



bioGenerator
The Startup Arm of BioSTL



BioGenerator
Startup Connect

September 9-10
2026

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BioGenerator Startup Connect

Welcome to the second annual BioGenerator Startup Connect, bringing together promising St. Louis startups in human health and agriculture with leading investors from across the region and the nation.

Over the past 25 years, St. Louis has built a life science innovation economy based on the region's world-class research and deep scientific talent. Today, that foundation is producing a growing pipeline of startups spanning therapeutics, medical devices, diagnostics, digital health and AI, research tools and services, and agriculture.

The region's foundation for innovation is exceptionally strong. In human health, WashU Medicine conducts more than \$1 billion in annual research, and nearly half of BioGenerator startups originate from WashU research. In agriculture, generations of plant science expertise and the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center—the world's largest independent nonprofit dedicated to plant science—have made St. Louis a global center for agtech.

BioGenerator, the startup arm of BioSTL, helps turn St. Louis' scientific strength into investable companies.

Since 2004, BioGenerator has invested **\$53 million in 143 St. Louis startups**, primarily at the pre-seed and seed stages. Those companies have gone on to raise **\$3.1 billion from more than 200 investors around the world**. Our nonprofit approach has combined \$33 million in charitable contributions with over \$20 million in reinvested returns to fund successive generations of startups.

Our model goes beyond capital. BioGenerator creates and builds companies, develops entrepreneurial talent, and provides the specialized infrastructure needed to launch life science businesses. Our **Entrepreneurs-in-Residence Program** brings seasoned executive leadership to company creation and founder mentorship while our **Venture Fellows Program** contributes emerging scientific talent to build new companies and evaluate startup opportunities.

Our new **Hypha Life Sciences Venture Studio** expands these company-formation efforts by providing the hands-on support and capital to build companies from the ground up, with a focus on research tools and services—the 'picks and shovels' of life science—which can reach the market faster than regulated products, accelerate returns, and create more local jobs.

BioGenerator also operates shared laboratories in the region's two major life science innovation districts: **BioGenerator Labs in Cortex** for human health and the **Helix Center at 39 North** for agtech. Together, these facilities have **supported more than 200 startups** with affordable laboratories, offices, shared equipment, and a community of fellow entrepreneurs.

This is all part of the innovation ecosystem behind the companies you will meet at Startup Connect.

Over the next two days, you will hear from founders building the next generation of St. Louis life science companies and from investors and industry leaders shaping their fields. We hope you will make new connections, find opportunities to partner and invest, and see why St. Louis is an advantageous location to create and grow life science companies.

Thank you for joining us at BioGenerator Startup Connect.



James McCarter, MD, PhD

Senior Managing Director, BioGenerator
Senior Vice President, BioSTL
Adjunct Professor of Genetics, WashU Medicine

BioGenerator by the Numbers

>1,000
jobs created in
St. Louis

81
active
companies,
23 exits

>\$52.9M
invested

>200 companies
housed in BioGenerator Labs in
Cortex & Helix Center in 39 North

84% capital
from outside of St. Louis

>57:1
leverage

>200
global and
strategic investors

>\$3.10B
total capital raised

BioGenerator Team



Jim McCarter MD PhD
Senior Managing Director



Alex Andrews PhD
Principal



Kari Miller PhD
Principal



Alec Beeve PhD
Senior Associate



Cecilia Gutierrez Perez PhD
Associate



Christy Althaber
Lab Manager



AJ Habicht
Event & Engagement
Coordinator

Entrepreneurs in Residence and Venture Fellows



Martha Schlicher PhD
EIR, Impetus CEO, Plastomics &
Solis Board Chair



David Smoller PhD
EIR, Panome Bio & Solis
Co-Founder & Board Member,
Hypha Venture Studio GP



