

The Activator Report

20
26

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Mission & History

Non-profit, trainee-led, educationally focused

Together, we're shaping a global powerhouse for cultivating and empowering the next generation of life sciences talent, dedicated to solving major challenges in health and sustainability. Our mission is to offer free and open programs, democratizing bio- and eco-tech education for diverse backgrounds.

We identify, educate, and nurture talent to fuel the emergence of tech-driven entrepreneurs, leaders, and VCs. By fostering intellectual communities and bridging connections within the biotech ecosystem, we drive impactful innovation. Our focus on access, outreach, and prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion creates a next-generation community committed to advancing life science and eco-tech ventures.

We're thrilled for you to join us as we help make biotech accessible for all, not just a privileged few.

Mission

To empower academic trainees through open-access educational resources.

Vision

To solve the world's most pressing biomedical and ecological challenges by enabling the next generation of bio- and eco- entrepreneurs.

Origins

Nucleate, formerly Activate Bio, was founded in Boston in 2018 within the GSAS Harvard Biotech Club. We have a 501(c)(3) status and operate under a franchise model wherein our organization supports and organizes regional chapters. Nucleate's Activator program currently operates under twenty-one regions globally.

Leadership

Our leadership team is composed of 800+ diverse and exceptional academic trainees in PhD, MBA, MD, and JD degree-granting programs. Our leadership is passionate about bridging the gap between innovation and translation by helping to educate future founders and biotech leaders and build support systems to encourage the translation of groundbreaking scientific work. Our leadership team aspires to become future leaders in biotech through VC, BD, and entrepreneurship.

The Activator Program

The Activator is a five-tier program, providing rigorous educational experience to future bioentrepreneurs. Our curriculum consists of bi-weekly workshops and culminates in a pitch event, during which finalists showcase their companies to industry stakeholders. Teams will finish with a polished pitch deck, written business plan, a fundraising and legal strategy, and a network of relevant industry advisors.



01 TEAM FORMATION

Align scientists and business students interested in launching a venture. Facilitate mutual matching



02 STRATEGY SUPPORT

Industry Mentors – Long-term guidance from experienced entrepreneurs & biotech executives. Legal Strategy – Navigate the IP and corporate law landscapes with guidance from legal experts.

Clinical Partners – Work with clinical residents to explore unmet clinical needs and interview KOLs.



03 HANDS-ON WORKSHOPS

Iterate on science-first business theses; deep workshops with industry experts.



04 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Enable networking with faculty, biotech executives, first-time founders, and VCs.



05 FINAL PITCH

Our program culminates in a regional final pitch showcase where teams present in front of the regional biotech community

Workshop Structure

Pre-work

- Before workshop, teams prepare slides and discussion Pre-work materials are circulated to the workshop experts in advance Slides will form components of the final 10-15 minute polished pitch deck presentation.

Hands-on feedback

- Participation in two-hour workshops Teams are paired with experts relevant to their targeted market and/or technology Experts provide feedback on the materials presented by the teams.

Post-work

- After workshop, teams integrate expert feedback Teams provide summary outlining what they learned & outstanding questions Post-work summaries will serve as building blocks for the final written business plan.

