



Amgen Engages Cambridge Biotech Community To Select 2018 LabCentral Golden Ticket Winners

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Amgen Golden Tickets Provide Startup Companies With Free Lab Space to Further Advance Innovative Science and Technology

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Dec. 18, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- Amgen (NASDAQ:AMGN) and LabCentral today announced that Kernal Biologics and PanTher Therapeutics have each won the Amgen Golden Ticket at LabCentral. The two Golden Ticket winners were chosen by an Amgen internal committee and live audience members at a "Quick Pitch" event hosted by Amgen at its Cambridge, Mass. facility on Dec. 11, 2018. Six finalists pitched their business plans to attendees where the audience members' votes served as input for the Amgen internal committee's decision.

As a LabCentral platinum sponsor, Amgen nominates two early-stage companies annually to take up residence in LabCentral's Kendall Square facilities in Cambridge. The Golden Ticket represents one year of free bench space for one scientist, including benefit of LabCentral's shared infrastructure and services (such as conference rooms, permits, shared equipment and facilities, participation in LabCentral training modules and seminars). Amgen scientists also provide on-going mentoring throughout the year. LabCentral is a first-of-its-kind shared laboratory space designed as a launchpad for high-potential life sciences and biotech startups.

"Amgen enjoys hosting the Quick Pitch event where, for the second year, we team up with our industry colleagues to showcase the brightest and most promising innovations happening here in Cambridge," said John Dunlop, Ph.D., vice president of Neuroscience at Amgen. "Our goal is to identify, empower and enable the best startup companies to advance their innovative science and technologies. Awarding the LabCentral Golden Tickets to Kernal Biologics and PanTher Therapeutics fulfills our mission to serve patients. We look forward to learning and mentoring to bring forth the best in both companies."

"Receiving this Golden Ticket award for a second time from Amgen is a great honor and an affirmation of Kernal's disruptive mRNA 2.0 technology and unique approach in immuno-oncology," said Yusuf Erkul, M.D., president and co-founder of Kernal Biologics. "We look forward to bringing onco-selective mRNA immunotherapy to cancer patients."

"PanTher's lead program in pancreatic cancer is well advanced and entering the FDA and clinical trial stage, and we are pursuing a second-generation program," said Laura Indolfi, chief executive officer and co-founder of PanTher Therapeutics. "Continuing this work at LabCentral will enable PanTher to accelerate development but can also be instrumental in defining the path we want to pursue by interacting and receiving mentoring from Amgen scientists."

Kernal Biologics Inc. develops therapeutic messenger RNAs via deep learning for immuno-oncology applications. Kernal's unique methods of sequence engineering and smart design are intended to develop a technology platform that will dramatically improve the efficacy of existing mRNA technologies.

PanTher Therapeutics develops a novel delivery method for the treatment of inoperable locally advanced solid tumors. Its delivery method is designed to target just the tumor, which has the potential to enhance therapeutic response and minimize side effects. The company's first indication will be for pancreatic cancer.

Amgen has sponsored the LabCentral Golden Ticket program since 2014, which was launched to assist high-potential life sciences and biotech startups in their efforts to continue further research in advancing unique approaches to treatments for serious conditions. Amgen has awarded LabCentral Golden Tickets to seven innovative startups: [Novopyxis](#), [Cocoon Biotech](#), [Platelet Biogenesis](#), [Holobiome](#), Torus Therapeutics, [QurAlis](#) and [Kernal Biologics](#).

About Amgen

Amgen is committed to unlocking the potential of biology for patients suffering from serious illnesses by discovering, developing, manufacturing and delivering innovative human therapeutics. This approach begins by using tools like advanced human genetics to unravel the complexities of disease and understand the fundamentals of human biology.

Amgen focuses on areas of high unmet medical need and leverages its expertise to strive for solutions that improve health outcomes and dramatically improve people's lives. A biotechnology pioneer since 1980, Amgen has grown to be one of the world's leading independent biotechnology companies, has reached millions of patients around the world and is developing a pipeline of medicines with breakaway potential.

For more information, visit www.amgen.com and follow us on [www.twitter.com/amgen](https://twitter.com/amgen).

About LabCentral (www.labcentral.org; twitter [@labcentral](https://twitter.com/labcentral))

LabCentral is the first-of-its-kind shared laboratory workspace in the heart of the Kendall Square, Cambridge, biotech innovation hub, designed as a launchpad for high-potential life-sciences and biotech startups. It offers everything young companies need to begin lab operations immediately upon move-in and propel their science forward faster and more cost-efficiently (10 to 20x less than going it alone!) This includes: beautifully designed, fully permitted lab and office space, first-class facility and administrative support, skilled lab personnel, peer learning and networking opportunities, an expert speaker series — as well as critical access to potential funders and industry partners. A private, nonprofit institution, the first site opened in 2013, with support from real-estate partner, MIT. Founding sponsors include Johnson & Johnson Innovation, the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center, Roche, and Triumvirate Environmental. To accommodate demand for growing startups, LabCentral 610 opened in late 2017, with support from Pfizer. LabCentral now has capacity to serve ~450 scientists and entrepreneurs in about 70 companies across its two-building campus. In 2017, it also added the LabCentral Learning Lab for STEM programming to help inspire the next generation of science entrepreneurs.

Contact: Amgen, Massachusetts
Jennifer Bianco, (401) 392-8815
biancoj@amgen.com

LabCentral, Massachusetts
Caroline Grossman, (781) 771-5579
cgrossman@labcentral.org



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