Maximum or (ii) the time at which the sale price of our common stock falls below the VWAP Minimum Price Threshold.

The Purchase Price will be adjusted for any reorganization, recapitalization, non-cash dividend, stock split, or other similar transaction occurring during the trading day(s) used to compute the Purchase Price. We may deliver multiple Purchase Notices and VWAP Purchase Notices to Aspire Capital from time to time during the term of the Purchase Agreement, so long as the most recent purchase has been completed.

The number of Purchase Shares covered by and timing of each Purchase Notice or VWAP Purchase Notice are to be determined by us, in our sole discretion. The aggregate number of shares that we can issue to Aspire Capital under the Purchase Agreement may in no case exceed 25,433,642 shares of our common stock (which is equal to approximately 19.99% of the common stock outstanding on the date of this prospectus supplement), or the Exchange Cap, unless (i) stockholder approval is obtained to issue more, in which case the Exchange Cap will not apply, or (ii) stockholder approval has not been obtained and at any time the Exchange Cap is reached and at all times thereafter the average price paid for all shares issued under the Purchase Agreement (including the 1,000,000 Commitment Shares) is equal to or greater than \$0.5907, or the Minimum Price, a price equal to the arithmetic average of the five closing sale prices for our common stock immediately preceding the execution of the Purchase Agreement. The Purchase Agreement also provides that at no time shall Aspire Capital (together with its affiliates) beneficially own more than 19.99% of our common stock. Except for the Initial Purchase Shares, Aspire Capital has no right to require any sales by us, but is obligated to make purchases from us as we direct in accordance with the Purchase Agreement. There are no limitations on use of proceeds, financial or business covenants, restrictions on future fundings, rights of first refusal, participation rights, penalties or liquidated damages in the Purchase Agreement. Other than the issuance of the 1,000,000 Commitment Shares, we have not and will not pay any additional amounts to reimburse or otherwise compensate Aspire Capital in connection with the transaction.

Minimum Share Price

Under the Purchase Agreement, we and Aspire Capital may not effect any sales of shares of our common stock under the Purchase Agreement on any trading day that the closing sale price of our common stock is less than \$0.15 per share.

Events of Default

Generally, Aspire Capital may terminate the Purchase Agreement upon the occurrence of any of the following, among other, events of default:

- the effectiveness of any registration statement that is required to be maintained effective pursuant to the terms of a registration rights agreement, or the Registration Rights Agreement, dated as of July 21, 2020, by and between us and Aspire Capital, lapses for any reason (including, without limitation, the issuance of a stop order) or is unavailable to us for the sale of our common stock to Aspire Capital in accordance with the terms of the Registration Rights Agreement, and such lapse or unavailability continues for a period of ten consecutive business days or for more than an aggregate of thirty business days in any 365-day period, and which is not in connection with a post-effective amendment to any such registration statement or the filing of a new registration statement, provided that in connection with any post-effective amendment to such registration statement or filing of a new registration statement that is required to be declared effective by the SEC such lapse or unavailability may continue for a period of no more than 30 consecutive business days;
- the suspension from trading or failure of our common stock to be listed on our principal market for a period of three consecutive business days;
- the delisting of our common stock from our principal market, provided our common stock is not immediately thereafter trading on the New York Stock Exchange, the NYSE American, the Nasdaq Global Market, the Nasdaq Global Select Market or the Nasdaq Capital Market;
- our transfer agent's failure to issue to Aspire Capital shares of our common stock which Aspire Capital is entitled to receive under the Purchase Agreement within five business days after an applicable purchase date;
- any breach by us of the representations or warranties or covenants contained in the Purchase Agreement or any related agreements which could have a material adverse effect on us, subject to a cure period of five business days;

- if we become insolvent or are generally unable to pay our debts as they become due; or
- any participation or threatened participation in insolvency or bankruptcy proceedings by or against us.

The Purchase Agreement will be automatically terminated in the event of any participation in insolvency or bankruptcy proceedings by or against us.

Our Termination Rights

The Purchase Agreement may be terminated by us at any time, at our discretion, without any penalty or additional cost to us.

No Short-Selling or Hedging by Aspire Capital

Aspire Capital has agreed that neither it nor any of its agents, representatives, and affiliates shall engage in any direct or indirect short-selling or hedging of our common stock during any time prior to the termination of the Purchase Agreement.

Effect of Performance of the Purchase Agreement on Our Stockholders

The Purchase Agreement does not limit the ability of Aspire Capital to sell any or all of the \$30.0 million of shares of our common stock, including the Initial Purchase Shares, or the 1,000,000 Commitment Shares registered in this offering. It is anticipated that shares registered in this offering will be sold over a period of up to approximately thirty months from the date of this prospectus supplement. The sale by Aspire Capital of a significant amount of shares registered in this offering at any given time could cause the market price of our common stock to decline and/or to be highly volatile. Aspire Capital may ultimately purchase all, some or none of the up to an aggregate of \$25.0 million of shares of our common stock remaining after the 5,555,555 Initial Purchase Shares that, together with the 1,000,000 Commitment Shares and the Initial Purchase Shares, is the subject of this prospectus supplement and registered in this offering. After it has acquired such shares, it may sell all, some or none of such shares. Therefore, sales to Aspire Capital by us pursuant to the Purchase Agreement also may result in substantial dilution to the interests of other holders of our common stock. However, we have the right to control the timing and amount of any sales of our shares to Aspire Capital and the Purchase Agreement may be terminated by us at any time at our discretion without any penalty or additional cost to us.

