Bavarian Biotech News

March 2026

BAVARIAN BIOTECH CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

Dear reader,

As spring begins in Bavaria, the region is once again gaining momentum - not only in nature, but also in innovation. The latest Bavaria Start-up and Scaleup Monitor confirms this dynamic development: Bavaria leads Germany in start-up activity, with a significant increase in new company formations projected for 2025 and according to the Financial Times, Bavaria leads Europe's start-up hubs!

This positive trend is also reflected in the life sciences sector. In this edition, we share the latest company news, and report on encouraging financing rounds that underscore the strength of Bavaria's biotech ecosystem.

One of the highlights this year will be BayOConnect on June 30 and July 1 in Munich, where key players from across the biotech ecosystem come together to discuss forward-looking topics and build valuable connections. We would be delighted to welcome you there and look forward to your participation!

We wish you sunny spring days and hope you enjoy reading this newsletter.

Your Bio^{M} team

Financial Times Ranking 2026: Bavaria leads Europe's start-up hubs – momentum for life sciences

The Financial Times has published its third ranking of Europe's leading start-up hubs. In the 2026 edition, 180 innovation and entrepreneurship centers from 25 countries were evaluated based on reputation, track record, and comprehensive feedback from the startup community. The result: Bavaria sets the benchmark across Europe.

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Once again, **UnternehmerTUM** from Munich tops the list for the third year in a row. Since 2002, the center, together with the **Technical University of Munich** (TUM), the **TUM Venture Labs**, and the broader Munich innovation ecosystem has supported start-ups from initial idea to scaling, contributing to the creation of more than 1,000 companies to date. Second and third place also go to Bavaria: the internationally oriented **Start2 Group** ranks second, followed by **BayStartUP** in third. With **WERK1** in ninth place, a total of four Bavarian organizations are now represented among Europe's top ten start-up hubs.

The ranking is regarded as one of the most **important indicators** of the performance of European innovation ecosystems. The evaluation included investor recommendations, feedback from founders and alumni, as well as measurable success indicators and scaling achievements of supported start-ups. Only organizations that have operated active programs since at least 2021 were eligible, underlining the data-driven nature and credibility of the analysis.

Read more

Recent headlines

Bio^{M} and LMU Munich agree on strategic collaboration to promote life sciences spin-offs

Prof. Ralf Huss, Managing Director of Bio^{M}, and Dr. Philipp Baaske, Vice President for Entrepreneurship at LMU and founder of NanoTemper © Bio^{M}

Bio^{M} Biotech Cluster Development GmbH and Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität (LMU) Munich have signed a memorandum of understanding to intensify their collaboration. The aim of this partnership is to identify promising research projects with spin-off potential in the fields of life sciences, medicine, and digital health at an early stage and to support them in a targeted manner on their path toward company formation.

As part of the agreed cooperation, Bio^{M}/MAxL and the Executive Board of LMU Munich have agreed on key objectives like:

- Information to interested LMU researchers and research groups
- Joint scouting to identify promising research and development projects with spin-off potential
- regular updates on Bio^{M}/MAxL start-up programs and events

With this memorandum of understanding, Bio^{M} and LMU are sending a strong signal for Bavaria as an innovation hub and strengthening the structural conditions needed to translate scientific findings more rapidly into marketable solutions for patients.

Read more

Ethris receives EU funding of up to EUR 148 million for novel pandemic influenza vaccines through consortium

Dr. Carsten Rudolph, CEO of Ethris © Ethris

Ethris, based in Planegg/Munich, Germany, together with the European consortium NOFLU, has received initial funding of EUR 13 million to advance an innovative mRNA-based mucosal vaccine against pandemic influenza. The total program could grow to up to EUR 148 million in several phases.

