

Innovative startups 2012

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A listing of the top 10 innovative startups receiving the largest Series A rounds in 2012 is made up entirely of companies from the US, underlying how these enterprises find it easier to raise risk capital. The top five is dominated by firms located in the traditional biotech hubs of San Francisco and Cambridge, Massachusetts.

In fact, a look at the broader life science startup sector shows that more than two-thirds of A rounds in 2012 went to US companies (Fig. 1). Regarding investors, Third Rock Ventures was sole backer for two of the largest A rounds, and the year saw a persistent presence of corporate venture arms: Novo, Novartis and Roche all made Table 1.

Table 1 Top 10 A rounds in 2012 for innovative startups

Company	Amount (millions), date, investors	Academic founders	Other	Technology
Global Blood Therapeutics, San Francisco	\$40.7, 6/14, Third Rock Ventures	Matthew P. Jacobson, Andrej Sali and Jack Taunton, University of California, San Francisco	Charles Homcy, Third Rock Ventures; Craig Muir, Third Rock Ventures; David Phillips, cofounder of COR Therapeutics and Portola Pharmaceuticals	Using computational biology and protein-ligand modeling with medicinal chemistry and empiric screening for developing therapeutics for genetic blood disorders
Moderna Therapeutics, Cambridge, Massachusetts	\$40, 12/6, Flagship Ventures, private investors	Robert Langer, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Derrick Rossi, Harvard University	Noubar Afeyan, Flagship Ventures; Stéphane Bancel, previously CEO of bioMérieux	Developing first-in-class chemically modified mRNA therapeutics
MyoKardia, San Francisco	\$38, 9/20, Third Rock Ventures	Leslie Leinwand, University of Colorado Boulder; Christine Seidman, Harvard; Jonathan G. Seidman, Harvard; James A. Spudich, Stanford University	Not applicable	Developing mutation-specific sarcomeric allosteric modulators for cardiomyopathies
Allakos, San Francisco	\$32, 12/17, Novo Ventures, Alta Partners, RiverVest Venture Partners, Roche Venture Fund	Not applicable	Christopher Bebbington, more than 25 years of experience in biopharma	Developing antibody therapeutics based on the dysregulation of the T helper type 2 immune response
Cerecor, Baltimore	\$22, 4/4, accredited investors, company directors	Solomon H. Snyder, Johns Hopkins University; Barbara Slusher, Brain Science Institute Drug NeuroTranslational Discovery Program	Isaac Blech and Blake Paterson, serial entrepreneurs	Developing drugs for the nervous system including cough and schizophrenia
BioMotiv, Cleveland	\$21, 9/5, University Hospitals (UH), Harrington family	Board of Managers: Achilles A. Demetriou, UH; Jonathan S. Stamler, UH Harrington Discovery Institute; Ronald G. Harrington and Robert S. Reitman, entrepreneurs and philanthropists; Robert W. Keith, CEO, BioMotiv; David C. U'Prichard, CSO, BioMotiv		Accelerator for aligning capital and collaborations with physician inventors
Atterocor, Ann Arbor, Michigan	\$16, 8/3, Frazier Healthcare Ventures, 5AM Ventures	Gary Hammer, University of Michigan	Julia Owens, formerly at Lycera Corp.; Raili Kerppola, ONL Therapeutics	Lead program in rare (adrenal) cancer
Thesan Pharmaceuticals, San Clemente, California	\$16, 10/30, Novo Ventures, Novartis Venture Funds	Daniele Piomelli, University of California, Irvine and the Italian Institute of Technology	Not applicable	Lead candidate a topically applied new chemical entity for dermatology expected to enter the clinic in 2013
Vascular Pharmaceuticals, Chapel Hill, North Carolina	\$16M, 9/12, Intersouth Partners, MPM Capital	David R. Clemmons, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Not applicable	Developing monoclonal antibody with activity against proteinuria and histological changes in the kidney
ImaginAb, Inglewood, California	\$12.5, 3/26, Novartis Venture Funds, Mérieux Développement, Nextech Invest, Cycad Group, Momentum Biosciences	Robert Reiter, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Anna Wu, UCLA and the Beckman Research Institute of the City of Hope; Tove Olafsen, UCLA	Christian Behrenbruch, serial entrepreneur	In vivo imaging agents for positron emission tomography based on antibody fragment technology

Source: BCIQ: BioCentury Online Intelligence; company websites

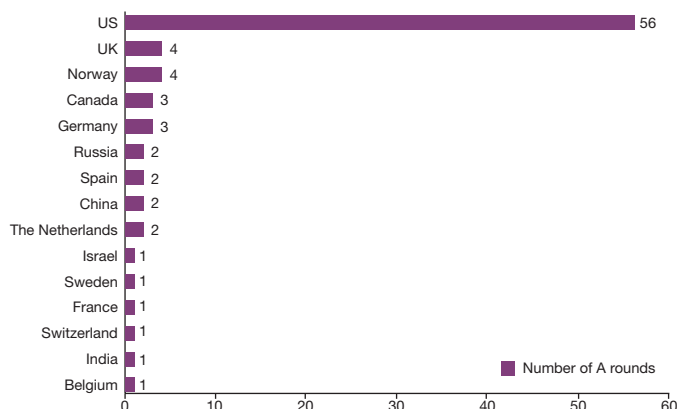
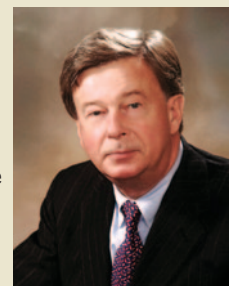


Figure 1 Startups by country, 2012. Source: BioCentury Online Intelligence (BCIQ)

First Rounders Podcast: Henri A. Termeer

Termeer was named CEO of Genzyme in 1983. Under his guidance the firm produced several life-saving drugs and became one of the flagships of the biotech sector, particularly in developing drugs for rare disease. *Nature Biotechnology* spoke to Termeer about the early years at Genzyme, the company's acquisition by Sanofi in 2011 and his advice to bioentrepreneurs. <http://www.nature.com/nbt/podcast/index.html>.



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