Percentage of Outstanding Shares after Giving Effect to the Purchased Shares Issued to Aspire Capital

Under the Purchase Agreement, we may sell shares of our common stock having an aggregate offering price of up to \$30.0 million to Aspire Capital from time to time, including the Initial Purchase Shares. The number of shares ultimately offered for sale to Aspire Capital in this offering in addition to the Initial Purchase Shares and Commitment Shares is dependent upon the number of shares we elect to sell to Aspire Capital under the Purchase Agreement. In addition, Aspire Capital will not be required to buy Purchase Shares pursuant to a Purchase Notice that was received by Aspire Capital on any trading day on which the last closing trade price of our Common Stock is below \$0.15 per share. The following table sets forth the amount of proceeds we would receive from Aspire Capital from the sale of shares at varying purchase prices:

Assumed Average Purchase Price	Number of Shares to be Sold if Full Purchase ⁽¹⁾	Percentage of Outstanding Shares After Giving Effect to the Sale to Aspire Capital ⁽²⁾	Proceeds from the Sale of Shares to Aspire Capital Under the Purchase Agreement
\$0.15	24,433,642	16.11%	\$7,831,712.55
\$0.50	24,433,642	16.11%	\$14,439,043.00
\$0.5907 ⁽³⁾	47,878,223	27.34%	\$30,000,000
\$1.00	30,555,555	19.37%	\$30,000,000
\$1.25	25,555,555	16.73%	\$30,000,000
\$1.50	22,222,222	14.87%	\$30,000,000
\$1.75	19,841,269	13.49%	\$30,000,000
\$2.00	18,055,555	12.43%	\$30,000,000

- (1) Includes the sale of the total number of Purchase Shares that we could sell under the Purchase Agreement at the corresponding assumed purchase price set forth in the adjacent column, up to an aggregate purchase price of \$25.0 million, plus the 5,555,555 Initial Purchase Shares sold at a purchase price of \$0.90 per share, but applying the 19.99% Exchange Cap limitation, to the extent applicable. Does not include the 1,000,000 Commitment Shares, although such Commitment Shares are subject to the 19.99% Exchange Cap limitation and included in the calculation of such limitation for purposes of this table.
- (2) Excludes the 1,000,000 Commitment Shares, which represent approximately 0.8% of our outstanding common stock based on 127,231,827 shares of our common stock issued and outstanding, of which 9,500 shares are held as treasury shares, on July 21, 2020, which does not take into account:
- 3,138,600 shares of our common stock that are reserved for future issuance pursuant to our equity incentive plans and standalone inducement stock option grants, of which approximately 563,603 shares remain available for future option grants or stock awards; and
 - 13,964,765 shares of common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding warrants having a weighted average exercise price of \$3.43 per share.
- (3) On July 21, 2020, the arithmetic average of the five closing sale prices for our common stock immediately preceding the execution of the Purchase Agreement was \$0.5907 per share.

Termination of Existing Purchase Agreement with Aspire Capital

The Purchase Agreement terminates the Common Stock Purchase Agreement, dated as of June 15, 2020, between us and Aspire Capital.

Information with Respect to Aspire Capital

Aspire Capital Partners LLC, or Aspire Partners, is the Managing Member of Aspire Capital Fund, LLC, or Aspire Fund. SGM Holdings Corp., or SGM, is the Managing Member of Aspire Partners. Mr. Steven G. Martin, or Mr. Martin, is the president and sole shareholder of SGM, as well as a principal of Aspire Partners. Mr. Erik J. Brown, or Mr. Brown, is the president and sole shareholder of Red Cedar Capital Corp, or Red Cedar, which is a principal of Aspire Partners. Mr. Christos Komissopoulos, or Mr. Komissopoulos, is president and sole shareholder of Chrisko Investors Inc., or Chrisko, which is a principal of Aspire Partners. Mr. William F. Blank, III, or Mr. Blank, is president and sole shareholder of WML Ventures Corp., or WML Ventures, which is a principal of Aspire Partners. Each of Aspire Partners, SGM, Red Cedar, Chrisko, WML Ventures, Mr. Martin, Mr. Brown, Mr. Komissopoulos and Mr. Blank may be deemed to be a beneficial owner of our common stock held by Aspire Fund. Each of Aspire Partners, SGM, Red Cedar, Chrisko, WML Ventures, Mr. Martin, Mr. Brown, Mr. Komissopoulos and Mr. Blank disclaims beneficial ownership of the common stock held by Aspire Fund.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

On July 21, 2020, we entered into the Purchase Agreement with Aspire Capital. In consideration for entering into the Purchase Agreement, we are issuing 1,000,000 Commitment Shares to Aspire Capital. The Purchase Agreement provides that, upon the terms and subject to the conditions set forth therein, Aspire Capital is irrevocably committed to purchase up to an aggregate of \$30.0 million of shares of our common stock over the 30-month term of the Purchase Agreement. In addition, in connection with entering into the Purchase Agreement, Aspire Capital agreed to make the initial purchase of 5,555,555 Initial Purchase Shares at a purchase price of \$0.90 per share, pursuant to the Purchase Agreement.

Aspire Capital is an “underwriter” within the meaning of the Securities Act.

Neither we nor Aspire Capital can presently estimate the amount of compensation that any agent will receive. We know of no existing arrangements between Aspire Capital, any other stockholder, broker, dealer, underwriter, or agent relating to the sale or distribution of the shares offered by this prospectus. At the time a particular offer of shares is made, a prospectus supplement, if required, will be distributed that will set forth the names of any agents, underwriters, or dealers and any other required information.

We will pay all of the expenses incident to the registration, offering, and sale of the shares to Aspire Capital. We have agreed to indemnify Aspire Capital and certain other persons against certain liabilities in connection with the offering of shares of our common stock offered hereby, including liabilities arising under the Securities Act or, if such indemnity is unavailable, to contribute amounts required to be paid in respect of such liabilities. Aspire Capital has agreed to indemnify us against liabilities under the Securities Act that may arise from certain written information furnished to us by Aspire Capital specifically for use in this prospectus or, if such indemnity is unavailable, to contribute amounts required to be paid in respect of such liabilities.

Aspire Capital and its affiliates have agreed not to engage in any direct or indirect short selling or hedging of our common stock during the term of the Purchase Agreement.

We have advised Aspire Capital that it is required to comply with Regulation M promulgated under the Exchange Act. With certain exceptions, Regulation M precludes a selling stockholder, any affiliated purchasers, and any broker-dealer or other person who participates in the distribution from bidding for or purchasing, or attempting to induce any person to bid for or purchase, any security which is the subject of the distribution until the entire distribution is complete. Regulation M also prohibits any bids or purchases made in order to stabilize the price of a security in connection with the distribution of that security. All of the foregoing may affect the marketability of the shares offered hereby this prospectus.