Heather Holemon PhD
EIR, TrueBind Bio



**Guillermo Rivera
Gonzalez PhD**
2025 VF, Co-founder & CSO,
CapyBio



Grant Downes PhD
2025 VF, Co-founder & CEO,
TrueBind Bio



Christopher Pulliam PhD
2026 VF, Former P&G
Analytical Chemist

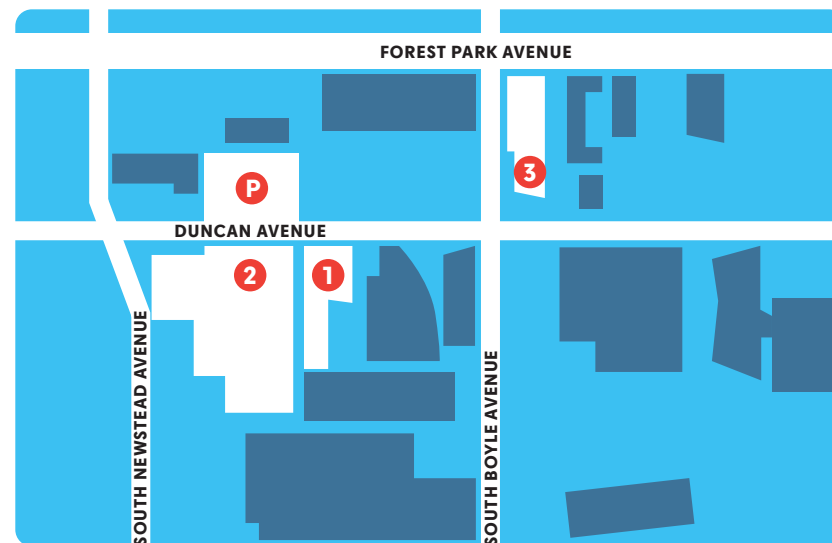


**Ronald Fowle-Grider
PhD**
2026 VF, Founder, Revita
Therapeutics



**Nicole
Rivera-Espinal PhD**
2026 VF, Co-Founder, Aactiva

Getting to Startup Connect



- 1** BioSTL, Home of BioGenerator
4340 Duncan Ave., St. Louis, MO 63110
- 2** WashU Medicine Jeffrey T. Fort Neuroscience Research Building (Fort Labs)
4370 Duncan Ave, St. Louis, MO 63110
- 3** Vicia Restaurant
4260 Forest Park Ave., St. Louis, MO 63108
- P** Event Parking
North of WashU Medicine Jeffrey T. Fort Neuroscience Research Building (Fort Labs)



BioSTL, Home of BioGenerator



Vicia Restaurant



WashU Medicine Jeffrey T. Fort Neuroscience Research Building (Fort Labs)

Agenda

Wednesday, September 9

Location: WashU Jeffrey T. Fort Neuroscience Research Building (Fort Labs), 4370 Duncan Ave.

12:00 PM – Registration & Lunch, Lobby

1:00 PM – Welcome and Keynote:
Jim McCarter and Guy Friedman

2:00 PM – Excite Talks, Auditorium

- MediBeacon
- Saluna
- BIOIO
- Plastomics
- Status Health
- ProvanAI

3:00 PM – Networking Break, Lobby

3:30 PM – Concurrent Sessions

Founder Networking & Company Showcase
Fort Labs, Room 1100

Startup Feedback Sessions
Assigned BioGenerator Conference Rooms,
BioSTL Building, 4340 Duncan Ave.

Session 1: 3:40–4:05 PM

Session 2: 4:15–4:40 PM

5:00 PM – Networking Reception, Vicia Restaurant

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM – Dinner, Vicia Restaurant,
4260 Forest Park Ave.

Thursday, September 10

Location: WashU Jeffrey T. Fort Neuroscience Research Building (Fort Labs), 4370 Duncan Ave.

7:30 AM – Breakfast & Networking, Lobby

9:00 AM – Excite Talks, Auditorium

- Omniose
- Edison Rubber
- Buck Surgical
- Pranas Neuro
- MaxFi Surgical Simulations
- Amplifi Vascular

10:00 AM – Networking Break, Lobby

10:30 AM – Concurrent Sessions

Founder Networking & Company Showcase
Fort Labs, Room 1100

Startup Feedback Sessions
Assigned BioGenerator Conference Rooms,
BioSTL Building, 4340 Duncan Ave.

