

## News Release

Your Contact

**Media Relations**

[gangolf.schrimpf@emdgroup.com](mailto:gangolf.schrimpf@emdgroup.com)

Phone: +49 151 1454-9591

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# Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, Enters Two Strategic Collaborations to Strengthen AI-driven Drug Discovery

- **Partnerships with BenevolentAI and Exscientia to drive accelerated drug discovery with higher probability of success**
- **Access to end-to-end AI platform capabilities to generate novel development candidates in oncology, neurology and immunology**
- **AI-powered R&D integral part of delivering on ambition of bringing more medicines to more patients, faster**

Darmstadt, Germany, September 20, 2023– Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a leading science and technology company, today announced two new strategic drug discovery collaborations aimed at harnessing powerful artificial intelligence (AI)-driven design and discovery capabilities, further advancing the company’s research efforts. The partnerships, with BenevolentAI, London, U.K., and Exscientia, Oxford, U.K., are expected to generate several novel clinical development drug candidates with first-in-class and best-in-class potential in key therapeutic areas of oncology, neurology and immunology.

“With the convergence of science, data, and AI, we're determined to fast-track the development of new and truly innovative candidates, forging a path to previously unimaginable medical breakthroughs”, said Danny Bar-Zohar, Global Head of Research & Development and Chief Medical Officer for the Healthcare business sector of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany. “The partnerships with industry-leading AI technology firms BenevolentAI and Exscientia will complement our internal research capabilities and expertise, aligning with our broader strategy to enhance R&D productivity and the output of our pipeline in a sustainable manner.”



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Under the terms of the agreements, three potential first-in-class and best-in-class targets have been selected to initiate each partnership with the possibility of identifying and nominating additional targets in the future. The collaborative efforts are focused on advancing small molecule development candidates which Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, will select for further pre-clinical and clinical development. Both partners will each receive low double digit million US dollar upfront payments and will be eligible for discovery, development, regulatory and commercial milestone payments and tiered royalties based on net sales.

Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, systematically explores data science and AI approaches to accelerate the discovery and delivery of breakthrough medicines. Integrating AI across R&D processes from identifying targets to clinical trials and product lifecycle management, is aimed at transforming drug discovery and development, bringing new medicines to patients faster and with higher probability of success. As the field evolves Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, will continue to deepen its existing AI and advanced analytics expertise while expanding partnerships and collaborations, ensuring the company remains at the forefront of innovation.

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

Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a leading science and technology company, operates across life science, healthcare and electronics. More than 64,000 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 providing products and services that accelerate drug development and manufacturing as well as discovering unique ways to treat the most challenging diseases to enabling the intelligence of devices – the company is everywhere. In 2022, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, generated sales of € 22.2 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 MilliporeSigma in life science, EMD Serono in healthcare and EMD Electronics in electronics. Since its founding in 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.