

# Novo Seeds

## NOVO SEEDS | NEWSLETTER – 2020

10 JANUARY | 2020

### A year of significant progress and growth

- Launched STipe Therapeutics with EUR 20 million investment, including backing from international investors
- Strengthened BiOrigin Entrepreneur-in-residence Advisory Unit with seasoned CEOs
- REPAIR Impact Fund makes four new investments totaling USD 48 million in eight companies since its inception
- Significant progress with portfolio companies, including Galecto merger with US company PharmAkea, Inc.
- Successful Seed Summit at Novo Holdings headquarters

**2019 was a year of progress and growth. Along with the significant advances made by our portfolio companies, 2019 saw the team make five new investments. These included four new financings by the REPAIR Impact Fund bringing the total committed to date to USD 48 million.**

**We also co-led the EUR 20 million Series A funding in STipe Therapeutics, a company that we created and incubated with the founder team to exploit the stimulator of interferon genes (STING) pathway.**

Our mission is to build life sciences companies based on breakthrough innovations, with the aim of developing novel treatments that can make a major difference to patients' lives.

Our values, long-term perspective and life sciences expertise makes us the investor of choice for many management teams.

In 2019, we continued building syndicates of international investors in efforts to create significant value through follow-on investments in our portfolio companies. We have also grown the team of entrepreneurs, advisors and partners as we strengthen our activities in identifying, building and investing in exceptional life sciences start-ups.

The Annual Novo Seeds Summit brought together our portfolio companies, investors, and pharma partners to discuss building sustainable breakthrough biotech companies.

\$1–2bn

NOVO HOLDINGS ANNUAL  
INVESTMENT IN LIFE SCIENCE  
SECTOR

25

NOVO SEEDS PORTFOLIO  
COMPANIES

## SIGNIFICANT VALUE CREATION WITHIN PORTFOLIO COMPANIES



[Galecto](#) is developing galectin modulators for the treatment of fibrotic diseases including idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF) and cancer.

January 2020 saw the company announce merger with PharmAkea, bringing together two clinical stage companies developing first-in-class therapeutics in fibrosis and cancer - transforming this Nordic company built on strong science with an experienced management team, into a global leader in a disease area with very high unmet need.

Galecto is an excellent example of Novo's investment strategy 'sourcing globally and building locally'. First incubated through the pre-seed grant programme of the Novo Nordisk Foundation, and subsequently Novo Seeds led the first seed investment round in 2011.



[NorthSea Therapeutics](#) is developing novel and innovative treatments of NASH (Non-alcoholic Steatohepatitis) and other metabolic, inflammatory and fibrotic diseases.

NorthSea commenced the Phase 2b dose ranging study ('ICONA') in NASH with icosabutate.

In 2020, NorthSea raised \$40 million (€36 million) in a Series B financing round, welcoming new US investors venBio Partners, which led the round, and Sofinnova Investments. NorthSea plans to drive the development of its pipeline of SEFA (Structural Engineered Fatty Acids) programs and lead asset icosabutate.



STipe  
Therapeutics

[STipe Therapeutics](#) a spinout from Aarhus University in Denmark, was founded to exploit the STING pathway, a major driver of innate immunity and regulator of tumorigenesis and autoimmune disorders.

STipe was initially incubated by our internal company building engine and funded through the pre-seed grant program of the Novo Nordisk Foundation in close collaboration with the founder team. STipe is the first company to come out of the BioInnovation Institute (BII) since it was set up less than a year ago and demonstrates how the BII and Novo Seeds can jointly develop groundbreaking early-stage life science innovations to well-funded startups.



[Acesion Pharma](#) is developing first-in-class novel treatments for atrial fibrillation targeting the genetically validated SK channel.

Acesion initiated a Phase 2 study for acute cardioversion following a successful Phase 1 safety study.



[Forendo Pharma](#) announced positive Phase 1a data for FOR-6219 a potential first-in-class treatment for endometriosis. In addition, it entered into a licensing agreement with Novartis to for the treatment of chronic liver diseases.



[IO Biotech](#) is developing novel immune modulating anti-cancer therapies based on its proprietary T-win® technology.

IO Biotech initiated the Phase 2 trial studying IO102 (targeting the IDO pathway) in combination with KEYTRUDA® for the treatment of first-line patients with metastatic non-small cell lung cancer.



[Syndesi Therapeutics](#) is developing molecules that uniquely modulate the synaptic vesicle protein SV2A, which plays a central role in synaptic transmission (the communication between neurons in the brain).

