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Eppendorf Innovation Company strengthens access to US startup scene

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Eppendorf's investment will foster a relationship that will increase knowledge of research tools, equipment, and diagnostics spinouts from over 100 universities across the US



The Eppendorf Innovation Company (EpIC) – a division of Eppendorf SE – continues to expand its international network. Through a targeted investment in Osage University Partners (OUP), EpIC will learn about investment opportunities in some of the most cutting-edge startups transitioning their academic discoveries into the commercial world through OUP's network of university spinouts.

The core task of the Eppendorf Innovation Company (EpIC) is to identify new business opportunities for the Eppendorf Group to strengthen its innovative advantage in a targeted manner. By investing in OUP, Eppendorf now has a new relationship to identify disruptive and highly innovative research tools and diagnostics businesses for potential investment and collaboration. Based in Philadelphia, USA, OUP partners with more than 100 universities to engage with researchers early in their startup journeys and ultimately invests in their most compelling startups.

"As a partner of OUP, we have the opportunity to get to know start-ups in our specific fields of interest at an early stage and possibly invest in them," explains Dr. Rudolf Walczak, Vice President Eppendorf Innovation Company. "Every year, OUP's number of tracked companies grows as more and more start-ups are created within their partner ecosystem. With this new relationship with OUP, Eppendorf will be well positioned to learn about cutting-edge innovation at its earliest stage and maintain their competitive advantage in the long run."

Innovative venture capital model in the USA

OUP partners closely with universities to invest in some of the most exciting startups in sectors ranging from life science research tools and therapeutics, to photonics, computing, and artificial intelligence. Since 2009, OUP has dedicated itself to supporting the university entrepreneurship ecosystem, earning exclusive relationships with institutions which allow them to exercise the university's investment rights in their startups, fuel their growth with capital, and share in their success. Universities have partnered with OUP to introduce them to scientists and professors who may be looking for guidance on commercialization strategy and raising venture capital in sectors that overlap with Eppendorf's expertise, namely research tools, diagnostics, and laboratory equipment.

"After almost 15 years of investing and tracking university spinouts, we have observed many consistent trends and challenges across our network. We know the startups in our deal flow represent the absolute cutting edge of science and technology," explains Dr. Manny Stockman, Partner at OUP. "But because of their origins as tech-first companies, the startups often take years to navigate product-market fit and identify the true pain points of their industry. Our fund is excited to work with Eppendorf so that our university partners and the startups we work with can benefit from Eppendorf's deep domain expertise in the area of research tools, lab equipment, and diagnostics."

Expansion of the international network

The OUP investment fits seamlessly into Eppendorf's strategy of expanding its international network. In line with this, investments were already made in High-Tech Gründerfonds in Germany at the beginning of 2023. "With these two collaborations, we are very closely linked to the German and US start-up scene," says Walczak. "In this extremely dynamic market, you can only operate successfully with functioning networks and early information, and we have now created this foundation. This is an important step for EpIC and thus also for the whole of Eppendorf."