Session 1: 10:30–10:50 AM

Session 2: 11:00–11:20 AM

11:30 AM – Keynote: Moving the Needle | Speaker:
Jim McKelvey, Co-Founder of Square (Block) and
Founder of Fastrials

Auditorium: WashU Jeffrey T. Fort Neuroscience
Research Building

12:30 PM – Lunch from Winslow's Table, Lobby

Keynote Speakers



Guy Friedman

CEO and Co-Founder, SteadyMD

Guy Friedman is CEO and Co-Founder at SteadyMD, a B2B telehealth technology platform and clinician workforce provider founded in 2016 that powers high-quality telehealth patient experiences for leaders and innovators in healthcare. SteadyMD was acquired by DocGo in October 2025. Under Guy's leadership, SteadyMD has become a leader in telehealth infrastructure for digital health companies, labs, pharmacies, employers, and other healthcare innovators. Prior to SteadyMD, Guy founded and was the CEO of HigherNext which was acquired by ProctorU. Guy earned degrees in economics and quantitative economics from Tufts University and his MBA from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.



Jim McKelvey

Co-Founder, Square (Block); Founder, Fastrials

Jim McKelvey is Founder of Fastrials, Co-founder of Square (Block), former Chair of the St. Louis Federal Reserve, and a Washington University trustee. He is a renowned artist/designer with works in the Smithsonian and the Museum of Modern Art and a serial entrepreneur committed to innovation in healthcare and sustainability.

Presenting Companies

Day 1



Steve Hanley, Co-Founder and CEO



Saluna
THE AMERICAN SEED

Matt Plummer, President and CEO



Tim Peterson, PhD, Founder and CEO



Tania Seger, CEO



Tom Cohen, PhD, Co-Founder



Dave Smoller, PhD, Advisor

Day 2



Timothy Cooke, PhD, CEO



Laura Zaim, CEO



Donald W. Buck II, MD FACS, Founder and President



Dana Ault-Riché, PhD, CEO



Bob Mills, CEO



Sean Morris, President and CEO



Presenter

Steve Hanley
Co-Founder and CEO



medibeacon.com | Medical Device

Overview

- Founded in 2016, MediBeacon is a medical technology company specializing in the advancement of fluorescent tracer agents and transdermal detection, providing vital and actionable assessment of organ function at the point of care
- The MediBeacon TGFR System noninvasively measures kidney function by using a skin-mounted sensor to detect changes in the fluorescence of the Lumitrace® GFR tracer 2.5 times per second, calculating a weighted average of kidney function in real time and displaying the results on the monitor

Highlights

- MediBeacon has received FDA clearance for its next-generation transdermal GFR monitoring system (as of late 2025) and operates internationally, with additional offices in Mannheim, Germany, serving academic, clinical, and pharmaceutical partners worldwide
- MediBeacon secured significant strategic partnerships and regulatory milestones, including a \$30M investment and exclusive commercialization agreement with Huadong Medicine and EU CE Mark certification under the EU MDR for the TGFR Monitor and Reusable Sensor

saluna.ag | Agriculture

Overview

- Founded in 2023, Saluna is an agtech company developing industrial hemp into a scalable oilseed crop by using advanced genetic approaches to develop elite and high-performing varieties
- Saluna brings together agricultural researchers and investment partners to commercialize hemp as a versatile, domestically produced crop and create new value opportunities and provide optionality for U.S. farming operations

Highlights

- Saluna launched a robust industrial-hemp crop-development program in spring 2024, applying modern breeding and plant-science capabilities to create non-THC/CBD, grain-focused hemp varieties suitable for mid-south growing conditions
- The company has progressed from controlled, indoor studies into field trials with Southeast Missouri State University and local growers, testing 20 hemp varieties and using crossbreeding and genetic enhancement to improve crop productivity