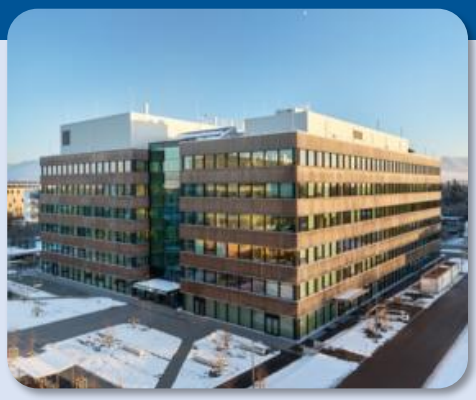
The European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA) has awarded the European vaccine consortium **NOFLU** initial funding of EUR 13 million as part of a competitive tender. Subject to further evaluation, the total volume of the contract could reach up to EUR 148 million. The aim is to develop **novel vaccine approaches to better prepare for influenza pandemics**.

NOFLU is one of three programs selected within this EU-wide pre-commercial procurement process. The consortium brings together seven partners from Europe and pools expertise across the entire value chain - from mRNA design and formulation to preclinical research and clinical development to immunological analysis. The participants are Ethris and Evonik (Germany), NIVI Development (Novo Nordisk Foundation Initiative for Vaccines and Immunity), Statens Serum Institut and Bavarian Nordic (Denmark), ECRAID (Netherlands), and VisMederi (Italy).

The program focuses on the further development of **Ethris' proprietary mRNA technology as a mucosal vaccine against pandemic influenza**. Read more

Recent headlines

Roche celebrates official inauguration of new diagnostics innovation center “LEAP” in Penzberg



© Roche

After around four years of construction, a new diagnostics innovation center has been completed in Penzberg – a modern, sustainable facility in which Roche has invested approximately 300 million euro. Internally named “LEAP” (symbolizing a leap forward), the new building represents the beginning of a new era of excellence in automated and digitalized laboratory work. Around 1,000 employees from research and development will work here, using state-of-the-art high-tech infrastructure to develop new diagnostic tests and reagents.

The innovation center was officially inaugurated on February 12, 2026, in the presence of **Bavarian Minister-President Markus Söder, Federal Minister of the Interior Alexander Dobrindt**, **Federal Minister for Research, Technology and Space Dorothee Bär, Thomas Schinecker, CEO of the Roche Group**, and the management of Roche’s German sites.
With the approximately 23,000-square-meter facility, Roche has established one of the **most advanced development centers for diagnostics** worldwide. The high-tech building is part of a long-term investment agenda: since 2020, more than EUR 3.5 billion has been invested in Roche’s German sites, around half of it in Penzberg.

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Bavaria launches Bavarian Center for Preventive Infection Medicine

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With the Bavarian Center for Preventive Infection Medicine (BZI), Bavaria is creating a permanent, state-wide structure for pandemic preparedness: Six university locations are pooling their expertise to identify infection risks earlier, further develop vaccination strategies, and systematically research post-infection syndromes such as Long COVID.

Infectious diseases are among the greatest health challenges of our time – not least due to emerging pathogens, increasing antibiotic resistance, and the long-term consequences of viral infections. To better prepare Bavaria for future waves of infection and health risks, the Bavarian Center for Preventive Infectious Medicine (BZI) is now beginning its work. The center is funded by the Bavarian State Ministry of Science and the Arts with around three million euros annually and connects all six Bavarian universities with medical faculties, including Erlangen, Augsburg, Munich (LMU and TU), Regensburg, and Würzburg, as well as university medicine and public health services.

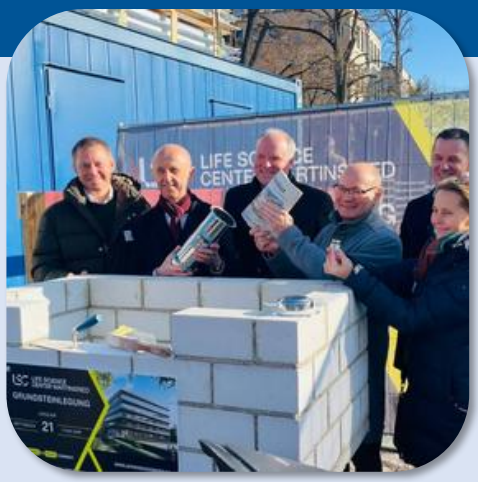
The aim is to identify infection risks as early as possible, translate research results into care and prevention more quickly, and thus support evidence-based decisions in healthcare. The new structure should also help to ensure that knowledge is used more quickly and risks are identified earlier.

