

## Vaccine developer Verovaccines GmbH concludes international pharma cooperation agreement

- Verovaccines enters into first collaboration with an international pharmaceutical company to jointly develop a veterinary vaccine
- The company was financed for the seed phase by High-Tech Gründerfonds, Business Angels and the founders as well as a seven-figure GO-Bio grant
- The goal is to develop and commercialize novel, cost-effective vaccines with high safety and efficacy for animal health

The biotech start-up Verovaccines GmbH has signed the first cooperation agreement with a Japanese pharmaceutical partner for the joint development of an animal vaccine. This cooperation documents a significant step forward in the company's development and the clear interest of market participants in vaccines based on the novel technology platform. In the Seed Investment Round, the company raised seven-figure funding from High-Tech Gründerfonds, Business Angels and the founders as well as funding from the German government's GO-Bio programme.

Verovaccines develops novel vaccines for animal health using a proprietary technology platform based on *K. lactis* milk yeast. In several previous vaccine tests, good results were achieved in the target animal pig (Proof of Concept) with regard to protection against a viral pathogen. The vaccines are very cost-effective to manufacture, highly efficacious, easy to combine, heat-stable and safe to manufacture and use. All in all, these properties represent important unique selling points on the international vaccine market. The application of the technology platform offers urgently needed solutions for a large number of infectious diseases in animals.

Managing Director Dr. Hanjo Hennemann: "This pharmaceutical cooperation demonstrates the validity of the technology platform and the added value that our vaccines have in the market through the proof of concept results already achieved. We look forward to further cooperate with our partner". The Senior Investment Manager of the High-Tech Gründerfonds, Dr. Philipp Rittershaus, adds: "We are pleased about the successful development of the vaccination platform, which we have accompanied since the foundation phase. The successful development work of the team is positively confirmed by the industry and market interest".

### Yeast-based vaccines

The vaccines of Verovaccines GmbH are based on a proprietary and patent-protected technology platform using the milk yeast *Kluyveromyces lactis*. Several different immunity-triggering proteins (antigens) can be produced in one yeast cell to generate cost-effective combination vaccines. The vaccines contain complete, killed yeast cells that are made heat-stable by freeze-drying and can therefore be stored at room temperature. The technology is safely validated by proof of concept in three vaccine programs in the respective target animals. Verovaccines is using its broad technology to develop a product pipeline of seven vaccines against pathogens in pigs, cattle, poultry and fish.

### About Verovaccines GmbH

Verovaccines GmbH is a spin-off of Prof. Dr. Sven-Erik Behrens, Dr. Hanjo Hennemann and Dr. Martina Behrens from the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany. In addition to the experienced founders, the company has a staff of scientists with expertise in the fields of virology, molecular biology, veterinary medicine and process engineering. Several of the company's own vaccine development programmes are funded by the "Gründungsoffensive Biotechnologie", or GO-Bio for short, of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

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**About High-Tech Gründerfonds**

High-Tech Gründerfonds (HTGF) is a seed investor that finances high-potential, tech-driven start-ups. With EUR 895.5 million in total investment volume across three funds and an international network of partners, HTGF has already helped forge more than 560 start-ups since 2005. Driven by their expertise, entrepreneurial spirit and passion, its team of experienced investment managers and start-up experts help guide the development of young companies. HTGF's focus is on high-tech start-ups in a range of sectors, including software, hardware and life sciences/ chemistry. To date, external investors have injected over EUR 2 billion into the HTGF portfolio via about 1,400 follow-on financing rounds. HTGF has also successfully sold interests in more than 100 companies.

Investors in the public-private partnership include the German Federal Ministry of Economics and Energy, KfW Capital, the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft and the commercial enterprises ALTANA, BASF, Bayer, Boehringer Ingelheim, B. Braun, Robert Bosch, BÜFA, CEWE, Deutsche Post DHL, Dräger, Drillisch AG, EVONIK, EWE AG, FOND OF, Haniel, Hettich, Knauf, Körber, LANXESS, media + more venture Beteiligungs GmbH & Co. KG, PHOENIX CONTACT, Postbank, QIAGEN, RWE Generation SE, SAP, Schufa, Schwarz Gruppe, STIHL, Thüga, Vector Informatik, WACKER and Wilh. Werhahn KG.

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**About the biotechnology start-up offensive (GO-Bio):**

The biotechnology start-up offensive (GO-Bio; <https://go-bio.de/>) is a funding programme of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). Researchers from the life sciences who are willing to found their own company receive financial support over a period of up to seven years in order to transfer their innovative ideas from research into an exploitable product and thus into patient applications. Such research approaches from the life sciences with high technological or clinical innovation potential and economic benefit are funded. The BMBF is providing between 20 and 30 million euros for each funding round.



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