

Press Release

Life Science Pitch Day at the IZB: Innovations meet Investors

Ten start-ups presented their innovative approaches to solving urgent medical issues to over 40 investors at the Munich start-up center.

Martinsried near Munich, 17 July 2024 – On 16 July 2024, the Munich Innovation and Start-up Center for Biotechnology (IZB), in cooperation with High-Tech Gruenderfonds (HTGF), Bayer, Boehringer Ingelheim and MEDICE, hosted the 9th Life Science Pitch Day, which brought together ten biotech start-ups with more than 40 renowned life science investors and decision-makers from the industry. To start with, Christian Gnam, Managing Director of the IZB, gave an insight into current developments at the Munich start-up center and welcomed the attendees as fellow hosts Ingo Kloeckner, Head of Portfolio and Reporting at Leaps by Bayer and Philipp Mueller, Executive Director at Boehringer Ingelheim Venture Fund. Dr. Laura Pedroza, Investment Manager at HTGF, moderated the event.

The ten selected start-ups presented their innovative approaches for treating a wide range of serious diseases, from bacterial infections to brain tumors. Afterwards, Dr. Daniel Vitt, CEO of IZB alumnus Immunic Therapeutics, gave a keynote speech on the path of a biotech company to a successful IPO.

“Research at the highest level was once again presented at this year's Life Science Pitch Day. This event offers start-ups the ideal opportunity to receive valuable feedback from the venture capital scene in a relaxed atmosphere. I would like to thank our partners for their long-standing support,” commented **Christian Gnam, Managing Director of the IZB**.

“The participating start-ups that are turning life science into innovative solutions were able to impress with their pitches,” says **Philipp Müller, Boehringer Ingelheim Venture Fund**.

“Networking is of key importance at Life Science Pitch Day. The founders have the opportunity to make valuable new contacts with potential investors, partners and other start-ups,” explains **Ingo Kloeckner, Leaps by Bayer**.

“With the Life Science Pitch Day, we have jointly established an excellent event with great added value for all participants. Partnerships are formed here that benefit life science start-ups and investors,” says **Dr. Laura Pedroza, Investment Manager at HTGF**.

The following project teams presented their groundbreaking research at the 9th Munich Life Science Pitch Day:

- 1. Akribion Therapeutics, Lukas Linnig:** A new modality of guided cancer cell killing, targeting cancer-specific RNA biomarker expression using easily programmable cytotoxic nucleases with high specificity for wide range of RNA targets
- 2. Citrapeutics, Prof. Frank Pressler:** First-in-class ACOD1 inhibitors to boost anti-tumor immunity and inhibit cancer cell proliferation for a variety of oncological indications
- 3. immuneAdvice, Dr. Teresa Wagner:** Visualizes immune cells through non-invasive imaging to guide immunotherapies
- 4. InCephalo Therapeutics, Carlo Bertozzi:** Develops next-generation therapies for the treatment of brain cancer

5. **KUPANDO, Johanna Holldack:** Stimulation of the Oldest Mechanism of Defense: TLRs operate to detect signature molecules that herald infection and cancer by activating the innate immune system
6. **PREVACTA, Torsten Mummenbrauer:** A vaccine and therapeutics start-up, combining unique expertise in synthetic (glyco-) chemistry, immunology & clinical infectious diseases
7. **Quasar Therapeutics, Dr. Arthur Dopler:** Develops cutting-edge regulators of the complement system to address rare but life-threatening diseases and to solve the problems of current inhibitors in the clinic
8. **TECregen, Prof. Georg Hollander:** Immuno-Rejuvenation start-up with the vision to develop transformative, next generation, synthetic ligands to regenerate the thymus
9. **Teneura, Dr. Niels von Wardenburg:** Aims to cure neurological autoimmune diseases through T-cell therapies
10. **TQ Therapeutics, Christin Zündorf:** Develops a novel manufacturing platform for cell therapeutics, that will enable the production of cellular drugs with an integrated, highly automated extracorporeal gene therapy approach

Investors at the Munich Life Science Pitch Day at the Innovation and Start-up Center for Biotechnology (IZB) 2024



Caption: More than 40 renowned life science investors and industry decision makers met at the 9th Life Science Pitch Day at the IZB.

Start-up teams at the 9th Munich Life Science Pitch Day 2024



First row (left to right): Niels von Wardenburg, Lukas Linnig, Teresa Wagner, Georg Hollander, Carlo Bertozzi

Second row (left to right): Torsten Mummenbrauer, Johanna Holldack, Christin Zündorf, Frank Pressler, Arthur Dopler

Image Source: IZB/Dominik Gierke

About the Innovation and Start-up Center for Biotechnology (IZB) in Martinsried near Munich

The Fördergesellschaft IZB mbH, founded in 1995, operates the Innovation and Start-up Center for Biotechnology (IZB) with sites in Planegg-Martinsried and Freising-Weihenstephan. The IZB is one of the leading biotechnology centers in Europe. More than 40 biotech and life science companies with over 700 employees are currently located on 26,000 square metres. Here, work is being done on developing drugs for the most serious diseases, such as cancer, Alzheimer's, and various autoimmune diseases. A key criterion for the success of the IZBs is the physical proximity to cutting-edge research on the Martinsried/Grosshadern campus and the Weihenstephan campus. The infrastructure measures, such as the Faculty Club G2B (Gateway to Biotech), the hotel CAMPUS AT HOME, the kindergarten Bio Kids as well as the restaurants SEVEN AND MORE and THE BOWL Food Lounge, are also location factors that are highly valued by the founders of the companies. Successful companies that emerged from the IZB include adivo (now Zoetis), Corimmun (today Janssen-Cilag), Crelux (today Wuxi AppTec), Exosome Diagnostics (bought by Bio-Techne), ibidi, Immunic Therapeutics, Medigene, Micromet (today Amgen), MorphoSys (soon Novartis), Octopharma or Rigontec (now MSD) as well as SIRION Biotech (today Perkin Elmer). More information at <https://www.izb-online.de/en/>.

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About High-Tech Gründerfonds

The seed investor High-Tech Gründerfonds (HTGF) finances tech start-ups with growth potential and has supported more than 750 start-ups since 2005. In its four seed funds, HTGF has about 1.4 billion euros under management. Its team of experienced investment managers and start-up experts support young companies with expertise, entrepreneurial spirit and passion. HTGF's focus is on high-tech start-ups in the fields of digital tech, industrial tech, life sciences, chemistry and related business areas. To date, external investors have injected about 6 billion euros of capital into the HTGF portfolio via more than 2,000 follow-on financing rounds. In addition, HTGF has already successfully sold shares in more than 180 companies.

Fund investors in this public-private partnership include the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, KfW Capital and 45 companies from a wide range of industries. <https://www.htgf.de/en/>

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