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Merck invests $250M in biotech development facility in Switzerland

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Investment driven by the growth of R&D pipeline reflects Merck's commitment to speed up availability of new medicines to patients



Merck, a leading science and technology company, announced an investment of US$250 million in a new facility in Corsier-sur-Vevey, Switzerland the Merck Biotech Development Center dedicated to biotech development and manufacturing for clinical studies. Driven by the growth of the Healthcare business sector R&D pipeline, this investment will help to sustainably secure capacity and high agility to deliver clinical trial material in a cost-effective way, contribute to accelerated development timelines of new biological entities, and address the increasing manufacturing complexity of the next generations of biotech compounds.

This investment in the Merck Biotech Development Center reflects our commitment to speed up the availability of new medicines for patients in need, and confirms the importance of Switzerland as our prime hub for the manufacturing of biotech medicines, said Stefan Oschmann, Chairman of the Executive Board and CEO of Merck, at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new facility held today.

Our investment in this biotech development facility in Switzerland is strongly related to the growth and progression of our Healthcare pipeline, and our confidence in its future potential,said Bel Garijo, Member of the Executive Board of Merck and CEO Healthcare.

Located near Merck's current biotech commercial manufacturing site in Corsier-sur-Vevey, Switzerland, the Biotech Development Center will bridge together research and manufacturing. The facility will consist of a building providing a total of 15,700 square meters of development space bringing together a cross-functional team of approximately 250 employees spread across different sites today, responsible for advancing Merck's biotech R&D pipeline by ensuring that Merck's next generation of biotech therapies are available for clinical trials on time, on quality and on quantity.

Equipped with the most advanced digital solutions and highest technological standards, including continuous manufacturing and laboratory automation, the Biotech Development Center will offer a flexible-by-design infrastructure to readily adapt to emerging needs and technology evolution, as well as open workspaces enabling collaboration, creativity and innovation. Everything will be designed to comply with the highest international standards of quality, environment, health and safety. Sustainable features in the new building will include an abundance of natural light, a highly efficient energy management, as well as an architectural design integrated into the landscape following the contours of the slope and preserving biodiversity with special habitats promoting wildlife and protected flora.

The Biotech Development Center will showcase Merck's science and technology across its three business sectors, including Life Sciences process solutions for clinical manufacturing and pilot plant operations, as well as Performance Materials eyrise dynamic liquid crystal windows as part of the highly efficient energy management of the building. The construction of the building is expected to be completed in 2021 and the Biotech Development Center is anticipated to be fully operational by the end of 2022 following validation by regulatory authorities.

The Biotech Development Center adds to recent investments aiming to further increase Merck's capacities in the research, development and manufacturing of medicines, such as the expansions of the R&D facility of Billerica, United States, of the biotech manufacturing site of Aubonne, Switzerland, and of the pharma manufacturing site of Darmstadt, Germany. With the existing sites of Corsier-sur-Vevey and Aubonne and the future Biotech Development Center, Switzerland further confirms its position as Merck's prime hub for the manufacturing and development of biotech medicines. Merck has invested more than one billion Swiss francs in Switzerland over the past ten years, reflecting the strategic importance of the country, where it employs more than 2,400 employees across 9 locations.