



## Gründungsoffensive Biotechnologie GO-Bio

Scientific findings often find their way into practical applications through spin-off of companies. In the last 30 years, a new biotechnology sector with more than 600 companies has emerged in Germany. About 10 to 20 companies spruce up each year.



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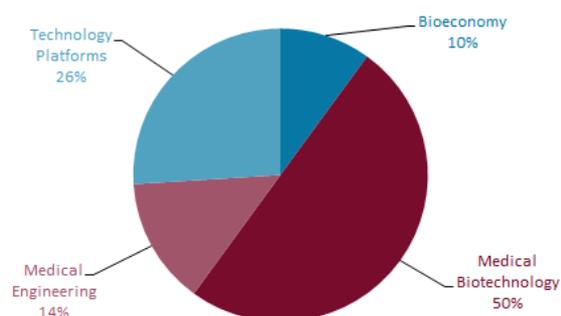
The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) has launched the "Gründungsoffensive Biotechnologie (GO-Bio)" to ensure that the influx of promising start-ups does not dry up. The GO-Bio programme supports teams of scientists from life sciences who are ready to set up their own business over a maximum period of seven years - up to four years before the foundation in the first funding phase and, if necessary, another three years after incorporation in a second funding phase.

GO-Bio was launched in 2005 in order to stabilise biotechnology start-up activities in Germany. While at the end of the 1990s a comparatively large amount of venture capital was available to spin off commercially viable ideas from universities and research institutes at an early stage, investors are currently demanding much greater technological validation and maturity of start-up ideas. Academic research results, however, rarely meet these requirements. The GO-Bio funding programme is intended to close this gap.

GO-Bio is tailored to support time-consuming and costly developments in life sciences and thus complements the technology-open start-up funding offers (e.g. EXIST) by the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy.

With GO-Bio, the founding teams receive substantial financial support for their challenging research work - on average about one million euros per year and team. In addition, the teams will be supported with the training series "GründerGespräche" offered twice a year as one-and-a-half-day seminars on all aspects of entrepreneurship. In addition, the teams can rely on an extensive package of coaching and consulting services to advance their projects. With the "Investmentlounge", the BMBF offers a special event format for establishing contacts with potential venture capital investors who have to be won for the further financing of the often very expensive product developments.

The majority of GO-Bio-funded projects are focused on new therapies and diagnostic tests for medicine. In addition, technology platforms for life science research and non-medical applications (bioeconomy) are also funded.



In the eight competition rounds of the GO-Bio funding initiative completed to date, 58 projects out of 723 project proposals were selected for funding. Of these, 19 projects also received funding in the second phase following successful incorporation. Some teams also started their company without a second GO-Bio funding phase. In total, GO-Bio funding has led to the establishment of 32 companies, or the commencement of operative business activities. Most companies founded with the help of GO-Bio are developing positively, and currently more than 1000 people are employed. In addition, more than one billion euros have been raised by investors and development partners for the start-ups.

Many start-up teams have successfully participated in business plan competitions, or were honoured with innovation awards. For example, the GO-Bio funded start-ups iThera Medical GmbH (2014) and Dynamic Biosensors GmbH (2015) were awarded the German Innovation Prize in the "Start-up" category. The originators of scientific ideas at Rigontec GmbH, Prof. Dr. Gunther Hartmann (University of Bonn), and iThera Medical GmbH, Prof. Dr. Vasilis Ntziachristos (Helmholtz Centre Munich), were honoured with renowned Leibniz Prizes by the German Research Foundation. This is proof that promising start-up companies can emerge from excellent academic research.

The eighth selection round of GO-Bio was completed in spring 2018. The eight winners were announced at the German Biotechnology Days in Berlin. It has not yet been decided when the next selection round will take place.

In addition to GO-Bio, the BMBF is also creating other start-up support formats. Together with the technology transfer agency Ascenion GmbH, the "Spinovator" pilot model has been launched. As a second example, the Life Science Incubator with locations in North Rhine-Westphalia and Saxony supports start-up projects.

With the "Innovationsakademie Biotechnologie", the BMBF also made a contribution to strengthening the start-up culture in Germany. The BMBF on a continuous basis provides 15 million euros per year for start-up funding in the life sciences.

For more information, please consult the following:

<https://go-bio.de>