Workshop Overview

	Workshop Topic	Objectives	Key Questions
1	Intellectual Property(IP) Strategy	Connect teams with experienced IP attorneys from Vossius & Partner to assess their current intellectual property position and develop a strategic approach to protecting their technology and maximizing its commercial value.	What is the current status of your IP portfolio? Which aspects of your technology can and should be protected? Are there potential freedom-to-operate (FTO) risks or competing patents to consider?
2	Scientific Risk	Manage scientific and technical risks to maximize value. Teams will work with experts to refine their unique value proposition and outline key value-creating experiments—focusing on the data investors need for seed/Series A funding.	Key scientific risks in deploying your technology? Addressed vs. remaining risks? Planned experiments to mitigate outstanding risks?
3	Market Risk & Application	Equip teams to assess investor perspectives, refine market positioning, and identify key risks to strengthen their commercialization strategy.	Teams will outline their target application within the market landscape and justify: Market fit – Why this is the best use case. <u>Competitive edge</u> – <u>How their technology</u> stands out.
4	Strategic Fundraising	Equip teams with knowledge on funding sources, investor targeting, and seed round planning.	What is your pre-seed/seed funding target? What key milestone will this funding achieve? Who are your ideal investors and why?
5	Company Culture	Highlight the impact of workplace culture on startup growth and financial success while equipping teams with strategies to prioritize diversity, recruitment, and retention.	Discuss the diversity-innovation paradox in academic science and its relevance to biotech startups. Define an ideal company culture, refine the team's mission and core values, and outline strategies for recruiting and retaining diverse talent
6	Regulatory Strategy	Connect teams with regulatory experts to evaluate their current IP portfolio and develop a comprehensive strategy for securing full product approval.	Discuss status and key considerations for IP; regulatory timeline & milestones; near & mid-term challenges to reach value inflection points and how to resolve them
7	Founder's Workshop	Connect teams with experienced founders. Help them navigate challenges in their startup journey.	Discuss strategic company positioning. Share insights on fundraising tactics. Learn from founder's past experiences
8	Practice Pitch	Teams incorporate workshop feedback to refine their slide deck, pitch to industry partners, and gather final insights.	How strong is the storytelling and delivery of the pitch? How well does the team handle Q&A and address challenges? Is the presentation visually clear, concise, and impactful

Finalist Teams

AI:LEEN PLATFORM

Team Members: Anna Tidstam Dario Zebcevic
Lyndon Hu Nikita Moshkov

Acceleration of new therapy adoption with counterfactual 'what - if' analysis.

COLDEX THERAPEUTIC

Team Members: Christine Wuebben, Simone Pinto Carneiro, Alexander Blaut

Nucleic acid delivery) A first-in-class molecular shield to protect exactly where respiratory virus enter.

GLITTER THERAPEUTIC

Team Members: Sammy Mahdi Virginie Clement-Schatlo Florian von der Linde

A biotech company developing precision therapies to treat the deadliest cancer, glioblastoma, by targeting cancer initiating cells.

IMMPRINT DIAGNOSTICS

Team Members: Clara Vazquez Garcia
Svea Matthiesen Kathrin Rosa Mirjam Svea Kurz

We want to commercialize a preventive blood test to improve patient care and therapy decision in hospitals and clinics.

NEOREGENESIS THERAPEUTIC

Team Members: Dong-Jiunn Truong Julian Geilenkeuser Niklas Armbrust Dan Sabatelli Florian Tubes

Programmable gene editor delivery and scalable non-immunogenic cell enrichment technologies.

BIO

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ONCODEGRADE THERAPEUTIC

Team Members: Lorenzo Cianni Jean-Patrick Pallagi Radek Nowak

Pioneers a next-generation small-molecule platform that precisely targets and degrades key oncogenic proteins to transform blood cancer therapy.

ORBION PLATFORM

Team Members: Aniruddh Goteti Çağlar Bozkurt Dennis Kwiatkowski

AI platform that transforms how scientists and biotech companies understand and stabilize proteins — replacing months of trial-and-error with instant, data-driven predictions that accelerate drug discovery and enzyme design.

PLANTMAN (NOW AGGREGON THERAPEUTICS)

THERAPEUTICS

Team Members: Ernesto Llamas Pamanes
Anooshay Khan Ashmita Ray Emelie Fonseca Qussai Abbas

Developing a first-in-class disease-modifying treatment for Huntington's Disease and other neurodegenerative diseases using plant-derived proteins.

RENATRIX MEDTECH

Team Members: Ahed Almalla Tamasri Senapati Didem Dost Komali Valishetti

We provide certified bio-grade, tissue-specific extracellular matrix (ECM) biomaterials that replicate native tissue microenvironments.