Presenter

Matt Plummer
President and CEO



Presenter

Tim Peterson, PhD
Founder and CEO

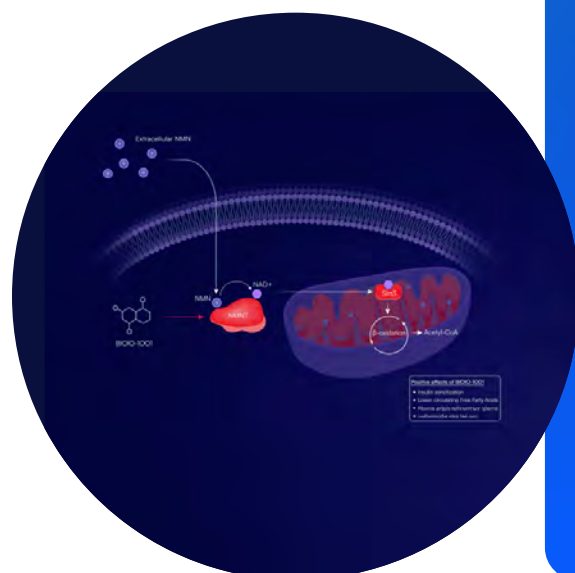
bioio.tech | Therapeutic

Overview

- Founded in 2019, BIOIO is a biotechnology company developing therapies to treat diabetes, its complications, and broader age-related diseases, utilizing a proprietary MOAT (Mechanism of Action Technologies) platform
- The company leverages an AI-powered platform Phasor, a clinical trial success predictor with 93% accuracy, and maps gene-to-drug relationships across >17k protein coding genes. Together they allow identified drug candidates to begin with evidence that reduces development timelines and costs

Highlights

- Produced 12 validated therapeutic programs spanning metabolic, neurological, oncology, and cardiovascular indications
- BIOIO's lead candidate, BIOIO-1001, is a first-in-class insulin sensitizer for Type II diabetes that has outperformed established therapies, including GLP-1s
- BIOIO has received multiple Missouri Technology Corporation IDEA Fund awards to accelerate its MOAT-based therapeutics for diabetes and aging



Presenter

Tania Seger
CEO

plastomics.com | Agriculture

Overview

- Founded in 2016, Plastomics is an agricultural biotechnology company pioneering chloroplast-based trait delivery for major row crops like soybeans, corn, and canola by utilizing a proprietary engineering platform to insert beneficial traits—such as insect and disease resistance—directly into plant chloroplasts
- The company has successfully validated its core scientific concept and raised significant capital, including a Series B round in 2025, to advance its proprietary trait delivery platform toward commercialization for both corn and soybean crops

Highlights

- Plastomics successfully demonstrated its proprietary chloroplast trait delivery platform by engineering soybean chloroplasts to express insect-resistance traits that were previously unattainable using conventional nuclear transformation methods
- The company has raised significant follow-on capital, including a \$7.1M Series A round in 2021 and a \$5.8M close of its Series B in October 2025, to advance chloroplast engineering in both soybeans and corn toward commercialization





statushealth.com | Consumer Tools & Services



Presenter

Tom Cohen, PhD
Co-Founder

Overview

- Founded in 2025, Status Health is developing Exposight, a consumer health platform that empowers people to measure, understand, and reduce exposure to harmful environmental chemicals
- Exposight's first product is a comprehensive at-home dried blood spot test that measures 40 PFAS chemicals and detects broader exposure signals linked to food additives, pesticides, phthalates, and other common environmental contaminants

Highlights

- Status Health is developing an at-home, direct-to-consumer platform measuring 300+ environmental chemicals—such as PFAS, phthalates, and pesticides—using advanced mass spectrometry
- The company's digital health report will quantify an individual's chemical burdens, offer personalized reduction plans, and track improvement over time



provanai.net | Digital Health



Presenter

Dave Smoller, PhD
Advisor

Overview

- Founded in 2025, ProvanAI is developing a first-in-class software platform that transforms routine screening mammograms into a predictive tool for assessing a woman's 5-year risk of developing ovarian cancer
- Founded by leading imaging AI researchers from Washington University, ProvanAI identifies women who may benefit from genetic testing, enhanced surveillance, or earlier intervention to address the lack of effective population-wide ovarian cancer screening
- The platform assesses risk for all patients—including those without known genetic mutations or family history—and has positioned its technology for expansion beyond ovarian cancer to additional cancer sites

Highlights

- Trained its ovarian cancer risk model on over 220,000 mammograms
- Achieved future cancer risk prediction with 2.3× greater accuracy than traditional questionnaire-based models
- Raised an oversubscribed \$1M pre-seed round





