

November 16, 2022

Toyobo joins Coba 1 Investment Limited Partnership operated by DEFTA Capital Aim is to support biomanufacturing by Bacchus Bio innovation, a Kobe University-originated startup

Toyobo Co., Ltd. has joined the Coba 1 Investment Limited Partnership operated by DEFTA Capital Inc. with the aim of making an investment in Bacchus Bio innovation Co., Ltd., a startup that uses technology developed by Kobe University. The investment is also designed to provide funds for the startup's peripheral technologies and business development.

Bacchus was founded in March 2020 with cutting-edge biotechnology that was transferred from Kobe University. It aims to become Japan's first integrated biofoundry, providing a comprehensive service from gene design to the development of production processes and prototypes.

The startup is expected to help kick off the development of Japan's bioindustry's sector, in particular biomanufacturing, by developing smart cells* and other innovative products through the application of DNA synthesis, genome editing and metabolic analysis technologies. In biomanufacturing, microorganisms and plants are used to produce a wide range of useful materials, including chemical products, fuel, ingredients for drugs, and proteins. DEFTA Capital, established in September 2007, is a Japanese member of DEFTA Partners, a company that provides funds to companies developing innovative technologies with the aim of generating new industries.

Coba 1 Investment Limited Partnership, in which DEFTA Capital is participating as a general partner, has a policy of providing funding for medium- and long-term research and development projects to Bacchus without seeking a short-term return. This is to nurture Japan's biomanufacturing industry.

Toyobo has focused on open innovation, or use of multiple external sources to help drive innovation. In April 2022, Toyobo sealed a comprehensive partnership agreement with Kobe University to promote joint research, mainly in the life sciences field. In January 2022, the company invested in DMC Biotechnologies Inc., a U.S. biotech startup that develops chemical products through precision microbe fermentation. By taking part in this limited liability partnership, Toyobo will help nurture the biomanufacturing sector and expand its own life sciences businesses.

*Smart cells: artificially modified biological cells whose intracellular production process are optimized.

(Source: Smart Cell Project Promoted by NEDO <https://www.nedo.go.jp/content/100923927.pdf>)

Outline of Bacchus Bio innovation Co., Ltd.

-Head office: Chuo Ward, Kobe, Hyogo Prefecture
-Representative: President Mikio Tanji
-Founding: March 2020
-Operations: Integrated biofoundry
-Website: <https://www.b2i.co.jp/>

Outline of DEFTA Capital Inc.

-Head office: Yokohama, Kanagawa Prefecture
-Representative: George Hara
-Founding: September 2007
-Operations: Investing and managing assets of investment partnerships, solicitation of an application to acquire the status of a partner in investment partnerships.
-Website: <https://www.deftacapital.jp/>

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