BIO

BIO

BIO

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AI:LEEN

PLATFORM

BIO



Anna Tidstam
Founder



Dario Zebcevic
Diagnostics specialist



Lyndon Hu
Clinical expert



Nikita Moshkov
Computational biologist

- Aileen drives Acceleration of new therapy adoption with counterfactual “what-if” analysis.

MENTORS: Hans Frickel

WORKSHOP EXPERTS: Monika Petersson, Thibault Geoui, Vanessa Luzak, Katarina Ebert, Mareike Mutzberg, Daniel Straimer, Sarah Oelsner, Sejal Patel Tolksdorf, Johanna Goldmann, Sam Ringle, Mert Duman, Stefan Munker, Victor Bustos, Negar Shahmoradi

COLDEX

THERAPEUTIC

BIO



Christine Wuebben
CEO



Simone Carneiro
CSO

- Coldex is a first-in-class molecular shield to protect exactly where respiratory virus enter.

MENTORS: Christian Walczuch

WORKSHOP EXPERTS: Marisela Rodriguez, Rüdiger Jankowsky, Valeria Rodriguez Espinoza, Katarina Ebert, Mareike Mutzberg, Daniel Straimer, Sarah Oelsner, Sejal Patel Tolksdorf, Johanna Goldmann, Sam Ringle, Mert Duman, Stefan Munker, Victor Bustos, Negar Shahmoradi

NEOREGENESIS

THERAPEUTIC

BIO



Julian Geilenkeuser

Gene editing and
Delivery



Florian Tubes

BD and Market
Access



Dong-Jiunn "Jeff"

Truong
Scientific Lead



Dan Sabatelli

Strategic Leadership



Niklas Armbrust

Cell Engineering and
Selection Systems

- Programmable gene editor delivery and scalable non-immunogenic cell enrichment technologies.

MENTORS: Benjamin Winkeljann

WORKSHOP EXPERTS: Marina Rajic,
Johanna Goldmann, Valeria Rodriguez
Espinoza, Katarina Ebert, Mareike
Mutzberg, Daniel Straimer, Sarah
Oelsner, Sejal Patel Tolksdorf, Sam
Ringle, Mert Duman, Stefan Munker,
Victor Bustos, Negar Shahmoradi

ONCODEGRADE

THERAPEUTIC

BIO



Lorenzo Cianni

CSO and Medicinal
Chemist



Jean-Patrick Pallagi

CBO and Business
Developer



Prof. Radoslaw Nowak

Project Lead

- **OncoDegrade** pioneers a next-generation small-molecule platform that precisely targets and degrades key oncogenic proteins to transform blood cancer therapy.

MENTORS: Luka Nicin

WORKSHOP EXPERTS: Boris Schmalz,
Subham Basu, Johannes Schmidt, Katarina
Ebert, Mareike Mutzberg, Daniel Straimer,
Sarah Oelsner, Sejal Patel Tolksdorf,
Johanna Goldmann, Sam Ringle, Mert
Duman, Stefan Munker, Victor Bustos,
Negar Shahmoradi

GLITThER

THERAPEUTIC

BIO



Sammy Mahdi
CEO and co-Founder



Florian von der Linde
Founders Associate



Alexander Berg
COO and co-Founder



Virginie Clement Schatlo
CSO and co-Founder

- GLITTher is a biotech company developing precision therapies to treat the deadliest cancer, glioblastoma, by targeting cancer initiating cells.

MENTORS: Caterina Iuliano

WORKSHOP EXPERTS: Shruthi Bharadwaj,
Michelle Böck, Maria Witte, Katarina Ebert,
Mareike Mutzberg, Daniel Straimer, Sarah Oelsner,
Sejal Patel Tolksdorf, Johanna Goldmann, Sam Ringle,
Mert Duman, Stefan Munker, Victor Bustos, Negar Shahmoradi

IMMPRINT

DIAGNOSTICS

BIO



Svea Matthiesen
Clinical and Regulatory
Strategy



Clara Vazquez Garcia
Translational Lead



Mirjam Svea Kurz
Strategy and Business



Prof. Kathrin de la Rosa
Scientific Lead

- We want to commercialise a preventive blood test to improve patient care and therapy decision in hospitals and clinics.

