



Three disruptive approaches in biotechnology and medicine win the BioRiver Boost! 2022 biotech start-up competition

Awards go to Lumatix Biotech (1st place), BioThrust (2nd place) and Vivalyx (3rd place).

Düsseldorf/Hilden, October 4th, 2022: The winner of this year's **BioRiver Boost!** competition for life science and biotech founders is Lumatix Biotech GmbH. With its light-controlled antibody purification, the start-up company from Garching, Bavaria, won first place and was voted the most promising start-up of 2022. The second and the third places went to BioThrust and Vivalyx, both based in Aachen, North Rhine-Westphalia.

In its ninth iteration, on September 29, 2022, BioRiver Boost!, selected the three best young European-based companies. A top-class jury of experts presented the awards following short company presentations and open discussion. The live event was filmed on the premises of this year's host, QIAGEN GmbH. The three winning teams won customized coaching from experienced entrepreneurs on business development, marketing support from experts and access to the influential BioRiver network.

"The founders who apply to us inspire me every year. They deserve our support. I am very proud that BioRiver Boost! has established itself as a platform for showcasing a broad field of technologies. This year we saw innovation from a wide range of disciplines including medicine, process engineering and statistics and colorants for food and cosmetics. We enable young companies to engage in a focused exchange with experienced experts from industry," says **Dr. Frauke Hangen**, Managing Director of the industry association BioRiver e.V., which has been organizing the competition since 2014. "Many key representatives of the life science industry and investors interested in the sector take advantage of this opportunity to get to know the people behind the start-ups and their innovative ideas. The BioRiver network adds professional expertise for the further development of the companies."

A considerable commitment on the part of regional industry and the founders themselves is what makes BioRiver Boost! so special. Managers with life science experience from a wide range of fields contribute their know-how in dialogues, pitch trainings and as jury members to support the start-ups. This year's jury was made up of top representatives from globally active life science companies Bayer, Janssen-Cilag/Johnson&Johnson, Lonza and QIAGEN, as well as from High-Tech Gründerfonds, Heinrich Heine University and NRW.BANK.

Very young companies developing disruptive technologies or innovative services for the biotechnology or life science industry can apply for the BioRiver Boost! start-up competition. Finalists are selected on the basis of fixed criteria such as customer benefit and the degree of innovation of the technology, as well as the experience of the team and the quality of the business plan. In a two-stage process, the jury first selects eight finalists from all submissions, which then present themselves in an "elevator pitch" on the actual day of the competition and face questions from the experts.

The winning projects of this year's competition are:

1st place: Antibody purification by light

Lumatix Biotech, a young company based in Garching, produces affinity matrices for the purification of monoclonal antibodies – light-controlled and without the use of chemicals. **Lumatix Biotech founder Andreas Reichert** and **team member Ingmar Polte** accepted the award on-site saying the company intends to also use new partners from the BioRiver Network competition to bring its technology further into use. After all, he said, the principle can be used very broadly. Polte explained: "We can use it to purify all biomolecules – from viruses to proteins – very gently and efficiently."

Link to Lumatix Biotech's pitch presentation on 29.09.2022: <https://youtu.be/VAn8300lhpc>

2nd place: Novel aeration of bioreactors through individual gas supply

BioThrust, a biotech start-up from Aachen, is revolutionizing the aeration of fermenters and single-use bioreactors with novel gassing solutions. **BioThrust co-founders Patrick Bongartz** and **Konstantin Kurz** had presented their project convincingly onsite, so that the jury saw first and second place very close to each other: "This is a great compliment and we are very pleased," said Kurz, whose co-founder Bongartz briefly described the technology as follows: "We ensure that no bubbles are formed in the fermenter, whose rising and bursting could tear the sensitive production cells apart."

Link to BioThrust's pitch presentation on 29.09.2022: <https://youtu.be/u4V98LTCuxc>

3rd place: Gentle organ transport without donor blood

Vivalyx, headquartered in Aachen, develops easy-to-use boxes and an innovative fluid, a blood-free, gentle perfusate, for the transport of organ donations that increase organ viability and the number of organs transported. **Prof. René Tolba, co-initiator of Vivalyx**, which was spun off from the University Hospital of RWTH Aachen University just two weeks ago, expressed his thanks by saying: "The prize increases our visibility and will certainly help us in the start-up phase. And it shows us that team spirit pays off. That's great!"

Link to Vivalyx's pitch presentation on 29.09.2022: https://youtu.be/3_Bs31KSkPs



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The winning teams of the BioRiver Boost! 2022 (from left):

The third-place winners Dr. Benedict Doorschodt (Technical Director of Vivalyx) and Prof. Dr. René Tolba (Medical Director Vivalyx), the first-place winners Andreas Reichert (CEO of Lumatix) and Ingmar Polte (Lumatix), the second-place winners Patrick Bongartz (BioThrust) and Konstantin Kurz (BioThrust).

BioRiver was again supported by numerous sponsors this year. The host of the event was QIAGEN GmbH. Platinum sponsors were KölnBusiness Wirtschaftsförderungs-GmbH, the City of Düsseldorf, Office for Economic Development and Miltenyi Biotec. Gold sponsor was Ruhr-IP Patent attorneys. The Ministry for Economic Affairs, Innovation, Digitalization and Energy of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia sponsored the BioRiver Boost! 2022 as part of its Digital Economy NRW (#DWNRW) project.

About BioRiver – Life Science im Rheinland e. V.

The promotion of founding projects and start-ups has a long tradition in BioRiver – Life Science im Rheinland e.V. and, therefore, receives special attention. The vast majority of the more than 60 life science companies in the association, which include industry giants Bayer, LONZA, Miltenyi Biotec and QIAGEN, emerged from spin-offs from Rhineland universities. The managing directors and the management of the companies support BioRiver e.V. as chairmen, as members of the board of directors and in the working groups. In total, BioRiver has more than 110 member organizations. With the BioRiver Boost! competition, introduced 2014, BioRiver e.V. aims to further strengthen the life science industry in Rhineland as well as to provide access to leading specialists in science and industry and to promote the market entry of promising founder projects, products and processes.

For more information, please visit www.bioriver.de.

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