

## News Release

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Joint press release of Charité and Bayer

### **Berlin Center for Gene and Cell Therapies kicked off in Berlin**

- Berlin Center for Gene and Cell Therapies aspires to create a leading biotech ecosystem in Berlin
  - Federal Chancellor Scholz acknowledges the importance of the project for Germany
  - Governing Mayor of Berlin Kai Wegner assures support from the State of Berlin
  - Construction planned to start in 2025
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**Berlin, Germany, June 21, 2024** – Today Bayer AG, together with Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin, presented plans for the construction of the Berlin Center for Gene and Cell Therapies. The project is being substantially financed and supported by Germany’s Federal Government as well as the State of Berlin. The aim of the joint project is to bring these groundbreaking technologies to patients more quickly while creating a leading biotech ecosystem for innovative therapies in Berlin.

The potential for cell and gene therapies (CGTs) is considered to be enormous. By targeting diseases at the genetic and cellular level, CGTs could offer options to people for whom conventional therapies have failed or where no effective treatment is currently available.

In order to translate basic research into benefits for patients faster, Charité and Bayer will establish the Berlin Center for Gene and Cell Therapies on the Bayer campus at Berlin Nordhafen. The center will support start-ups bringing their innovative approaches in the area of cell therapies and gene therapies into clinical development. To achieve this, the center will include a so-called incubator with fully equipped laboratory space and a production area certified according to the standards of good manufacturing practice (GMP). Incubators are facilities that accompany start-ups developing their innovative

ideas and helping them build viable business models. These early-stage companies will receive advice on regulatory requirements, clinical trials, patent rights and business development. To operate the incubator, Bayer and Charité will establish a joint public-private, non-profit company with limited liability. Charité will own 67 percent of this company, with Bayer owning the remaining 33 percent.

The Berlin Center for Gene and Cell Therapies will bring together research, development and the manufacturing of cell therapies and gene therapies in the heart of Berlin. Purposely embedding it within the Berlin ecosystem, a European capital with a large number of biomedical and healthcare facilities, it is intended to become a creative and interactive hub for biotech innovations in the area of CGT. The project is funded by both the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the State of Berlin. Construction is planned to begin in 2025.

**Olaf Scholz, Federal Chancellor of Germany:** "With the kick-off of the new translation center, we are also celebrating a unique form of collaboration between science, industry and politics. This institution will become the core of an entire organism of gene and cell-based therapies. To achieve this, we need scientists and entrepreneurs who see both the smallest details in the cell nucleus as well as the big picture: the medicine of the future that provides answers to the big questions that Rudolf Virchow already posed. Here in Germany we have both: bold research and innovative companies. I wish you every success with this visionary project!"

**Bettina Stark-Watzinger, Federal Minister of Education and Research:** "Gene and cell therapies offer a tremendous opportunity for more targeted and therefore better treatment of patients. Currently, however, the path from the research laboratory to the patient's bedside often still takes too long. With the translation center for gene and cell therapies, we are now taking a big step forward in Germany. Science and industry are coming together in one location to turn ideas into reality and to help translate scientific findings into medical practice more quickly through spin-offs and start-ups. As an essential component of the National Strategy for Gene and Cell Therapies, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research is supporting the establishment of the Center with around 80 million euro. In doing so, we are once again strengthening Germany's position as a leading location for biomedical innovations."

**Prof. Dr. Karl Lauterbach, Federal Minister of Health:** “Targeted gene therapies, personalized cancer vaccines and novel antibody-drug conjugates, together with artificial intelligence, will open a new era in medicine and entirely new prospects for patients. These revolutionary treatment approaches place high demands on laboratories, hospitals and doctors. This joint project of Bayer and Charité is an ideal partnership to learn together and make rapid progress.”

**Bill Anderson, Chairman of the Board of Management (CEO) of Bayer AG:** “Despite great advances in research and technology, there are still many diseases that are without cure and which affect the lives of millions. To these people, cell and gene therapies offer great hope. Only through close partnerships across borders, new approaches and quick action can we make real progress towards our objective of curing diseases that were long considered incurable.”

**Stefan Oelrich, Member of the Board of Management, Bayer AG and President of Bayer’s Pharmaceuticals Division:** “The close proximity between research and production within the Berlin Center for Gene and Cell Therapies will be unique in Germany. Together with the Charité we want to help translate scientific knowledge in the area of cell therapies and gene therapies into innovative treatment approaches for patients as quickly as possible. With the Berlin Center for Gene and Cell Therapies, it is our vision to establish a biotech ecosystem, which unites different players, providing international appeal way beyond the city of Berlin.”

**Prof. Dr. Heyo K. Kroemer, Chief Executive Officer of Charité:** “Cell therapies and gene therapies represent a major medical advance; they can help where conventional methods reach their limits. As these are highly innovative drugs, their development, however, is much more complex than that of other medicines. If we want to bring these therapies to patients as quickly as possible, we need to take new routes. With the intensified partnership between Charité and Bayer, we want to initiate structural development to bring Berlin to the forefront of this pioneering technology both nationally and internationally. In doing so, we also create and maintain value and thus jobs in the country. This is a big step in Berlin, for Berlin and for Germany.”

