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Culture Biosciences secures $5.5M to expand its digital biomanufacturing platform

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Culture's bio manufacturing platform empowers customers to design and manage high-throughput fermentation experiments from the cloud.



Culture Biosciences, the South San Francisco-based biotech company pioneering biomanufacturing-as-a-service has announced $5.5 million in funding led by Section 32, with participation from Refactor Capital and Verily. Culture will use the funding to expand its digital biomanufacturing platform and develop additional bioreactor facilities.

"Biotechnology is poised to transform industries ranging from healthcare to food, but it is limited by arduous and time consuming approaches to fermentation, the key process involved in manufacturing bio-based products at scale," said Culture Biosciences CEO Will Patrick. "Our goal is to make fermentation a digital experience, empowering scientists to run experiments from their computers in the same way a software engineer tests and compiles code. We're proud to have the support of such committed investors as we pursue our vision of supporting companies as they build breakthrough products."

Across industrial, pharmaceutical and agricultural biotechnology, companies often struggle to scale their lab-based projects into commercial solutions. This scale-up process is bottlenecked by legacy approaches to fermentation, which require companies to either build in-house fermentation facilities or contract an outside lab to run their experiments. Both approaches are limited in speed, flexibility and convenience, contributing to lengthy lab-to-market timelines that can stretch well beyond five years and cost companies hundreds of millions of dollars in R&D expenses.

Culture is developing a digital biomanufacturing platform to enable companies to run, monitor and analyze bioreactor experiments for faster and more convenient biotech product development. Culture's platform, which integrates best-in-class bioreactors, cloud monitoring capabilities and remote operations, is currently being used by leading biotechnology companies to optimize their R&D processes.

Customers who join the Culture network have access to custom built and engineered bioreactors equipped with novel robotic systems for more efficient operation, cloud monitoring capabilities to gain real-time insights, fast data transfer and sample shipping, and same-day process design changes. Customers can access the Culture system through any cloud-connected device, and can remotely manage their experiment as if they were running it themselves.

"We are excited to lead this investment in Culture Biosciences, which is empowering companies to focus on what they do best – creating groundbreaking technology and turning it into great products," said Dr. Mike Pellini, Managing Partner at Section 32.