Read more

Recent headlines

Cornerstone laid for new Life Science Center in Martinsried

By fall 2027, a state-of-the-art life science center with approximately 7,400 square meters of laboratory and office space will be completed in Martinsried. Aventin Real Estate celebrated the groundbreaking ceremony for its new life science center in Martinsried.



Per Bødker (Bavarian Nordic GmbH), Volker Dittmeier (Aventin Real Estate GmbH), District Administrator Christoph Göbel, Mayor Hermann Nafziger and Dr. Ulrike Dirmeier (Bavarian Nordic GmbH), from left © Bio[M]

With political representatives, project participants, and the future user in attendance, the groundbreaking marks another important step in the expansion of the life sciences hub. By fall 2027, a state-of-the-art research building with a total of approximately 7,400 m² of laboratory and office space meeting S1 and S2 standards will be constructed on a site spanning roughly 3,200 m². In the future, around 400 scientists will work there in the field of biotechnology. As early as September 2025, Bavarian Nordic was secured as a long-term tenant for the entire building. The publicly traded biopharmaceutical company, headquartered in Denmark, specializes in the development and production of vaccines against infectious diseases and viral threats. Bavarian Nordic will consolidate significant portions of its global research and development activities at the Martinsried site in the future.

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T-CURX raises USD 20 million in series A funding to advance non-viral CAR-T cancer therapies

The management team of T-CURX © T-CURX GmbH

T-CURX announced a USD 20 million Series A first closing led by BiomedVC to fund pipeline of clinical-stage CAR-T programs and advance proprietary non-viral in vivo CAR-T platform.

T-CURX GmbH, a spin-off of Würzburg University, announced the first closing of a USD 20 million (17.7 Mio EUR) **Series A financing** with a syndicate of European and Asian investors for accelerating clinical development of T-CURX **non-viral clinical CAR-T therapies** in AML and solid tumor indications, as well as advancing T-CURX proprietary non-viral technologies for ***in vivo* CAR-T generation**. The Series A syndicate was led by BiomedVC and included Bayern Kapital, WuXi Biologics Healthcare Ventures, HighLight Capital (HLC), and i&iBio Fund, as additional investors along with existing and new individual investors.

T-CURX was spun-out of the laboratory of its co-founder, Prof. Michael Hudecek, University of Würzburg, who is a European KOL and pioneer in the development and clinical translation of non-viral CAR-T cell therapies to target various types of cancer.

Read more

m⁴ Awardee RevoBITs receives EXIST research transfer funding – EUR 1.25 million for the development of the first smart bioprinter

The team of RevoBITs © Bio^{M}

m⁴ Award winner RevoBITs impresses in the nationwide selection process of EXIST Research Transfer and receives EUR 1.25 million in funding. With its smart bioprinter, the start-up aims to significantly improve biological reproducibility.

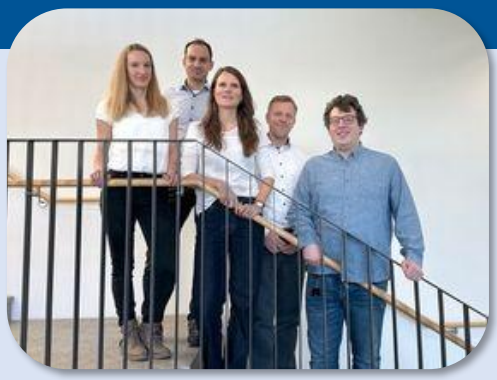
Biotech start-up RevoBITs from Erlangen, winner of the m⁴ Award 2023, has been selected for the renowned EXIST Research Transfer funding program run by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy. The award is one of the most prestigious public funding instruments for deep tech start-ups in Germany. Only projects that demonstrate technical excellence, clear value creation prospects, and a high degree of innovation are eligible for this funding.