Presenter

Timothy Cooke, PhD
CEO

omniose.com | Therapeutic (Vaccine)

Overview

- Founded in 2016, OmniOSE is an early-stage biotechnology company that has developed a unique enzyme-based bioconjugation technology enabling the precise attachment of virtually any bacterial polysaccharide antigen to engineered carrier proteins within a single E. coli cell
- The company's mission is to create next-generation conjugate vaccines against serious and multidrug-resistant bacterial threats by leveraging its platform to expand the range of vaccines addressable via bioconjugation

Highlights

- In January 2024, OmniOSE announced an exclusive scientific collaboration with AstraZeneca, granting the pharma giant access to OmniOSE's proprietary bioconjugation platform to explore vaccines against a broad range of bacterial pathogens, including multidrug-resistant superbugs
- OmniOSE has secured more than \$15M in non-dilutive SBIR/STTR grant funding from the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) to advance its bioconjugate vaccine pipeline



Presenter

Laura Zaim
CEO

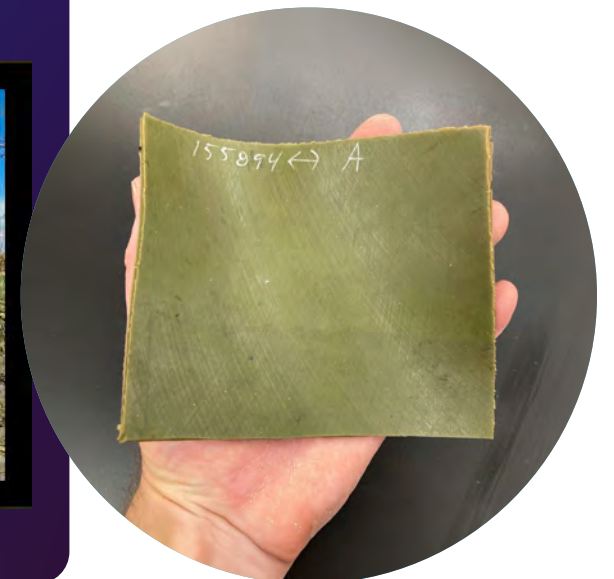
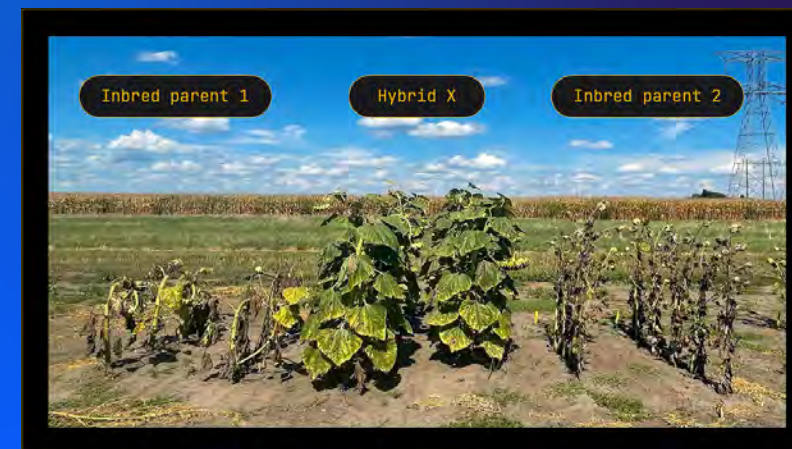
edisonrubber.com | Agriculture

Overview

- Founded in 2013, Edison Rubber is developing a domestic, sustainable source of rubber by enhancing the natural rubber already produced in sunflower leaves
- Using predictive speed breeding technology, the company is creating higher-rubber sunflower varieties to provide farmers with a new value stream while reducing reliance on imported rubber and strengthening the U.S. supply chain for critical industrial materials

Highlights

- Achieved the world's first sample sheet of sunflower rubber and secured a \$1M Department of Defense research contract
- Was selected for the Wells Fargo Innovation Incubator (IN²) program, adding non-dilutive support and industry validation for its sustainable biomaterials work