**Astrid Lurati, Chief Financial and Infrastructure Officer of Charité:** “As part of this project, the two partners Charité and Bayer are combining their respective expertise to further advance the developments in the field of gene and cell therapy both nationally and

internationally. This approach is unique in Germany and demonstrates the innovation power of Berlin and its major healthcare players in their efforts to reimagine the medical care of tomorrow already today. The extensive support, which we are receiving both from the State of Berlin as well as the Federal Government underlines the importance of this project. With the Berlin Center for Gene and Cell Therapies we are breaking new ground together and I would like to thank everyone involved for the excellent cooperation."

**Kai Wegner, Governing Mayor of Berlin:** "Berlin is a strong and leading location for science, research and medicine and therefore for the healthcare industry as a whole. The newly emerging translation center for gene and cell therapies is an excellent example of this. The State of Berlin has supported this lighthouse project from the beginning as we are convinced of the potential that gene and cell therapies provide. The collaboration between Charité and Bayer in one of the most innovative areas of medicine is a clear signal that together we can make Berlin and Germany a pioneer in this field. It is our common goal to help more patients with the most modern therapies, where today's medicine still reaches its limits. In addition, the location provides an excellent environment, which we will continue to strengthen by further developing the Bayer site into a life science campus."

**Franziska Giffey, Mayor and Berlin State Senator for Economic Affairs, Energy and Public Enterprises:** "The close collaboration between companies and the excellent research in the city is a recipe for success to achieve our goal of making Berlin the number one innovation hotspot in Europe. With the Bayer and Charité translation center for gene and cell therapies we are moving a big step closer to reaching this goal. It brings together two internationally renowned medical pioneers and will benefit from its location in Berlin, one of the most successful start-up ecosystems in the world. The new center has enormous economic potential and will attract talent and investment. This is very good news for the growing business location of Berlin."

The Berlin Center for Gene and Cell Therapies is being developed by iQ spaces, a project developer specialized in laboratory real estate, on the Bayer campus at Berlin Nordhafen. Across 18,000 sqm, the ten-story building is divided into an incubator with fully equipped laboratory and office space to accommodate 15 to 20 start-ups in various stages of development, as well as a GMP-certified manufacturing facility for the development of cell and gene therapies up to clinical phase II. The building was designed by the architectural firm HENN.

### **About cell therapies and gene therapies**

Cell therapies and gene therapies (Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products, ATMPs) are among the most important innovations in the healthcare sector. They have the potential to fundamentally change the treatment of cancer, autoimmune diseases, neurodegenerative diseases and many rare genetic diseases. The novel therapies are based on genes, tissues or cells and therefore often contain living components. These products, which are therefore also referred to as “living drugs”, can be better tailored to individual patients than traditional medicines and are particularly suitable for the treatment of diseases that were previously untreatable or difficult to treat. Although several hundred clinical studies for the development of cell therapies and gene therapies are currently ongoing, only a small number of such products is currently approved in Europe. The goal of Bayer and Charité is for the Berlin Center for Gene and Cell Therapies to bridge this translation gap.

### **About Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin**

With more than 100 departments and institutes across four campuses and 3,293 beds, Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin is one of Europe’s largest university medical centers. At Charité, the areas of research, teaching, and medical and patient care are closely interconnected. Averaging about 20,000 employees Charité-wide and some 23,500 across the entire group of companies, Berlin’s university medicine organization remained one of the capital city’s largest employers in 2023. Charité is a leader in diagnosis and treatment of particularly severe, complex, and rare diseases and health conditions. A medical school and university medical center in one, Charité enjoys an outstanding reputation worldwide, combining first-class patient care with excellence in research and innovation, state-of-the-art teaching, and high-quality training and education. Everything Charité does revolves around people and their health. Charité pursues translational research in which scientific findings are applied to prevention, diagnostics, and treatment and clinical observations inform new approaches in research in turn. At Charité, the goal is to actively help shape the medicine of the future to benefit patients.

<https://www.charite.de/en/>

### **About Bayer**

Bayer is a global enterprise with core competencies in the life science fields of health care and nutrition. In line with its mission, “Health for all, Hunger for none,” the company’s products and services are designed to help people and the planet thrive by supporting efforts to master the major challenges presented by a growing and aging global

population. Bayer is committed to driving sustainable development and generating a positive impact with its businesses. At the same time, the Group aims to increase its earning power and create value through innovation and growth. The Bayer brand stands for trust, reliability and quality throughout the world. In fiscal 2023, the Group employed around 100,000 people and had sales of 47.6 billion euros. R&D expenses before special items amounted to 5.8 billion euros. For more information, go to [www.bayer.com](http://www.bayer.com).

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sp (2024-0099E)

#### **Forward-Looking Statements**

This release may contain forward-looking statements based on current assumptions and forecasts made by Bayer management. Various known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors could lead to material differences between the actual future results, financial situation, development or performance of the company and the estimates given here. These factors include those discussed in Bayer's public reports which are available on the Bayer website at [www.bayer.com](http://www.bayer.com). The company assumes no liability whatsoever to update these forward-looking statements or to conform them to future events or developments.