With the **EUR 1.25 million in non-dilutive funding provided**, RevoBITs is pushing ahead with the development of the **world's first smart bioprinter,** which will enable medical research and the pharmaceutical industry to establish and reliably produce meaningful human tissue models.

Read more

Twogee Biotech secures EUR 2.2 million seed funding to industrialize circular biomass value creation

Twogee Biotech, a Munich-based biotechnology start-up and MAxL incubator tenant specializing in tailor-made enzyme solutions for the industrial conversion of biomass into sustainable raw materials, has successfully closed a seed financing round of 2.16 million euros. Investors include High-Tech Gründerfonds (HTGF) and Bayern Kapital, as well as strategic partners such as AgriFoodTech Venture Alliance and Heinz Entsorgung.



The Twogee Biotech team (from left): Katharina Stenzel, Dr. Frank Wallrapp, CEO & co-founder, Julia Bollwahn, Dr. Helge Jochens, CTO & co-founder, and Lukas Danzer © Twogee Biotech

Founded in 2024 by Dr. Frank Wallrapp and Dr. Helge Jochens, each bringing more than ten years of shared industry experience in biotechnology, and supported by the **Bio^{M} MAxL Incubator**, the company develops customized enzyme solutions for the industrial use of biomass residual streams and is using the newly raised capital now to accelerate the development and commercialization of its technology. Initial MVPs and paid pilot projects with industrial partners as well as laboratories and bioreactors have already been implemented. The technology enables companies to convert previously low-value residual and by-product streams into sustainable **second-generation raw materials**, particularly 2G sugars for Bio- and SynBio applications.

Read more

RNATICS secures EUR 2.7 million BMFTR grant RCS-21 advances in clinical development

Munich start-up RNATICS GmbH has been awarded EUR 2.7 million in funding from the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR). The grant supports the next stage of clinical development for RCS-21, a first-in-class inhaled RNA therapeutic targeting severe inflammatory-fibrotic lung diseases.

© RNATICS GmbH

RNATICS develops targeted **nucleic acid therapies** against disease-causing RNAs in macrophages. The proprietary technology is based on an innovative carbohydrate-coupling technology that enables the targeted delivery of RNA therapeutics to lung macrophages. This approach opens up new possibilities for the treatment of various inflammatory lung diseases.

RCS-21 uses proprietary carbohydrate conjugation for selective uptake into pulmonary macrophages, where it inhibits microRNA-21 – a key driver of pathological inflammation and fibrosis. The program focuses on patients with **idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF)** and related fibrotic lung conditions which currently have limited therapeutic options.

Read more

2NA FISH from Munich secures additional pre-seed funding for RNA diagnostics platform

Dr. Christina Port, CEO & co-founder, with investors Michael Aderberger (Twip) and Fabian Hogrebe (GF BRYCK Ventures) © 2NA FISH

The Munich-based biotech company 2NA FISH GmbH, developer of an innovative platform for spatial RNA biomarker detection in oncology diagnostics, has secured additional pre-seed funding. The round was led by GF BRYCK Ventures, with a follow-on investment from existing investor Twip.

The capital will be used to further develop and validate 2NA FISH's **spatial RNA biomarker detection platform** for research and translational use, expand early-access collaborations, and strengthen the software stack that enables robust analysis in routine pathology workflows.

2NA FISH's platform combines **nanostructure-enhanced probes** with routine pathology workflows to deliver **bright, specific signals** and practical **multiplexing on standard fluorescence microscopes** - aiming to make **spatial RNA biomarker testing** more affordable and deployable in everyday lab and pathology settings. A proprietary, **AI-based analysis application** supports quantification and cell-level readouts to turn spatial RNA data into actionable biomarker information.

