

## News Release

Your Contact

gangolf.schrimpf@emdgroup.com

Phone: +49 6151 72-9591

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### **Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, Welcomes Ten New Startups to its Innovation Center**

- **From January 2019, startups from nine different countries will collaborate with Merck KGaA, Darmstadt Germany**
- **Selected teams will have the opportunity to extend their stay in the company's China Innovation Hub in Shanghai**
- **For the first time, the program includes a startup specializing in the fight against multi-drug resistant bacteria**

Darmstadt, Germany, January 16, 2019 – Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a leading science and technology company, today announced the ten startups that will be joining the seventh intake of its Accelerator program at the Innovation Center of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany. The teams come from nine different countries, making 2019 the most international intake in the Accelerator's history. They were chosen from a total of 565 applications, coming from startups based in 68 countries across the world.

"We are confident that inviting such a diverse group of collaboration-ready startups can lead to outstanding partnerships. We believe that startups and a company such as ours can mutually benefit a lot from working together. Partnering with startups, we connect with new external ideas while we simultaneously help them to take off. Bringing curious and expert minds together is a tremendous opportunity to create innovations beyond our current scope," said Michael Gamber, Head of the Innovation Center of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany.



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The ten selected startups will join the Accelerator of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany for the program's three-month duration. For the first time since the launch of the program, some of the participating startups will also have the opportunity to extend their stay by joining the company's China Innovation Hub in Shanghai, which will give them the opportunity to access the Chinese market.

The Accelerator of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany welcomes startups operating in healthcare, life science and performance materials, as well as emerging areas such as bio-sensing and interfaces or liquid biopsy, which represent the Innovation Fields that the Innovation Center is focusing on. This year's program includes, for example, Nextbiotics – a startup focusing on antibiotic-resistant bacteria and microbiomes: Nextbiotics is developing a biotechnology platform that engineers bacteriophages to target antibiotic-resistant bacteria. The startup envisions using its technology to precisely modulate the microbiome with applications in the prevention and treatment of infections for humans and animals. The other startup teams joining the Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany Accelerator program are also working on solutions that could make a positive difference in people's lives. From affordable point-of-care diagnostic devices through intelligent solutions to developing 3D bioprinted skin, to even analysing patients' tumour samples in order to identify their level of drug resistance and determine the best type of cancer treatment.

### **About the Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany Accelerator**

The Accelerator program collaborates with startups that are working on Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany related topics. Startups participating in the three-month program receive mentoring and in-depth coaching from the company's Senior Management and access to a network comprised of over 50,000 experts from 66 countries. They also benefit from training and tailored coaching sessions, financial support of up to € 50,000, access to state of the art workspace and high-tech prototyping labs at the new Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany Innovation Center. The goal of the Accelerator program is to establish partnerships with startups and launch joint innovation projects: partnering in innovation offers both Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany and startups the benefit of access to key markets and technologies.

### **About the Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany Innovation Center**

Complementing research and development in the company's business sectors, the Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany Innovation Center supports the scaling of new businesses beyond the company's current scope. With its initiatives, creative working environment and culture of openness and exchange, the Innovation Center connects employees, startups and companies to create groundbreaking innovations.

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### **About Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany**

Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a vibrant science and technology company, operates across healthcare, life science and performance materials. Around 51,000 employees work to make a positive difference to millions of people's lives every day by creating more joyful and sustainable ways to live. From advancing gene editing technologies and discovering unique ways to treat the most challenging diseases to enabling the intelligence of devices – the company is everywhere. In 2017, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, generated sales of € 15.3 billion in 66 countries.

The company holds the global rights to the name and trademark "Merck" internationally. The only exceptions are the United States and Canada, where the business sectors of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany operate as EMD Serono in healthcare, MilliporeSigma in life science, and EMD Performance Materials. Since its founding 1668, scientific exploration and responsible entrepreneurship have been key to the company's technological and scientific advances. To this day, the founding family remains the majority owner of the publicly listed company. For more information about Merck, KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, visit [www.emdgroup.com](http://www.emdgroup.com).