

Swiss-based Debiopharm co-invests in the future of cell therapies on a chip through the latest \$25 million Series A round for Mekonos

Funding to accelerate the development of Mekonos' System on a Chip (SoC), expand commercial partnerships, and support talent acquisition

Lausanne, Switzerland - San Francisco - November 10, 2021 – **Debiopharm** (www.debiopharm.com), a Swiss biopharmaceutical company, announced today having invested \$4M in [Mekonos](#), a biotech company building the future of cell therapies on a chip. This financing is part of a \$25M, Series A investment round co-led by Reimagined Ventures, Fiscus Ventures, and PEAK6 Strategic Capital, a division of PEAK6 Investments. Debiopharm's is one of the new institutional and strategic investors which also include Section 32, Sands Capital, TDK Ventures, along with previous investors, including Novartis Pharma AG and Elementum Ventures. This funding round will support Mekonos' next stages in product development and commercialization.

Mekonos will use the new capital specifically to expand its MEMS, Microfluidics, Biology, and Business Development functions in order to advance its proprietary, integrated system-on-a-chip (SoC) for targeted ex vivo gene engineering. The platform supports physical delivery of payloads at the single cell level, as well as the parallel delivery of multiple payloads– multiplexing – into cells with repeatable and localized dose control for precise and scalable cell engineering. Demonstration pilot projects with top pharmaceutical and research labs have shown outstanding cell viability and uptake in delivery of CRISPR and CRE into iPSCs and other fragile cell types.

The field of cell & gene therapy has seen tremendous progress, reaching impressive clinical milestones over the last few years. Examples include CAR-T therapies to treat blood malignancies along with several gene therapies, including the first clinical readouts with CRISPR-based technologies. The field, however, is limited by several medical and technical limitations, in particular payload delivery, viability of cells, and reliable manufacturing. The California based biotech, Mekonos, is responding to several of these challenges with a versatile cell engineering platform using a microfluidic chip allowing single cell capture and a BioMEMS chip of nanoneedles that can deliver different types of payloads directly into cells.

“Mekonos is bringing truly disruptive cell engineering technology to reality. This investment aligns well with our aim to support the development of novel drug delivery systems and further explore the possibilities that digital platforms can bring to science and ultimately patients. We look forward to observing firsthand the improvements that Mekonos' platform can bring to cell

and gene therapeutics,” expressed **Lambert Potin, Partnering Associate, Search and Evaluation, Debiopharm.**

“It’s thrilling to collaborate on this investment with a syndicate of strong investors for such an important cutting-edge biotechnology. It’s evident that the versatility of Mekonos’ platform will take cell and gene engineering far beyond CAR-T and what we know today,” explained **Tanja Dowe, CEO, Debiopharm Innovation Fund.**

About Mekonos, Inc.

Mekonos is a cell & gene technology company transforming synthetic biology and personalized medicine. The company's SoC merges innovations in MEMS, microfluidics, and chemistry for controlled and individualized molecular delivery in cells at scale. The company is headquartered in San Francisco, is backed by leading investors in both healthcare and technology, and is an alum of Berkeley Launch, Berkeley SkyDeck, Creative Destruction Lab, and named a 2018 Fierce 15 startup. For more information please visit www.mekonos.com

Debiopharm’s commitment to patients

Debiopharm develops, manufactures and invests in innovative therapies and technologies that respond to high unmet medical needs in oncology and bacterial infections. We aim to provide strategic funding and guidance for companies with Smart Data & Digital Health solutions with the ambition to change the way drugs are developed and the way patients are treated. Our growing portfolio company achievements includes 18 FDA clearances or CE marks and 2 IPOs. Since 2018 Debiopharm has invested over USD 120 million, typically leading the investment rounds of its 16 portfolio companies.

For more information, please visit www.debiopharm.com

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