Read more

Technology for strong muscles: Noxon secures millions in financing for market entry

The Noxon team. © Noxon

Munich-based medical technology start-up Noxon has completed a seed financing round worth millions. The round is led by High-Tech Gründerfonds (HTGF), with Bayern Kapital, Auxxo, and another institutional investor also participating. Noxon intends to use the fresh capital to further develop its non-invasive muscle-computer interface technology, clinically validate it, and obtain regulatory approval. The goal is to transition from research to clinical application and prepare for market entry.

Strong and healthy muscles are a key prerequisite for mobility, independence, and healthy aging. Nevertheless, muscle activity in everyday life remains largely invisible. While numerous other bodily functions can be precisely measured and analyzed, muscle signals are usually only recorded selectively and under clinical conditions.
More than a billion people worldwide are affected by muscle diseases. Whether in Parkinson's disease, scoliosis, or rehabilitation after an accident or stroke, continuous data from everyday life is often lacking. As a result, it remains unclear whether muscles are working at the right time, with the appropriate intensity, and in coordination with other muscle groups. Until now, therapies have only been able to be individualized and adapted for the long term to a limited extent.

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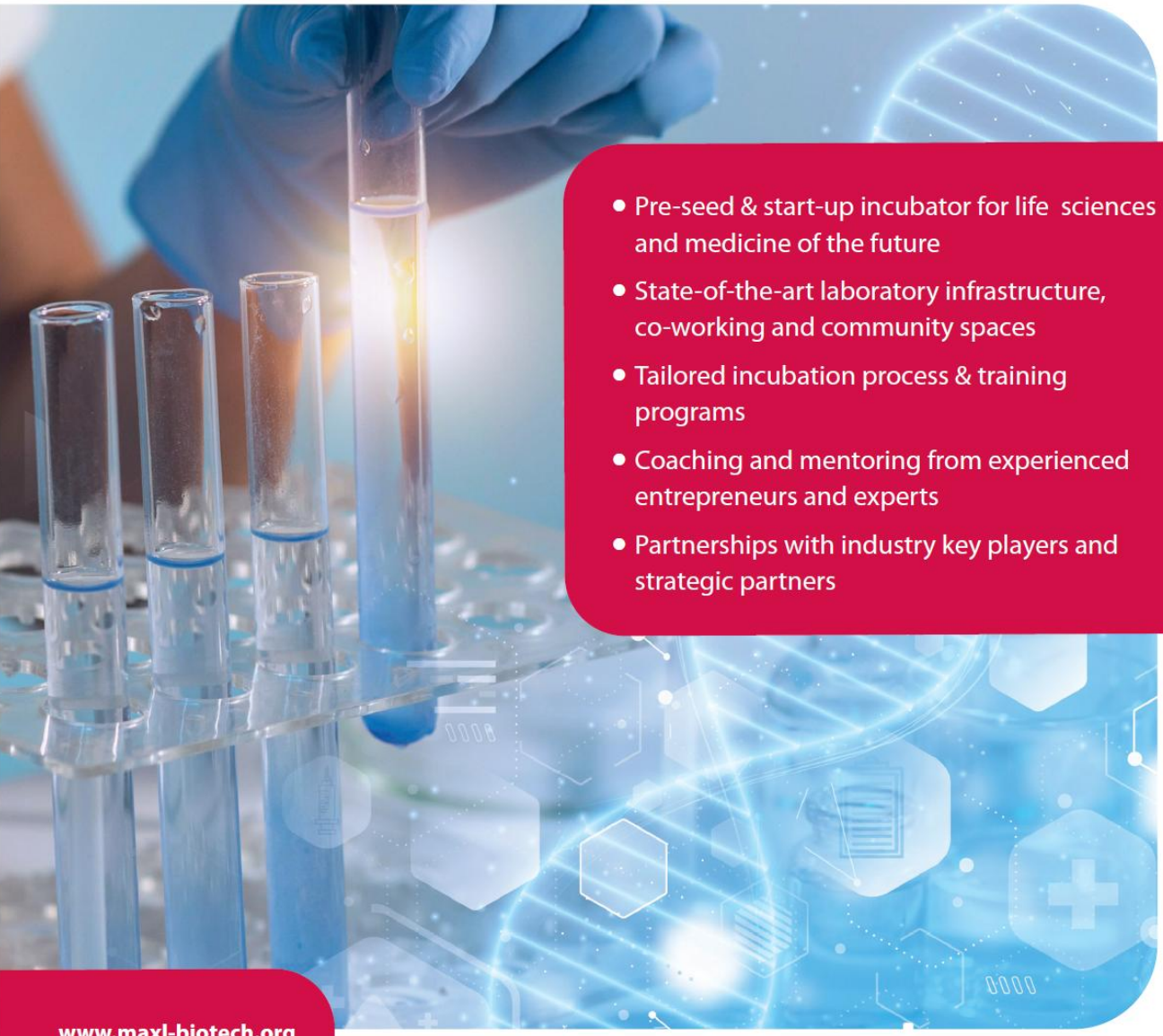