We may suspend the sale of shares to Aspire Capital pursuant to this prospectus for certain periods of time for certain reasons, including if the prospectus is required to be supplemented or amended to include additional material information.

This offering will terminate on the date that all shares offered by this prospectus have been sold to Aspire Capital or the earlier termination of the Purchase Agreement.

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the securities offered hereby will be passed upon for us by Smith, Anderson, Blount, Dorsett, Mitchell & Jernigan, L.L.P., Raleigh, North Carolina.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements as of December 31, 2019 and 2018 and for each of the two years in the period ended December 31, 2019 incorporated by reference in this Prospectus Supplement have been so incorporated in reliance on the report of BDO USA, LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, (the report on the consolidated financial statements contains an explanatory paragraph regarding the Company's ability to continue as a going concern), incorporated herein by reference, given on the authority of said firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

This prospectus supplement and accompanying prospectus is part of the registration statement on Form S-3 we filed with the SEC under the Securities Act and does not contain all the information set forth in the registration statement. Whenever a reference is made in this prospectus supplement and accompanying prospectus to any of our contracts, agreements or other documents, the reference may not be complete and you should refer to the exhibits that are a part of the registration statement or the exhibits to the reports or other documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and accompanying prospectus for a copy of such contract, agreement or other document. Because we are subject to the information and reporting requirements of the Exchange Act, we file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy and information statements and other information with the SEC. Our SEC filings are available to the public on our website at www.novan.com, and over the Internet at the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. The information on our web site, however, is not, and should not be deemed to be, a part of this prospectus supplement or accompanying prospectus.

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN INFORMATION BY REFERENCE

The SEC's rules allow us to "incorporate by reference" information into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying 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 supplement and the accompanying prospectus, and subsequent information that we file with the SEC will automatically update and supersede that 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 supplement and the accompanying prospectus to the extent that a statement contained in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus modifies or replaces that statement.

We incorporate by reference our documents listed below and any future filings we may make 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 supplement and the accompanying prospectus, between the date of this prospectus supplement and the termination of the offering of the securities described in this prospectus supplement. 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 the 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 supplement and the accompanying prospectus 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, 2019, filed with the SEC on [February 24, 2020](#); as amended by our Annual Report (Amendment No. 1) on Form 10-K/A for the year ended December 31, 2019, filed with the SEC on [May 20, 2020](#);
- our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2020, filed with the SEC on [May 20, 2020](#);
- our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on [January 3, 2020](#), [February 4, 2020](#), [February 6, 2020](#), [March 3, 2020](#), [March 23, 2020](#), [March 26, 2020](#), [April 3, 2020](#), [April 23, 2020](#), [May 15, 2020](#), [June 17, 2020](#), [June 25, 2020](#), [July 9, 2020](#), [July 16, 2020](#) and [July 22, 2020](#); and
- the description of our Common Stock contained in our Registration Statement on Form 8-A, filed with the SEC on [September 16, 2016](#), and any amendment or report filed with the SEC for the purpose of updating the 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, but excluding any information furnished to, rather than filed with, the SEC, will also be incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus and deemed to be part of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus from the date of the filing of such reports and documents.

Any statement contained in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus or in a document incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement will be deemed to be modified or superseded for purposes hereof to the extent that a statement contained in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus or any other subsequently filed document that is deemed to be incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement modifies or supersedes the statement. Any statement so modified or superseded will not be deemed, except as so modified or superseded, to constitute a part of this prospectus supplement and accompanying prospectus.

You may request a free copy of any of the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement (other than exhibits, unless they are specifically incorporated by reference in the documents) by writing or telephoning us at the following address:

Novan, Inc.
4105 Hopson Road
Morrisville, North Carolina 27560
Telephone: (919) 485-8080

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

PROSPECTUS



Novan, Inc.

\$150,000,000

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

We may offer and sell up to \$150,000,000 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. We may offer securities at the same time or in separate transactions.

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 any applicable prospectus supplement before you invest in any of our securities.

As of the date of filing, the aggregate market value of our outstanding common stock held by non-affiliates pursuant to General Instruction I.B.1. of Form S-3 was approximately \$76.6 million based on 27,434,800 shares of common stock outstanding as of the date of filing, of which 22,462,956 shares were held by non-affiliates, and the last reported sale price of our common stock on the Nasdaq Global Market on December 26, 2019, which was \$3.41 per share.

The securities described in this prospectus and any prospectus supplement may be offered and sold 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. We may not sell any securities 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 a high degree of risk. See the "Risk Factors" on page 5 of this prospectus, any applicable prospectus supplement, and under similar headings in the other documents that are incorporated by reference into this prospectus concerning factors you should consider before investing in our securities. We may not use this prospectus to sell our securities unless accompanied by a prospectus supplement.

Our common stock is listed on the Nasdaq Global Market under the symbol "NOVN." On April 8, 2020, the last reported sale price of our common stock on the Nasdaq Global Market was \$0.38 per share.

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

The date of this prospectus is April 10, 2020.

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ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement on Form S-3 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 \$150,000,000 from time to time in one or more offerings 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. Additionally, we may authorize one or more free writing prospectuses to be provided to you that may contain material information relating to these offerings. Any prospectus supplement provided may 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, you should rely on the prospectus supplement. Before purchasing any securities, you should carefully read both this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement, together with the additional information described under the headings “Where You Can Find More Information” and “Incorporation of Certain Information by Reference.”

We have not authorized anyone to provide you with any information or to make any representations other than those contained in 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 any applicable prospectus supplement to this prospectus is accurate as of the date on its respective cover, 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 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. Although we are not aware of any misstatements regarding the market and industry data presented in this prospectus and the documents incorporated herein by reference, these estimates involve risks and uncertainties and are subject to change based on various factors, including those discussed under the heading “Risk Factors” contained in this prospectus, any applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus, and under similar headings in the other documents that are incorporated by reference into this prospectus. Accordingly, investors should not place undue reliance on this information.