MENTORS: Niklas Lassch

WORKSHOP EXPERTS: Erika Kelmer Sacramento,
Petra Herrmann, Nikki van Teylingen Bakker,
Katarina Ebert, Mareike Mutzberg,
Daniel Straimer, Sarah Oelsner, Sejal Patel Tolksdorf,
Johanna Goldmann, Sam Ringle,
Mert Duman, Stefan Munker,
Victor Bustos, Negar Shahmoradi

ORBION PLATFORM

BIO



Çağlar Bozkurt
Co-Founder



Aniruddh Goteti
Co-Founder



Dennis Kwiatkowski
Business Development
Advisor

- [Orbion](#) is building an AI platform that transforms how scientists and biotech companies understand and stabilize proteins – replacing months of trial-and-error with instant, data-driven predictions that accelerate drug discovery and enzyme design.

MENTORS: Markus Rinecker

WORKSHOP EXPERTS: Christopher Kuhn, Ipek Celiksoz, Stephanie Oestreich, Katarina Ebert, Mareike Mutzberg, Daniel Straimer, Sarah Oelsner, Sejal Patel Tolksdorf, Johanna Goldmann, Sam Ringle, Mert Duman, Stefan Munker, Victor Bustos, Negar Shahmoradi

AGGREGON THERAPEUTICS THERAPEUTICS

BIO



Ernesto Llamas Pamanes
CEO



Anooshay Khan
Lead R&D



Qussai Abbas
AI & BI



Ashmita Ray
Technical Assistant



Emelie Fonseca
Business Strategy

- [Aggregon Therapeutics](#) are developing a first-in-class disease-modifying treatment for Huntington's Disease and other neurodegenerative diseases using plant-derived proteins.

MENTORS: Maria Lamottke

WORKSHOP EXPERTS: Maryna Polyakova, Brahim Gargouri Ph.D, Johannes Sonnenschein, Katarina Ebert, Sarah Oelsner, Mareike Mutzberg, Daniel Straimer, Sejal Patel Tolksdorf, Johanna Goldmann, Sam Ringle, Mert Duman, Stefan Munker, Victor Bustos, Negar Shahmoradi

RENATRIX

MEDTECH

BIO



Komali Vanishetti
CEO and Business
development



Ahed Almalla
CTO



Tamasri Senapati
CSO and Scientific
Innovation

- Renatrix provide certified bio-grade, tissue-specific extracellular matrix (ECM) biomaterials that replicate native tissue microenvironments.

MENTORS: Dogan Doruk Demircioglu

WORKSHOP EXPERTS: Hans Leemhuis,
Joachim Seidel, Maria Witte, Katarina Ebert,
Mareike Mutzberg, Daniel Straimer, Sarah
Oelsner, Sejal Patel Tolksdorf, Johanna
Goldmann, Sam Ringle, Mert Duman, Stefan
Munker, Victor Bustos, Negar Shahmoradi

Regional Sponsors

Our sponsors are committed to supporting the next generation of biotech leaders. Nucleate Germany's sponsors are critical to our open-to-all and free-to-all programs. They directly support our cohorts with free legal support, services, and prizes – this program would not be possible without support. We want to thank them for their generous support!

SILVER



IN-KIND



Nucleate HQ Sponsors

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Nucleate Canada's sponsors are critical to our open-to-all and free-to-all programs. They directly support our cohorts with free legal support, services, and prizes - this program would not be possible without support. We want to thank them for their generous support!

PLATINUM



GOLD



BANKING



SPEND



VENTURE



SILVER



LENS.ORG
Solving The Problem Of Problem Solving



Acknowledgements

Thank you for your help with the 2026 Activator, our biggest ever.

Nucleate would not be possible without the tireless and creative efforts of our many volunteer leaders.

Nucleate Germany 25/26

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Sally Makady

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Alexander Emrich, Munich Co-MD	TU Munich
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Alexander Pattberg, Heidelberg Co-MD	DKFZ
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