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LMU President Prof. Tschöp receives prestigious Rolf Luft Award

© LMU/Enno Kapitza

Prof. Matthias H. Tschöp, President of Ludwig Maximilians-Universität (LMU) Munich, receives the internationally renowned Rolf Luft Award 2026 in recognition of his pioneering research in the field of diabetes, and obesity. The award underscores the outstanding importance of his scientific work for clinical innovations and global health issues.

The Rolf Luft Award is awarded annually, initially by the Karolinska Institute, and since 2005 by the Rolf Luft Foundation for Diabetes Research to outstanding researchers active in endocrinology, metabolism and diabetes research in honor of Swedish endocrinology pioneer Rolf Luft. It is considered the world's most prestigious award in the field of endocrinology and diabetes.

Tschöp receives the award together with **Prof. Richard DiMarchi** (Indiana University, USA) for their fundamental contributions to the development of innovative drugs for diabetes and obesity. The jury honors the “outstanding, groundbreaking scientific contribution in diabetes and obesity” of DiMarchi and Tschöp in the field of diabetes and obesity, “with basic research leading to important clinical implications.”

Their work is characterized by strong national and international collaborations that enable rapid translation of scientific findings into clinical application. An outstanding example is TherVacB, a therapeutic vaccine for the treatment of chronic hepatitis B, which is now being used in initial clinical trials.

Read more

EUR 3 million for hormone-free contraception: LMU develops new approaches in the PREVENT project

© Computer generated

An interdisciplinary research team, including members from LMU Munich, is developing novel, non-hormonal contraceptive methods for women and men as part of the PREVENT project. The goal is to create effective alternatives to the traditional “pill” with few side effects. The BMFTR is funding the project with approximately three million euros.

A research team led by Prof. Daniel Merk of the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich, Dr. Claudia Tredup and Prof. Stefan Knapp of the Institute of Pharmaceutical Chemistry at Goethe University Frankfurt, and Prof. Hubert Schorle of the University Hospital Bonn have jointly launched the PREVENT project (“Precision Reproductive and Contraceptive Target Discovery Network”). The goal is to develop non-hormonal contraceptives as an alternative to the birth control pill. The project is being funded by the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology, and Space (BMFTR) with approximately three million euros through 2029.

The researchers aim to identify new active compounds and establish a method for developing **innovative contraceptive approaches for both women and men**. The focus is on strategies that do not interfere with hormonal balance and are therefore potentially better tolerated.

Read more

MPI study identifies new diagnostic markers for multiple sclerosis

© TUM, adapted from the MPI of Biochemistry

A large-scale proteomic analysis of cerebrospinal fluid samples has identified new protein markers for the diagnosis of multiple sclerosis (MS). The method, developed at the Max Planck Institute of Biochemistry, improves the ability to distinguish MS from similar inflammatory diseases of the central nervous system and also provides insights into the disease's future course. In the future, this technology could also lead to the discovery of new biomarkers for other neurological disorders.