When we refer to “Novan,” “NOVN,” “we,” “our,” “us” and the “Company” in this prospectus, we mean Novan, Inc. and its subsidiary, unless otherwise specified.

PROSPECTUS SUMMARY

The following summary highlights information contained elsewhere in this prospectus or incorporated by reference in this prospectus. This summary is not complete and does not contain all the information you should consider before investing in our securities. You should read this entire prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement carefully, including the financial statements and other information incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement, before making an investment decision. In addition, please read the “Risk Factors” section of this prospectus beginning on page 5, the risk factors contained in any prospectus supplement and the risk factors contained in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2019 and subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q.

Company Overview

We are a clinical development-stage biotechnology company focused on leveraging nitric oxide’s naturally occurring anti-viral, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal and immunomodulatory mechanisms of action to treat a range of diseases with significant unmet needs. Nitric oxide plays a vital role in the natural immune system response against microbial pathogens and is a critical regulator of inflammation. Our ability to harness nitric oxide and its multiple mechanisms of action has enabled us to create a platform with the potential to generate differentiated product candidates.

The two key components of our nitric oxide platform are our proprietary Nitricil technology, which drives the creation of new chemical entities, or NCEs, and our formulation science, both of which we use to tune our product candidates for specific indications. Our ability to deploy nitric oxide in a solid form, on demand and in localized formulations allows us the potential to improve patient outcomes in a variety of diseases.

We have advanced strategic development programs in the field of dermatology, while also further expanding the platform into women’s health and gastroenterological, or GI, therapeutic areas. This decision was based on the connection between the multi-factorial pathologies of diseases in these areas and the demonstrable anti-microbial, anti-viral and anti-inflammatory properties of Novan’s nitric oxide technology. Our goal is to create the world’s leading macro-molecular nitric oxide-based science, technology, and clinical translation company that delivers safe and efficacious therapies for patients.

We have clinical-stage dermatology drug candidates with multi-factorial (SB204), anti-viral (SB206), anti-fungal (SB208) and anti-inflammatory (SB414) mechanisms of action. We have recently introduced SB207 as a possible product candidate for additional anti-viral programs. We have also conducted preclinical work on NCEs and formulations for the treatment of human papilloma virus, or HPV, related illnesses in the women’s health field (WH504 and WH602) and inflammatory diseases in the GI field. Further advancement of our development activities is dependent upon our ability to access additional capital.

Corporate Information

We were incorporated under the laws of the State of Delaware in 2006. Our principal executive office is located at 4105 Hopson Road, Morrisville, NC 27560, and our telephone number is 919-485-8080. Our Corporate Information. Our corporate website is www.novan.com. The information contained on or that can be accessed through our website is not incorporated by reference into this prospectus, and you should not consider information on our website to be part of this prospectus or in deciding to purchase any of our securities.

The Securities We May Offer

We may offer shares of our common stock and preferred stock, various series of debt securities and/or warrants to purchase any of such securities, either individually or in combination, up to a total dollar amount of \$150,000,000, from time to time under this prospectus, together with the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus, at prices and on terms to be determined by market conditions at the time of any offering. We may also offer common stock, preferred stock and/or debt securities upon the exercise of warrants. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we offer a type or series of securities under

this prospectus, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will describe the specific amounts, prices and other important terms of the securities.

The applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus that we may authorize to be provided to you may also add, update or change any of the information contained in this prospectus or in the documents we have incorporated by reference. However, no prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus will offer a security that is not registered and described in this prospectus at the time of the effectiveness of the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part.

THIS PROSPECTUS MAY NOT BE USED TO CONSUMMATE A SALE OF SECURITIES UNLESS IT IS ACCOMPANIED BY A PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT.

Use of Proceeds

We currently intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of the securities offered by us hereunder, if any, for working capital and general corporate purposes, including research and development expenses and capital expenditures. See “Use of Proceeds” in this prospectus.

Risk Factors

Investing in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. Please read the information contained in and incorporated by reference under the heading “Risk Factors” on page 5 of this prospectus, and under similar headings in the other documents that are filed after the date hereof and incorporated by reference into this prospectus.

Implications of being an Emerging Growth Company

The Jumpstart Our Business Startups Act of 2012, or the JOBS Act, was enacted in April 2012 with the intention of encouraging capital formation in the United States and reducing the regulatory burden on newly public companies that qualify as “emerging growth companies.” We are an emerging growth company within the meaning of the JOBS Act. As an emerging growth company, we may take advantage of certain exemptions from various public reporting requirements, including the requirement that our internal control over financial reporting be audited by our independent registered public accounting firm pursuant to Section 404 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, certain requirements related to the disclosure of executive compensation arrangements, and the requirement that we hold a nonbinding advisory vote on executive compensation and any golden parachute payments. We may choose to take advantage of some, all or none of these reduced burdens until we are no longer an emerging growth company. As a result, the information that we provide to our stockholders may be different than you might receive from other public reporting companies in which you hold equity interests.

We will remain an emerging growth company until the earliest to occur of:

- the last day of the fiscal year in which we have approximately \$1.07 billion or more in annual gross revenue;
- the date we qualify as a “large accelerated filer,” with at least \$700 million of equity securities held by non-affiliates;
- the date on which we have issued, in any three-year period, more than \$1.0 billion in non-convertible debt securities; or
- the last day of the fiscal year ending after the fifth anniversary of the closing of our initial public offering.

Section 102(b)(1) of the JOBS Act exempts emerging growth companies from being required to comply with new or revised financial accounting standards until private companies (that is, those that have not had a registration statement under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the Securities Act, declared effective or do not have a class of securities registered under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or the Exchange Act) are required to comply with the new or revised financial accounting standard. We have chosen to “opt out” of the

extended transition periods available under the JOBS Act for complying with new or revised accounting standards. Section 107 of the JOBS Act provides that our decision to opt out of the extended transition periods for complying with new or revised accounting standards is irrevocable.

RISK FACTORS

Investment in any securities offered pursuant to this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement involves risks. You should carefully consider the risk factors described immediately below and incorporated by reference to our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, 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 any applicable prospectus supplement before acquiring any of such securities. The occurrence of any of these risks, including risks related to our financial condition and risks related to the development of our product candidates, might cause you to lose all or part of your investment in the offered securities.