Syndesi successfully completed its first-in-human Phase 1 study with a novel SV2A modulator.

# HIGHLIGHTS OF 2019



*"Our mission is to identify scientific breakthroughs globally and build life sciences companies locally. To harness innovative research at an early stage and build long-term value that translates into benefits for patients, we believe we must offer more than financial support*

*– we also need to provide 'hands-on' strategic and operational support. We are proud to be part of a vibrant and successful ecosystem in Denmark."*

Søren Møller  
Managing Partner, Novo Seeds

## BIORIGIN - ENTREPRENEURS-IN-RESIDENCE



The BiOrigin team is a critical part of our company creation and provides start-ups with hands-on industry and management expertise as well as the strategic and operational input of seasoned entrepreneurs, building startups into successful biotech companies.

During 2019 we significantly strengthened the entrepreneur-in-residence advisory unit with the appointment of industry heavyweights, including former executives Martin Bonde of Vaccibody, John Haurum, of F-star, and Anders Hinsby of Orphazyme joined as Entrepreneurs-in-residence and Peter Hirth, co-founder and former CEO of Plexikon, and Anders Gersel Pedersen, former EVP of Research and Development of Lundbeck, joined as Advisors.

## SUCCESSFUL SEED SUMMIT FOCUSED ON BUILDING TEAMS



In September 2019, we held our Annual Novo Seeds Summit and welcomed portfolio companies and investors from across Europe for a full day of discussions and networking.

Over 150 biotech CEOs, pharma executives and international investors gathered at Novo Holdings Headquarters in Copenhagen to discuss how to build winning teams and successful biotech businesses.

The event included presentations from a number of Novo Seeds portfolio companies (video profiles below), keynote speakers and panel discussions on creating opportunities to strengthen the Nordic biotech ecosystem.



acesion  
Pharma



Camel-IDS



IO  
BIO



Galecto



NMD PHARMA  
NEUROMOLECULAR DISORDERS



northsea  
BIOINVESTMENT



STipe  
Therapeutics



syndesi  
therapeutics

## EXPANDED NOVO SEEDS TEAM WITH NEW PARTNER



We have expanded our team with Jørgen Søberg Petersen as Partner, who will take an active role in building asset spinouts. Jørgen joins from Novo Ventures and brings additional senior management experience from Merck and Novo Nordisk.

Our team is focused on a common goal - to build on and enhance our position as a leading life sciences company builder in the Nordics. More details on the Novo Seeds team can be found [here](#).

## REPAIR IMPACT FUND INVESTS IN PROMISING COMPANIES



Since the launch of the REPAIR Impact Fund in 2018, a total of USD 48 million has been invested in eight companies which are developing innovative novel anti-infective therapies.

In 2019 four companies were selected for investment following reviews by the REPAIR Impact Fund's Scientific Selection Board from about 100 high-quality investment proposals targeting the deadliest resistant pathogens on the planet. These included:



- USD 5.25 million investment into Curza, a small-molecule therapeutics company based in Salt Lake City, Utah, to accelerate its lead program, a new class of antibiotics focused on drug-resistant Gram-negative bacteria.



- USD 10 million investment into Spero Therapeutics (NASDAQ: SPRO), a US clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company to advance its SPR720 program, an oral antibiotic being developed for the treatment of non-tuberculous mycobacterial infections. Spero announced positive preliminary phase 1 data for SPR720 in December 2019.



- USD 3.9 million investment into based in Rockville, Maryland, which is developing a vaccine for Staphylococcus Aureus currently in late preclinical testing. IBT-V02 is a novel mode of action vaccine consisting of five toxoids with broad coverage and with a potential to be the first to market.



- EUR 7 million investment into Mutabilis, located in France, to support Mutabilis' 2G-Dabocins program, a wide spectrum Gram-negative anti-infective agent. The program is currently undergoing lead optimization.

## ABOUT NOVO HOLDINGS



Novo Holdings A/S is a private limited liability company wholly owned by the Novo Nordisk Foundation. It is the holding and investment company of the Novo Group, comprising Novo Nordisk A/S and Novozymes A/S, and is responsible for managing the Novo Nordisk Foundation's assets.

Novo Holdings is recognized as a leading international life science investor, with a focus on creating long-term value. As a life science investor, Novo Holdings provides seed and venture capital to development-stage companies and takes significant ownership positions in growth and well-established companies. Novo Holdings also manages a broad portfolio of diversified financial assets.

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