Nonspecific neurological symptoms such as numbness, visual disturbances, or severe fatigue often make it difficult to diagnose neurological disorders quickly. Despite modern imaging techniques, reliable molecular biomarkers are lacking for many diseases, which can lead to delayed or uncertain diagnoses. A research team from the Technical University of Munich (TUM) and the Max Planck Institute (MPI) of Biochemistry has now identified new markers for **multiple sclerosis** using modern proteomics. The study analyzed cerebrospinal fluid samples from more than 5,000 patients with various neurological conditions - including strokes, brain tumors, infections, and autoimmune diseases - and systematically compared their protein profiles.

Read more

FAU Erlangen-Nuremberg: T-cells' energy-saving mode explains decades-long vaccine protection

© Pixabay

Researchers at Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg (FAU) and Erlangen University Hospital have demonstrated why vaccinations often provide lifelong protection: Certain T cells switch to an energy-saving mode early on, thereby ensuring a stable immunological memory for decades.

Using the yellow fever vaccine as an example, the study published in Nature Immunology demonstrates that metabolic dormancy is a fundamental principle of long-lasting immunity.

Why is the human immune system often able to remember a vaccination for a lifetime? Researchers at FAU and Universitätsklinikum Erlangen have investigated this question. Their study shows that the T cells responsible for **immunological memory** switch to a kind of standby mode at an early stage. In this state, they can survive for many decades.
The **yellow fever** vaccine, one of the most effective examples of successful immunization in humans, served as the model system. Typically, a single injection is sufficient to achieve exceptionally strong and often lifelong protection. This makes the vaccine particularly well-suited for studying the development of stable immunity.

Read more

Expanded MoU signed between Bavaria and Japan: Bio^{M}, City of Kawasaki, and KIIP intensify cooperation in the life sciences

The Bavarian biotech cluster organization Bio^{M} Biotech Cluster Development GmbH (Bio^{M}), the City of Kawasaki, Japan, and the Kawasaki Institute of Industrial Promotion (KIIP) re-signed an expanded memorandum of understanding (MoU) in Munich today.

Takeshi Suzuki, KIIP and Prof. Ralf Huss, Bio^{M} © Bio^{M}

The aim of the cooperation agreement is to promote economic exchange in the fields of health, biotechnology, and life sciences, as well as to intensify industry-industry and industry-academia cooperation between Kawasaki and the Bavarian biotechnology network.

The agreement focuses on the structured exchange of information on technologies and developments in industry and science, matchmaking and delegation formats, and the exchange of best practices in technology transfer and the internationalization of small and medium-sized enterprises. The partnership between Bio^{M} and the City of Kawasaki was first signed in November 2017 and updated in 2020 and 2023. With the renewed signing, the MoU is expanded to include the Kawasaki Institute of Industrial Promotion (KIIP). Ongoing exchanges between Kawasaki City, KIIP, and Bio^{M} in the field of innovation and life sciences, as well as further delegation and matchmaking formats, are planned for 2026. Read more

Australia X Bavaria: Exploring global clinical trial collaboration

Bio^{M} had the pleasure of welcoming the Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) delegation for a morning full of insights around "Australia × Bavaria: Exploring Global Clinical Trial Collaboration."

© Bio^{M}

From Australia's clinical trial ecosystem to concrete perspectives on German–Australian collaboration, the exchange highlighted the strong potential for cross-border innovation.

The discussions, roundtable exchanges, and networking highlighted that, for example, Australia requires less data and documentation for clinical trial submission preparation, while studies conducted in Europe and Australia can be complementary, enabling efficient and globally aligned development pathways.

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CLUSTER BIOTECHNOLOGY BAVARIA

Events

German Biotech Day 2026
21 - 22 April 2026 I Leipzig, Germany

Swiss Biotech Day 2026
4 - 5 May 2026 I Basel, Switzerland

BIO International Convention
22 - 25 June 2026 I San Diego, USA

BayOConnect
30 June - 1July 2026 I Munich, Germany

Please find current event information on our website www.bio-m.org/en/events

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