We face potential business disruption and related risks resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic which could have a material adverse effect on our business.

In December 2019, a novel strain of a virus named SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2), or coronavirus, which causes novel coronavirus disease 2019, or COVID-19, was reported to have surfaced in Wuhan, China, and has reached multiple other regions and countries, including the United States and, more specifically, Morrisville, North Carolina, where our primary office is located.

The timetable for development of our product candidates will likely be disrupted and our business could be materially adversely affected by the recent outbreak of COVID-19. The spread of COVID-19 from China to other countries resulted in the Director General of the World Health Organization declaring COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, 2020. International stock markets have begun to reflect the uncertainty associated with the slow-down in economies worldwide, and the significant declines in the United States' stock market at the end of February and throughout March and into April 2020 have been largely attributed to the effects of and uncertainties presented by COVID-19. The worldwide response to COVID-19 is evolving, and to date has led to the implementation of various responses, including government-imposed quarantines, travel restrictions, and other public health safety measures. We are still assessing our business plans and the impact COVID-19 may have on our daily operations, our ability to conduct our planned preclinical studies and clinical trials, which also remain subject to available funding and regulatory feedback, including our ability to recruit patients to participate in clinical trials and access sites and investigators to conduct our clinical trials, and our ability to rely on our current and future third-party relationships (including with third-party manufacturers, vendors, and strategic partners). There can be no assurance that this analysis will enable us to avoid part or all of any impact from the spread of COVID-19 or its consequences, including downturns in business sentiment generally or in our sector in particular. For example, we are assessing the impact of COVID-19 on the B-SIMPLE4 Phase 3 trial for SB206, which is also subject to additional funding and receipt of written minutes from the FDA, including delay, postponement or other impacts to the trial.

The extent to which COVID-19 and global efforts to contain its spread will impact our business including our operations, preclinical studies, clinical trials, and financial condition will depend on future developments, which are highly uncertain and cannot be predicted at this time, and include the duration, severity, and scope of the pandemic and the actions taken by other parties, such as governmental authorities, to contain and treat COVID-19.

USE OF PROCEEDS

We currently intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of the securities offered by us hereunder, if any, for working capital and general corporate purposes, including, among other things, research and development expenses and capital expenditures.

The amounts and timing of our use of the net proceeds from this offering will depend on a number of factors, such as the timing and progress of our research and development efforts, the timing and progress of any partnering and commercialization efforts, technological advances and the competitive environment for our products. As of the date of this prospectus, we cannot specify with certainty all of the particular uses for the net proceeds to us from the sale of the securities offered by us hereunder. As a result, our management will have broad discretion to allocate the net proceeds, if any, we receive in connection with securities offered pursuant to this prospectus for any

purpose. Pending application of the net proceeds as described above, we may initially invest the net proceeds in short-term, investment-grade, interest-bearing securities pursuant to our investment policy or apply them to the reduction of short-term indebtedness.

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein contain 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. All statements that are not statements of historical facts may be deemed to be forward-looking statements. In some cases, you can identify forward-looking statements by terminology such as “believe,” “assume,” “contemplate,” “continue,” “due,” “goal,” “objective,” “plan,” “seek,” “target,” “expect,” “believe,” “anticipate,” “intend,” “positioned,” “may,” “will,” “would,” “could,” “should,” “potential,” “predict,” “project,” “estimate,” or “continue,” 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, although not all forward-looking statements contain these words. In addition, statements such as “we believe” and similar statements reflect our beliefs and opinions on the relevant subject. The forward-looking statements and opinions contained in this prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein are based upon information available to us as of the date hereof (or thereof, as applicable) and, while we believe such information forms a reasonable basis for such statements, such information may be limited or incomplete, and our statements should not be read to indicate that we have conducted an exhaustive inquiry into, or review of, all potentially available relevant information. These forward-looking statements include statements about:

- our plans and ability to develop and commercialize our product candidates, which could be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic;
- the timing of initiation of our planned clinical trials;
- the timing of the availability of data from our clinical trials;
- the timing of our regulatory filings for our product candidates;
- the clinical utility, potential benefits and market acceptance of our product candidates;
- strategic arrangements and/or collaborations with third parties and the potential benefits of such arrangements;
- our commercialization, marketing and manufacturing capabilities and strategy;
- our intellectual property position; and
- our estimates regarding future revenue, expenses, liquidity, capital requirements and our strategies and needs for additional financing.

Forward-looking statements are based on management’s current expectations, estimates, forecasts and projections about our business and the industry in which we operate, and management’s beliefs and assumptions are not guarantees of future performance or development and involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that are in some cases beyond our control. As a result, any or all of our forward-looking statements in this prospectus or the documents incorporated herein by reference may turn out to be inaccurate. Furthermore, if the forward-looking statements prove to be inaccurate, the inaccuracy may be material. Our forward-looking statements do not reflect the potential impact of any future acquisitions, mergers, dispositions, collaborations, strategic partnerships, joint ventures or investments that we may make or enter into. In light of the significant uncertainties in these forward-looking statements, you should not 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 time frame, or at all. Factors that may cause actual results to differ materially from current expectations include, among other things, those risks, uncertainties and assumptions described under the sections in our periodic reports, including our Annual Report on

Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2019, entitled “Risk Factors” and “Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations,” as well as other sections elsewhere in this prospectus, any accompanying prospectus supplement and the documents or reports incorporated by reference in this prospectus. Potential investors are urged to consider these factors carefully in evaluating these forward-looking statements. Except as required by law, we assume no obligation to update or revise these forward-looking statements for any reason, even if new information becomes available in the future. You should, however, review the risk factors and other information we describe in the reports we file from time to time with the SEC after the date of this prospectus and incorporate by reference herein.

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

The following description of our capital stock and certain provisions of our restated certificate of incorporation and our amended and restated bylaws is not complete and may not contain all the information you should consider before investing in our capital stock. This description is summarized from, and qualified in its entirety by reference to, our restated certificate of incorporation and amended and restated bylaws, each of which has been publicly filed with the SEC. See “Where You Can Find More Information” and “Incorporation of Certain Information by Reference.”

