

Pressemitteilung

Gateway to Biotech: Top researchers met industry experts in the Faculty Club at IZB

Prof. Bruno Reichart, Dr. Michael Almstetter from Origenis, Dr. Joachim Vogt from AbbVie and Sebastian Grabert from Euronext presented at the Biotech Press Lounge

Martinsried, May 16, 2019 - Are heart transplants with genetically modified pig hearts within reach? What can we learn from progress in oncology to develop new treatments for Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease? What are the opportunities to partner with a biopharmaceutical company? And how can the stock exchanges strengthen the European life science sector? All these answers were given by the four speakers of the 11th Biotech Press Lounge on May 16, 2019 at the Innovation and Start-Up Centre Biotechnology (IZB) in Martinsried near Munich. Dr. Martin Laqua, Senior Editor of Transkript, moderated the event. "We are always delighted that almost 100 guests from the biotech, pharmaceutical and venture capital sectors as well as top researchers from the Martinsried campus come to our Faculty Club G2B (Gateway to Biotech) to get to know each other and discuss the latest projects," said Dr. Peter Hanns Zobel, Managing Director of the IZB.

Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Bruno Reichart of the Clinic of the University Munich, former heart surgeon and co-speaker DFG Transregio Xenotransplantation, spoke about the long-term success after transplantation of genetically modified pig hearts into non-human primates. For patients with terminal heart disease, transplants prolong the life and improve its quality. However, the number of transplantations needed by far exceed the number of organs donated. "The use of genetically modified (gm) pig (xenogeneic) organs is a most promising alternative to remedy the lack of human organs. Our research program generates these animals in an innovative approach. There are no rejections in none-human primates and because of highest hygienic standards, necessary pathogen-free pig organs are available." explained Prof. Reichart. "Being requested by a future European implantation hospital, gm pig hearts (or organs) will be explanted in a Bavarian "Designated-Pathogen-Free" animal farm and then will be transported perfused (the perfusion solution delivers oxygen and nutrients) under our strict control. The xenotransplantation will take place under the supervision of local transplantation surgeons. Our support will also include the patient aftercare as well as the adjustment of non-toxic immunosuppression – not to forget the biobanking of recipient specimen."

Dr. Michael Almstetter, CEO Origenis GmbH, explained what can be learned from progress in oncology in order to develop new treatments for Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease. Michael Almstetter referred to the progress that was made in cancer research over the past 20 years mainly in the understanding of disease relevant targets, pathways, in-vivo models that lead to a reclassification from organs to specific targets, resulting in successful specific therapies to fight various biologically characterized cancer types. This only was possible because of a clear funding focus from various governments as well as investors and especially in recent years with a progress in computer speed, data handling and analysis.

There is a growing similar understanding in neurodegeneration, but there are also many failures in the field. Learning from the failures, setting up more target and pathway focused approaches and sufficient funding will lead to success in this area as well.

Dr. Joachim Vogt, Director Search and Evaluation (S&E), Western Europe, at AbbVie Deutschland GmbH & Co. KG presented the possibilities for a partnership with an innovative global biopharmaceutical company. "Nowadays, cooperation is a decisive success factor for successful medical research. Europe plays an increasingly important role for AbbVie. In order to further strengthen our pipeline, we are specifically looking for innovations in the fields of oncology, immunology and neurodegenerative diseases, which we can make available to patients as quickly as possible with our expertise in reliable partnerships." AbbVie is a global research-based bio-pharmaceutical company specialized in the discovery and development of innovative therapies for some of the world's most severe and complex diseases.

Sebastian Grabert, Representative for Germany at Euronext N.V., explained the role of the stock exchanges in strengthening the life science sector: "We see it as the task of the stock exchanges to open up access for companies to both industry-specific and generalist investors worldwide. The initial public offering is only a first step - the decisive factor is that they can then constantly raise further growth capital to invest in research and development. Last year alone, the 52 biotech companies listed on Euronext were able to raise over 1.6 billion euros in secondary placements."

Images for download can be found on our website: <https://www.izb-online.de/de/veranstaltungsfotos.html>



Caption to the group photo of the speakers:

Speakers of the 11. Biotech Press-Lounge at the IZB on May 16, 2019 (f.l.t.r.)
Sebastian Grabert, Director – Germany Representative, EURONEXT N.V.
Dr. Martin Laqua, Senior Editor, Transkript

Dr. Michael Almstetter, CEO, Origenis GmbH

Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Bruno Reichart, former heart surgeon and co-speaker DFG Transregio
Xenotransplantation, Clinic of the University Munich

Dr. Joachim Vogt, Director Search and Evaluation (S&E), Western Europe, AbbVie Deutschland
GmbH & Co. KG

Dr. Peter Hanns Zobel, Managing Director, Fördergesellschaft IZB mbH

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About the Innovation and Start-Up Center Biotechnology (IZB):

The company IZB mbH, founded in 1995, is the operating company of the Innovation and Start-Up Centers Biotechnology in Planegg-Martinsried and Freising-Weihenstephan, and has developed into one of the top ten renowned biotechnology centers in the world. More than 50 biotech companies with more than 600 employees are currently located on an area covering 26,000 m². This is where work focuses on developing drugs against the most severe diseases such as cancer, Alzheimer's disease and various autoimmune diseases – and there are already many successes. At the IZB Freising-Weihenstephan – 15 minutes from the airport – scientists are working on developments in the field of life sciences. An essential criterion for the success of the IZBs is the proximity to top research on the Martinsried / Grosshadern Campus. The new infrastructure measures, such as the Faculty Club G2B (Gateway to Biotech), the IZB Residence CAMPUS AT HOME, the Chemistry College Elhardt, the two kindergartens BioKids and BioKids2, as well as the two restaurants SEVEN AND MORE and Café Freshmaker, have become decisive location factors. Successful companies that have emerged from the IZB include, for example, Medigene AG, Morphosys AG, Micromet GmbH (now Amgen AG), Octopharma GmbH and Corimmun (today Janssen-Cilag). More information at www.izb-online.de

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