Investor News

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Metagenomi closes USD 65 million Series A financing led by Leaps by Bayer and Humboldt Fund

- Metagenomi is a genomic medicines company pioneering precision gene editing systems to advance curative therapies for oncology and genetic diseases
- Proprietary and wholly owned gene editing platform offers the potential to expand the range of treatable diseases and to improve patient access to cell and gene therapies

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Leverkusen, Germany, November 12, 2020 – Metagenomi, a next generation gene editing company launched by UC Berkeley scientists in 2018, successfully completed a USD 65 million Series A financing round and emerged from stealth mode today. The Series A round was led by Leaps by Bayer and Humboldt Fund. Other investors included Sozo Ventures, Agent Capital, InCube Ventures and HOF Capital.

CRISPR-based gene editing is one of the most important discoveries in recent years, and a critical technology for next generation therapeutic development. With the ability to edit DNA, scientists can address a whole range of diseases – but there are still hurdles to overcome such as delivery, immunogenicity, selectivity, and genomic accessibility with current technologies. To enable efficient technological solutions, Metagenomi is building a proprietary suite of CRISPR-based gene editing systems by applying computational algorithms to screen thousands of genomes from microorganisms around the world. The approach leverages big data and the science of metagenomics to quickly identify novel gene editing systems with properties that leapfrog first generation technologies. These include the capability to precisely edit genomes via single base changes, knockouts, or integrations, with lower potential for off-target effects. While in stealth mode, Metagenomi has developed a vast portfolio of these innovative gene editing systems, and it is Metagenomi's goal to improve patient access to gene editing technologies by providing safe, accurate modalities for use in therapeutic development.

“Gene editing is a paradigm shifting technology which will continue to move the needle from treatment to cure in many genetically inherited diseases and significantly improve the world around us for the better,” said Dr. Juergen Eckhardt, Head of Leaps by Bayer. “Leaps by Bayer is committed to advancing new breakthroughs in gene editing and is thrilled to partner with Metagenomi in its mission to discover tomorrow’s gene editing technologies.”

“Metagenomi is accelerating innovation in gene editing technology to help patients with genetic diseases that are incurable today. This means developing a vast database of gene editing capabilities to enable unprecedented therapeutic approaches,” said Brian C. Thomas, CEO and co-founder of Metagenomi. “Working with visionary investors, such as Leaps by Bayer and Humboldt Fund, will allow us to deliver on our promise to partners and fuel the development of our own pipeline of innovative curative medicines.”

Capital raised during this round will enable Metagenomi to accelerate the expansion of its gene editing systems for potential therapeutic use. In addition, Metagenomi will advance research and preclinical validation for its own pipeline. New hires will help sustain the growth Metagenomi has seen in 2020 and carry the company through further scientific advancements. Joining Metagenomi as Chief Business Officer is Jak Knowles who will oversee exploration of partnerships with industry leaders in the cell and gene therapy space.

“With the Nobel Prize in Chemistry this year honoring CRISPR, the technology will continue to sweep through laboratories around the world and be examined for its countless potential applications,” said Dr. Sebastian Bernales, General Partner of Humboldt Fund.

About Bayer and Leaps by Bayer

Bayer is a global enterprise with core competencies in the life science fields of health care and nutrition. Its products and services are designed to benefit people by supporting efforts to overcome the major challenges presented by a growing and aging global population. At the same time, the Group aims to increase its earning power and create value through innovation and growth. Bayer is committed to the principles of sustainable development, and the Bayer brand stands for trust, reliability and quality throughout the world. In fiscal 2019, the Group employed around 104,000 people and had sales of

43.5 billion euros. Capital expenditures amounted to 2.9 billion euros, R&D expenses to 5.3 billion euros. For more information, go to www.bayer.com.

Leaps by Bayer, a unit of Bayer AG, leads impact investments into solutions to some of today's biggest challenges in health and agriculture. The investment portfolio includes more than 30 companies. They are all working on potentially breakthrough technologies to overcome some specific challenges such as, e.g. regenerating lost tissue function, reducing the environmental impact of agriculture, preventing or curing cancer, and others. For more information, go to leaps.bayer.com

About Humboldt Fund
Humboldt Fund is a venture capital fund that supports innovative, early-stage companies by investing in the biotech revolution. At Humboldt Fund, we identify and invest in pioneers of engineering, physical sciences and life sciences to bring emerging biotech enterprises to a global market. Together we explore, discover and create new technologies that disrupt global conventions and solve the critical issues of our world, while creating value and prosperity. For a more information, please go to www.humboldtfund.com

About Metagenomi
At Metagenomi, we are accelerating innovation in cell and gene therapy with a wave of proprietary CRISPR-based systems to accurately edit DNA where current technologies cannot. Our metagenomics-powered discovery platform and analytical expertise reveal novel cellular machinery sourced from otherwise unknown organisms. We adapt and forge these naturally evolved systems into powerful therapeutic tools that can be leveraged by partners and fuel our own pipeline of potentially curative medicines. Our goal is to revolutionize gene editing and unlock its power for the benefit of patients around the world. For more information, please visit https://metagenomi.co/

Bayer Investor Relations Team

Bayer AG
Investor Relations
51368 Leverkusen, Germany
E-mail: ir@bayer.com
Internet: http://www.investor.bayer.com

Forward-Looking Statements

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