Our authorized capital stock consists of:

- 200,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$0.0001 per share; and
- 10,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value \$0.0001 per share.

Common Stock

Holders of our common stock are entitled to one vote for each share held on all matters submitted to a vote of stockholders and do not have cumulative voting rights. An election of directors by our stockholders shall be determined by a plurality of the votes cast by the stockholders entitled to vote on the election. Holders of common stock are entitled to receive proportionately any dividends as may be declared by our board of directors, subject to any preferential dividend rights of any series of preferred stock that we may designate and issue in the future.

In the event of our liquidation or dissolution, the holders of common stock are entitled to receive proportionately our net assets available for distribution to stockholders after the payment of all debts and other liabilities and subject to the prior rights of any outstanding preferred stock. Holders of common stock have no preemptive, subscription, redemption or conversion rights. Our outstanding shares of common stock are, and the shares offered by us in this offering will be, when issued and paid for, validly issued, fully paid and nonassessable. The rights, preferences and privileges of holders of common stock are subject to and may be adversely affected by the rights of the holders of shares of any series of preferred stock that we may designate and issue in the future.

Our common stock is listed on the Nasdaq Global Market under the symbol “NOVN.”

Transfer Agent

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is American Stock Transfer & Trust Company, LLC.

Preferred Stock

Under the terms of our restated certificate of incorporation, our board of directors is authorized to direct us to issue shares of preferred stock in one or more series without stockholder approval. Our board of directors has the discretion to determine the rights, preferences, privileges and restrictions, including voting rights, dividend rights, conversion rights, redemption privileges and liquidation preferences, of each series of preferred stock. The preferred shares may have voting or conversion rights that could have the effect of restricting dividends on our common shares, diluting the voting power of our common shares, impairing the rights of our common shares in the event of

our dissolution, liquidation or winding-up or otherwise adversely affect the rights of holders of our common shares. The holders of preferred shares are entitled to receive notice of any meeting of our shareholders and to attend and vote, except as otherwise provided in the rights and restrictions attached to the shares by the board of directors.

We will fix the rights, preferences, privileges, qualifications and restrictions of the preferred shares of each series that we sell under this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplements in the certificate of designation relating to that series. We will incorporate by reference into the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part the form of any certificate of designation that describes the terms of the series of preferred shares we are offering before the issuance of the related series of preferred shares. We urge you to read the prospectus supplements (and any related free writing prospectus that we may authorize to be provided to you) related to the series of preferred shares being offered, as well as the complete certificate of designation that contains the terms of the applicable series of preferred shares.

Options

There are 2,740,770 shares of common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding options or stock appreciation rights as of April 8, 2020, and 407,663 shares of common stock reserved for future issuance under the Novan, Inc. 2016 Incentive Award Plan.

Warrants

As of April 8, 2020, we had outstanding warrants to purchase (i) an aggregate of 10,000,000 shares of our common stock with an exercise price of \$4.66 per share, (ii) an aggregate of 11,483,334 shares of our common stock with an exercise price of \$0.30 per share, (iii) an aggregate of 594,958 shares of our common stock with an exercise price of \$0.375 per share, and (iv) an aggregate of 558,140 shares of our common stock with an exercise price of \$0.5375 per share. Unless earlier exercised, these warrants will expire on the four year anniversary, the five year anniversary, the five year anniversary, and the five year anniversary, respectively, of the issuance of such warrants. Additionally, we had outstanding pre-funded warrants to purchase an aggregate of 1,452,326 shares of our common stock with an exercise price of \$0.0001 per share. These pre-funded warrants are exercisable until all of the pre-funded warrants are exercised in full.

Anti-Takeover Effects of Delaware Law and Our Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws

Restated Certificate of Incorporation and Amended and Restated Bylaws

Because our stockholders do not have cumulative voting rights, our stockholders holding a majority of the voting power of our shares of common stock outstanding will be able to elect all of our directors. Our restated certificate of incorporation and amended and restated bylaws provide that all stockholder actions must be effected at a duly called meeting of stockholders and not by consent in writing. A special meeting of stockholders may be called only by a majority of our board of directors, the chair of our board of directors, our chief executive officer or, in the absence of a chief executive officer, our president.

Our restated certificate of incorporation further provides that the affirmative vote of holders of at least sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66-2/3%) of the voting power of all of the then outstanding shares of voting stock, voting as a single class, will be required to amend certain provisions of our certificate of incorporation, including provisions relating to the size of the board, removal of directors, special meetings, actions by written consent and cumulative voting. The affirmative vote of holders of at least sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66-2/3%) of the voting power of all of the then outstanding shares of voting stock, voting as a single class, will be required to amend or repeal our bylaws, although our bylaws may be amended by a simple majority vote of our board of directors.

Our restated certificate of incorporation further provides that our board of directors is divided into three classes, Class I, Class II and Class III, with each class serving staggered terms.

Finally, our restated certificate of incorporation provides that, unless we consent in writing to the selection of an alternative forum, the Court of Chancery of the State of Delaware will, to the fullest extent permitted by law, be the sole and exclusive forum for: (i) any derivative action or proceeding brought on behalf of us; (ii) any action

asserting a claim of breach of a fiduciary duty owed by, or other wrongdoing by, any of our directors, officers or other employees or agents to us or our stockholders, creditors or other constituents; (iii) any action asserting a claim against us arising pursuant to any provision of the Delaware General Corporation Law or our restated certificate of incorporation or amended and restated bylaws; (iv) any action to interpret, apply, enforce or determine the validity of our restated certificate of incorporation or amended and restated bylaws; or (v) any action asserting a claim against us governed by the internal affairs doctrine. These choice of forum provisions do not preclude or contract the scope of exclusive federal or concurrent jurisdiction for any actions brought under the Securities Act or the Exchange Act. Accordingly, our choice of forum provisions will not relieve us of our duties to comply with the federal securities laws and the rules and regulations thereunder, and our stockholders will not be deemed to have waived our compliance with these laws, rules and regulations. The enforceability of similar choice of forum provisions in other companies' certificates of incorporation has been challenged in legal proceedings, and it is possible that, in connection with any action, a court could find the choice of forum provisions contained in our restated certificate of incorporation to be inapplicable or unenforceable in such action. Nonetheless, any person or entity purchasing or otherwise acquiring any interest in any of our securities shall be deemed to have notice of and consented to these provisions. These choice of forum provisions may limit a stockholder's ability to bring a claim in a judicial forum of its choosing for disputes with us or our directors, officers or other employees or agents, which may discourage lawsuits against us and our directors, officers and other employees or agents.

