

MPOWER Partners announces its investment in Cyto-Facto



April 22, 2024; Tokyo, Japan: MPOWER Partners Fund, Japan's first ESG-focused global venture capital fund, has invested in Cyto-Facto Inc. (Kobe, Japan), a CMO/CDMO company for cell and gene therapy.

Historically, medical treatments have been administered in the form of drugs or surgery. More recently, cell therapies such as regenerative medicine using tissue stem cells that can differentiate into target cells after transplantation and replace damaged tissues, Cell and Gene Therapy (CGT) using gene-transferred T-cells that are enhanced cytotoxic effect of the patient's own T-cells (CAR-T) to target the blood cancers such as leukemia and lymphoma and solid tumors, and gene therapy that delivers target genes to cure the congenital or incurable diseases at the genetic level are also underway.

Cyto-Facto functions as a CMO (Contract Manufacturing Organization) and CDMO (Contract Development and Manufacturing Organization) for CGT therapy. With a mission to "improve lives in Japan and beyond by swift and reliable delivery of novel CGT (cell & gene therapy) products," they work closely with pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies to develop and manufacture cutting-edge cell therapies.

Cyto-Facto was spun out from the Foundation for Biomedical Research and Innovation at Kobe (FBRI) in April 2023. FBRI was established as part of the Kobe Biomedical Innovation Cluster, which grew out of the reconstruction efforts following the 1995 Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. In 2015, the Research & Development Center for Cell Therapy (RDC) was established as the fourth center in FBRI to promote a wide range of development support for cell therapy, from basic research to pharmaceutical commercialization. Led by Shin Kawamata, MD, PhD, who pioneered the field of CGT in Japan with more than two decades of research, the RDC was the first facility to manufacture a CAR-T product, Novartis' Kymriah, in Asia. Following completion of clinical trials and regulatory filing, RDC began commercial production of Kymriah in 2000 and has treated more than 200 patients with relapsed or refractory B-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia.

MPower is pleased to support Cyto-Facto's continued efforts and to co-lead this Series A round with existing investor D3 LLC. We have been impressed not only by Cyto-Facto's track record at Novartis, but also by the team's determination to develop cell manufacturing software, CytoFactory 4.0 (CF4.0), that could further improve the CGT manufacturing process at every step. MPower intends to support the Cyto-Facto team not only in commercial manufacturing, but also in their efforts to promote environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors, such as reducing medical waste throughout the life cycle of pharmaceutical products.



Comments from Shin Kawamata, Cyto-Facto CEO

One year has passed since we spun out from FBRI, and we owe this milestone to our great business partners and stakeholders. Our team is very grateful to have raised nearly 1.2 billion Japanese yen in this round of funding, and we believe it is a testament to the societal importance of our business and the high expectations for our growth.

We are humbled and excited to work with our investors, MPower Partners and D3, who are co-leading this round. D3 has been an ongoing supporter of Cyto-Facto since their initial investment in the summer of 2023, and we are grateful to receive their investment again with MPower, a globally minded and ESG-focused venture capital fund. With other VCs, corporates and trading firms also participating in this round, we are confident in our journey to become a globally competitive company.

Cyto-Facto's Press Release regarding this round (Japanese)

URL: <https://prtimes.jp/main/html/rd/p/000000004.000125654.html>

About Cyto-Facto

Location: Shimin Byoin Mae bldg 3F. 2-1-11, Minatojima-minamimachi, Cyuo-ku, Kobe, Hyogo

CEO: Shin Kawamata

Business: Cell and gene therapy CMO/CDMO

Corporate URL: <https://www.cytofacto.com/company/>

About MPower Partners

MPower Partners Fund is Japan's first ESG-integrated global venture capital fund that aims to support entrepreneurs providing solutions to societal challenges through the power of technology, and to promote sustainable growth by incorporating ESG (Environment, Social, Governance) into their core business strategies.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.mpower-partners.com>

For inquiries, please contact: info@mpower-partners.com

This press release has been prepared for the purpose of providing information to qualified institutional investors and potential portfolio companies of the Fund, and is not a disclosure document pursuant to the Financial Instruments and Exchange Act, and does not constitute a solicitation or recommendation to purchase the Fund.