BUCK SURGICAL



Presenter

**Donald W. Buck II,
MD, FACS**
Founder and President

bucksurgical.com | Medical Device

Overview

- Founded in 2021, Buck Surgical innovates technology for life- and limb-preserving surgery and broadens patient access to complex vascular procedures
- Its flagship device, The Buckle™, is a patented sutureless coupling platform designed to simplify vascular and gastrointestinal anastomoses—the surgical connection of blood vessels or other structures—while reducing human and suture-related error

Highlights

- Buck Surgical has raised more than \$4.2M to bring its microvascular platform through regulatory testing
- It was named a *St. Louis Business Journal* “Startup to Watch 2026”



Therapeutic

Overview

- Founded in 2025, Pranas Neuro is developing guardian peptide therapies that harness the body’s own regulatory T cells (Tregs) to control neuroinflammation, restore immune balance, and address the underlying causes of neurodegenerative disease
- By harnessing a natural immune mechanism to control neuroinflammation, the company’s platform has the potential to treat multiple central nervous system disorders including Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease, and multiple sclerosis

Highlights

- Pranas Neuro’s therapeutic approach is based upon landmark scientific discoveries by Jonathan Kipnis at WashU, that were published in *Nature* in 2025 and demonstrated an entirely new way to treat neurodegenerative diseases using guardian peptides
- Alongside Jonathan Kipnis at WashU, the company was co-founded by neurologist Lawrence Steinman at Stanford and biotech entrepreneur Dana Ault-Riché
- Dana Ault-Riché was recruited to join the company full-time as CEO



Presenter

Dana Ault-Riché, PhD
CEO





Presenter

Bob Mills
CEO

max-fi.com | Clinical Tools & Services

Overview

- Founded in 2014, MaxFi is redefining surgical training with its patented cadaver perfusion system, which restores lifelike physiology to human donors—making them bleed, breathe, and respond to surgical manipulation like live patients—enabling the world’s only high-fidelity surgical simulation center based on reanimated human tissue
- Its patented envivoPC® closed-loop system circulates SimBlood through cadaver vessels, simulating heart rate, blood pressure, blood loss, and ventilation, and provides surgeons with real-time anatomical feedback as they operate

Highlights

- The company has perfused more than 500 cadavers, trained over 10,000 medical professionals across five continents, and tested more than 50 pre-FDA medical devices, establishing a large, real-world track record with academic medical centers, industry partners, and military trauma programs
- In July 2024, MaxFi closed a \$2.25M seed funding round to build a state-of-the-art surgical simulation center in St. Louis, which now serves as the only dedicated training lab for surgeons using reanimated cadaver technology



Presenter

Sean Morris
President and CEO

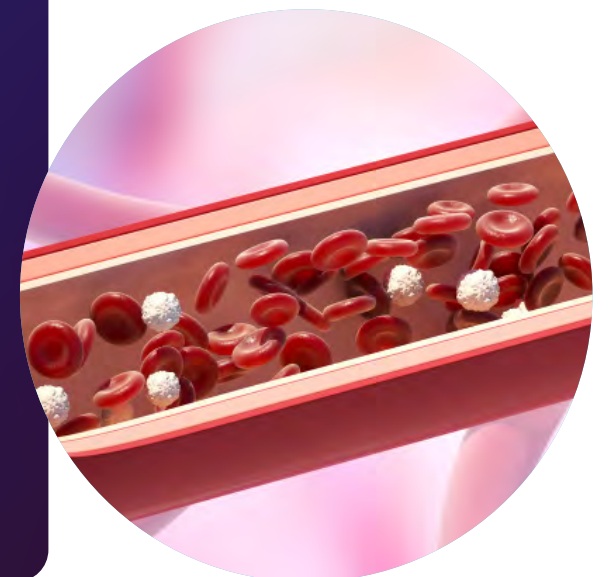
amplifivascular.com | Medical Device

Overview

- Founded in 2023, Amplifi Vascular is developing a vascular remodeling platform to improve surgical outcomes for hemodialysis access
- The Amplifi™ Vein Dilation System uses a temporary external blood pump to enlarge a patient’s own vein in 24-72 hours prior to surgery
- Amplifi is designed to accelerate maturation of vascular access sites, reduce failure and complications, and minimize long-term catheter use