The foregoing provisions, including the choice of forum provisions, will make it more difficult for our existing stockholders to replace our board of directors as well as for another party to obtain control of our company by replacing our board of directors. Since our board of directors has the power to retain and discharge our officers, these provisions could also make it more difficult for existing stockholders or another party to effect a change in management. In addition, the authorization of 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 change the control of our company.

These provisions are intended to enhance the likelihood of continued stability in the composition of our board of directors and its policies and to discourage certain types of transactions that may involve an actual or threatened acquisition of our Company. These provisions are also designed to reduce our vulnerability to an unsolicited acquisition proposal and to discourage certain tactics that may be used in proxy fights. However, these provisions could have the effect of discouraging others from making tender offers for our shares and may have the effect of deterring hostile takeovers or delaying changes in control of our Company or our management. As a consequence, these provisions also may inhibit fluctuations in the market price of our stock that could result from actual or rumored takeover attempts.

Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law

We are subject to Section 203 of the General Corporation Law of the State of Delaware, which prohibits persons deemed to be "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, (i) together with affiliates and associates, owns, or (ii) is an affiliate or associate of the corporation and, together with affiliates and associates, at any time 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.

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

The following description, together with the additional information we include in any applicable prospectus supplement, 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.

The following summary of material provisions of the debt securities and the indenture is subject to, and qualified in its entirety by reference to, all of the provisions of the indenture applicable to a particular series of debt securities. We urge you to read the applicable prospectus supplements and any related free writing prospectuses related to the debt securities that we may offer under this prospectus, as well as the complete indenture that contains the terms of the 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 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. Unless the context requires otherwise, whenever we refer to the indenture, we also are referring to any supplemental indentures that specify the terms of a particular series of debt securities. Any supplemental indentures and forms of debt securities containing the terms of the debt securities being offered will be filed as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part or will be incorporated by reference from reports that we file with the SEC.

As used in this section only, “Novan,” “we,” “our” or “us” refer to Novan, Inc. excluding our subsidiaries, 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. 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).

The indenture does not limit the amount of debt securities that we can issue, and such debt securities may be in one or more series with the same or various maturities, at par, at a premium, or at a discount. 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;
- 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 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, and premium and interest on, the debt securities will be made;
- if payments of principal of, or 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, and 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 depositories, 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; and
- 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.

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.

Form, Exchange and Transfer

We may issue debt securities of each series only in fully registered form without coupons and, unless we otherwise specify in the applicable prospectus supplement, in denominations of \$1,000 and any integral multiple thereof. The indenture will provide that we may issue debt securities of a series in temporary or permanent global form and as book-entry securities that will be deposited with, or on behalf of, The Depository Trust Company or another depository named by us and identified in a prospectus supplement with respect to that series (the “Depository”). See “Book-Entry Securities” below for a further description of the terms relating to any book-entry securities.

At the option of the holder, subject to the terms of the indenture and the limitations applicable to global securities described below or in the applicable prospectus supplement, the holder of the debt securities of any series can exchange the debt securities for other debt securities of the same series, in any authorized denomination and of like tenor and aggregate principal amount.

Subject to the terms of the indenture and the limitations applicable to global securities set forth below or in the applicable prospectus supplement, holders of the debt securities may present the debt securities for exchange or for registration of transfer, duly endorsed or with the form of transfer endorsed thereon duly executed if so required by us or the security registrar, at the office of the security registrar or at the office of any transfer agent designated by us for this purpose. Unless otherwise provided in the debt securities that the holder presents for transfer or exchange, we will make no service charge for any registration of transfer or exchange, but we may require payment of any taxes or other governmental charges.

We will name in the applicable prospectus supplement the security registrar, and any transfer agent in addition to the security registrar, that we initially designate for any debt securities. We may at any time designate additional transfer agents or rescind the designation of any transfer agent or approve a change in the office through which any transfer agent acts, except that we will be required to maintain a transfer agent in each place of payment for the debt securities of each series.

If we elect to redeem the debt securities of any series, we will not be required to:

- issue, register the transfer of, or exchange any debt securities of any series being redeemed in part during a period beginning at the opening of business 15 days before the day of mailing of a notice of redemption of any debt securities that may be selected for redemption and ending at the close of business on the day of the mailing; or

- register the transfer of or exchange any debt securities so selected for redemption, in whole or in part, except the unredeemed portion of any debt securities we are redeeming in part.

Book-Entry Securities

The following description of book-entry securities will apply to any series of debt securities issued in whole or in part in the form of one or more global securities, except as otherwise described in a related prospectus supplement.

Book-entry securities of like tenor and having the same date will be represented by one or more global securities deposited with and registered in the name of a depository that is a clearing agent registered under the Exchange Act. Beneficial interests in book-entry securities will be limited to institutions that have accounts with the depository, or “participants,” or persons that may hold interests through participants.

Ownership of beneficial interests by participants will only be evidenced by, and the transfer of that ownership interest will only be effected through, records maintained by the depository. Ownership of beneficial interests by persons that hold through participants will only be evidenced by, and the transfer of that ownership interest within such participant will only be effected through, records maintained by the participants. The laws of some jurisdictions require that certain purchasers of securities take physical delivery of such securities in definitive form. Such laws may impair the ability to transfer beneficial interests in a global security.

Payment of principal of and any premium and interest on book-entry securities represented by a global security registered in the name of or held by a depository will be made to the depository, as the registered owner of the global security. Neither we, the trustee nor any agent of ours or the trustee will have any responsibility or liability for any aspect of the depository’s records or any participant’s records relating to or payments made on account of beneficial ownership interests in a global security or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any of the depository’s records or any participant’s records relating to the beneficial ownership interests. Payments by participants to owners of beneficial interests in a global security held through such participants will be governed by the depository’s procedures, as is now the case with securities held for the accounts of customers registered in “street name,” and will be the sole responsibility of such participants.

A global security representing a book-entry security is exchangeable for definitive debt securities in registered form, of like tenor and of an equal aggregate principal amount registered in the name of, or is transferable in whole or in part to, a person other than the depository for that global security, only if (i) the depository notifies us that it is unwilling or unable to continue as depository for that global security or the depository ceases to be a clearing agency registered under the Exchange Act, (ii) there shall have occurred and be continuing an event of default with respect to the debt securities of that series or (iii) other circumstances exist that have been specified in the terms of the debt securities of that series. Any global security that is exchangeable pursuant to the preceding sentence shall be registered in the name or names of such person or persons as the depository shall instruct the trustee. It is expected that such instructions may be based upon directions received by the depository from its participants with respect to ownership of beneficial interests in such global security.

Except as provided above, owners of beneficial interests in a global security will not be entitled to receive physical delivery of debt securities in definitive form and will not be considered the holders thereof for any purpose under the indenture, and no global security shall be exchangeable, except for a security registered in the name of the depository. This means each person owning a beneficial interest in such global security must rely on the procedures of the depository and, if such person is not a participant, on the procedures of the participant through which such person owns its interest, to exercise any rights of a holder under the indenture. We understand that under existing industry practices, if we request any action of holders or an owner of a beneficial interest in such global security desires to give or take any action that a holder is entitled to give or take under the indenture, the depository would authorize the participants holding the relevant beneficial interests to give or take such action, and such participants would authorize beneficial owners owning through such participant to give or take such action or would otherwise act upon the instructions of beneficial owners owning through them.

Covenants

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

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 Novan) 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
- 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.

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 90 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 90-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 90 days after we receive written notice from the trustee or Novan 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 Novan;
- any other Event of Default provided with respect to debt securities of that series that is described in any applicable prospectus supplement.

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. The occurrence of certain Events of Default or an acceleration under the indenture may constitute an event of default under certain indebtedness of ours outstanding from time to time.

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. We refer you to the prospectus 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. 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.

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.

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, and 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.

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. 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 holder 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.

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;
- 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.

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, or 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, and 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.

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. 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.

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 United States 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 United States federal income tax purposes as a result of the deposit, defeasance and discharge and will be subject to United States federal income tax on the same amounts and in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if the deposit, defeasance and discharge had not occurred.

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 any 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 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 United States 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 United States federal income tax purposes as a result of the deposit and related covenant defeasance and will be subject to United States federal income tax on the same amounts and 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.

No Personal Liability of Directors, Officers, Employees or Stockholders

None of our past, present or future directors, officers, employees or stockholders, 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 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.

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;
- United States 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 Novan.

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 any applicable prospectus supplement. Until any warrants to purchase debt securities are 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 United States federal income tax considerations applicable to the units; and
- any other terms of the units and their constituent securities.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the securities from time to time pursuant to underwritten public 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;
- at negotiated prices; or
- at varying prices determined at the time of sale.

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.

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, 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 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 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 any 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.

In compliance with the guidelines of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc., or FINRA, the maximum consideration or discount to be received by any FINRA member or independent broker dealer may not exceed 8% of the aggregate proceeds of the offering.

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

The validity of the securities offered hereby is being passed upon for us by Smith, Anderson, Blount, Dorsett, Mitchell & Jernigan, L.L.P., Raleigh, North Carolina. 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

The consolidated financial statements as of December 31, 2019 and 2018, and for the two years ended December 31, 2019, incorporated by reference in this prospectus have been so incorporated in reliance on the report of BDO USA, LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, (the report on the consolidated financial statements contains an explanatory paragraph regarding the Company's ability to continue as a going concern as described in Note 1 to the consolidated financial statements), incorporated herein by reference, given on the authority of said firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. The SEC maintains a web site 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 web site address is <http://www.novan.com>. There we make available free of charge, on or through the investor relations section of our website, annual reports on Form 10-K, quarterly reports on Form 10-Q, current reports on Form 8-K and amendments to those reports filed pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Exchange Act as soon as reasonably practicable after we electronically file such material with the SEC. The information on our web site, however, is not, and should not be deemed to be, a part of this prospectus. All website addresses in this prospectus are intended to be inactive textual references 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 below. 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. 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. You may inspect a copy of the registration statement through the SEC's website, as provided above.

MATERIAL CHANGES

None.

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN INFORMATION 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 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 our documents listed below and any future filings we may make 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 the 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, 2019, filed with the SEC on [February 24, 2020](#);
- our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on [January 3, 2020](#), [February 4, 2020](#), [February 6, 2020](#), [March 3, 2020](#), [March 23, 2020](#), [March 26, 2020](#) and [April 3, 2020](#); and
- the description of our Common Stock contained in our Registration Statement on Form 8-A, filed with the SEC on [September 16, 2016](#), and any amendment or report filed with the SEC for the purpose of updating the 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 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.

Any statement contained in this prospectus or in a document incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference into this prospectus will be deemed to be modified or superseded for purposes of this prospectus to the extent that a statement contained in this prospectus or any other subsequently filed document that is deemed to be incorporated by reference into this prospectus modifies or supersedes the statement. Any statement so modified or superseded will not be deemed, except as so modified or superseded, to constitute a part of this prospectus.

You may request a free copy of any of the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus (other than exhibits, unless they are specifically incorporated by reference in the documents) by writing or telephoning us at the following address:

Novan, Inc.
4105 Hopson Road
Morrisville, North Carolina 27560
Telephone: (919) 485-8080

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

DISCLOSURE OF COMMISSION POSITION ON INDEMNIFICATION FOR SECURITIES ACT LIABILITY

Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act may be permitted to our directors, officers, and controlling persons, we have been advised that in the opinion of the SEC this indemnification is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act and is therefore, unenforceable.



\$30,000,000
plus 1,000,000 Commitment Shares

Common Stock

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

The date of this prospectus supplement is July 22, 2020