Highlights

- Closed a \$7M Series A in 2023
- Raised \$10M of an open \$12M Bridge financing in 2026
- Earned FDA Breakthrough Device Designation and Category B designation in 2025
- Received FDA IDE approval and began enrolling in AMPLIFI-1 in 2026



BioGenerator Programs

Innovators Hour

February 2026 – Jon Silva, PhD, and Jennifer Avari Silva, MD, Co-Founders, SentiAR



First Innovators Hour hosted at 39 North with Martha Schlicher, CEO & Board of Directors, Impetus Ag | Susan Martino-Catt, President & COO, Solis Agrosiences

EVENTS

Pairidex



BioGenerator-backed Pairidex and Aurenar presented at last year's Startup Connect; Pairidex was named A Startup to Watch 2025 by the St. Louis Business Journal. Aurenar recently received a FDA Breakthrough Device Designation

Startup Connect 2025



Aurenar



SHARED INFRASTRUCTURE

Helix Center at 39 North



BioGenerator Labs

TALENT

Venture Fellows



The Venture Fellows program provides hands-on commercialization experience to highly trained scientists; the program will expand to 5 fellows for this year's cohort

Entrepreneurs in Residence



Entrepreneurs/Executives in Residence (EIRs) serve different roles for the benefit of BioGenerator startups, including stepping into leadership roles; mentorship; board service; and providing expert advice to startups

Investment Portfolio

Active and Exited BioGenerator Portfolio Companies

aggio

Agrela

AGXELERATORS

AlloTera THERAPEUTICS

AMPLIFI VASCULAR

KaloCyte

Katalyst Surgical, LLC

Kinimmune

KOAGENT SURGICAL

KYPHA Making sense of inflammation

APERTUS

APT THERAPEUTICS

Aptimmune

ArrayBridge

A+OMATION

Lingrove

LiquidCell Dx

LYMBUS ONCOLOGY

MAXFI surgical simulations

NORFOLK HEALTHY PRODUCE

@T&G Bio

AXIOFORCE

BACTERIOSCAN

BENSON HILL

Bioio

MediBeacon

Miller Bioelectronics

mobiustherapeutics

Neuroolutions Kandu

panomebio

bluestrata ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS

Bond BIOSCIENCES

BUCKSURGICAL

C2N DIAGNOSTICS

cadre BIOSCIENCE

omniOSE

opencell

OxaluRx

Pairidex

PROGNOSIA

CAELIVascular

CADEX GENOMICS

Canopy BIOSCIENCES A BRUNNEN COMPANY

CAPYBIO

CareSignal

peptyde

PMDI PMI Diagnostics Inc

PRANAS NEURO

PRECISION VIROLOGICS Targeted Vaccines

RNAISSANCE AG

COFACTOR genomics

Confluence DISCOVERY TECHNOLOGIES

COURIER THERAPEUTICS

CoverCress

CuriMeta

ProvanAI

PYRONE SYSTEMS INC.

RevivBio

RhoDx

SPEARHEAD BIO PRECISION PLANT JEDIOME ENGINEERING

DAYA CNS

DEFIANCE THERAPEUTICS

EDISON AMERICAN-MADE RUBBER

Electrochaeta

ELIRA

Saluna

SARmont

sentiar

SOLIS agrosciences

synerz MEDICAL

Equator Therapeutics

euclises

Euphrates VASCULAR

FERRIS GENOMICS

FORWARD DEFENSE

START RIGHT

STATUS HEALTH

SweetSpot

Syndeavor THERAPEUTICS

Traxxsson

Galera Therapeutics, Inc

Geneoscopy Transforming Gastrointestinal Health

GET HELP

Graematter Think intelligence, not information. Think Graematter.

HALYARD THERAPEUTICS

IMMUNO PHOTONICS

IMPETUS AG

INTENT

INTERSHUNT

Ionic Transport Assays

UNLEASH IMMUNO ONCOLYTICS

Wakyn Sleep Technologies

SAVE THE DATE

2027

BioGenerator
Startup Connect

September 8-9, 2027

BioGenerator creates, builds, and invests in St. Louis companies that are solving global challenges in human health and agriculture.