

Press release

Inkocell Therapeutics secures CHF 150,000 from Venture Kick to advance next-generation Natural Killer (NK) cell therapies

St. Gallen/Zurich/Lausanne, September 8, 2025 — EPFL spin-off Inkocell Therapeutics, a Swiss biotech startup developing next-generation cell therapies, has secured CHF 150,000 from Venture Kick. The funding will accelerate the development of Inkocell's first-in-class NK-tailored CAR (chimeric antigen receptor) technology, designed to create effective, safe, off-the-shelf, and affordable therapies for patients with life-threatening diseases.

Over the past decade, **engineered T-cell therapies (CAR-T)** have transformed cancer treatment and brought cures to some patients who previously had no options. But these therapies are complex to manufacture, extremely costly, and can trigger dangerous side effects. Not all patients respond, leaving a large group still without effective treatments.

[Inkocell Therapeutics](#) is addressing these challenges by engineering a new type of therapy based on **Natural Killer (NK) cells**—immune cells naturally specialized in detecting and destroying abnormal or diseased cells. By equipping NK cells with its proprietary CAR technology, Inkocell is building therapies that are scalable, safer, and available “off the shelf” without the need for personalized manufacturing.

Inkocell's first programs focus on:

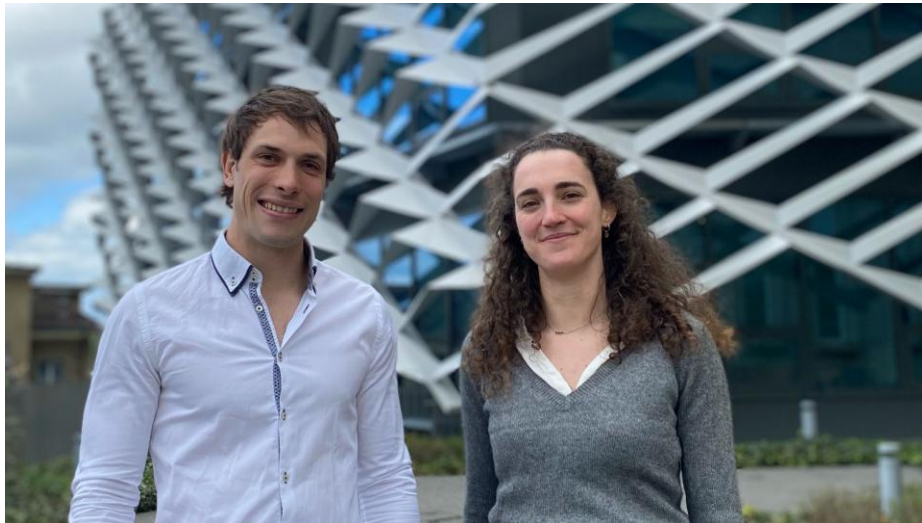
- **B-cell malignancies:** these are **blood cancers such as leukemia, lymphoma, and multiple myeloma**, which together affect over **500,000** patients every year worldwide. While CAR-T therapies have helped some patients, many relapse or cannot access them because of high costs and limited availability.
- **Solid tumors** with therapy resistance: more than **10 million** patients annually face **tumors** protected by the tumor stroma—the “shield” of normal cells and tissue around a tumor that makes it harder for treatments to reach the cancer. Inkocell's CAR-NK approach is designed to break through this shield and attack the cancer directly.

Beyond oncology, the same NK-tailored CAR technology could be applied to autoimmune diseases (where the immune system attacks the body's own tissues) and **fibrotic diseases** (characterized by organ-damaging scar tissue), opening the door to treatments for millions more patients.

With the CHF 150,000 investment from Venture Kick, Inkocell will strengthen its business development and accelerate preparations for clinical testing, bringing its therapies closer to patients.

Co-founded by Mathieu Girardin and Angela Madurga Alonso, Inkocell Therapeutics will be incorporated as an EPFL spin-off by the end of 2025. The team combines deep expertise in cell engineering and translational medicine, aiming to bring curative therapies from the lab to the clinic.

“Beyond funding, Venture Kick provides access to a network of experts who have been instrumental in accelerating Inkocell from project to company,” said Co-Founder and CEO Mathieu Girardin. “This support strengthens our credibility with investors and partners, and helps us move faster toward delivering therapies that can save patients’ lives.”



CEO Mathieu Girardin and CSO Angela Madurga Alonso

[Inkocell Therapeutics' profile on Venture Kick](#)

inkocell.com

About Venture Kick

The Venture Kick philanthropic initiative provides up to CHF 150,000 seed funding to Swiss startups and offers a well-structured entrepreneurial path toward building a winning business. Startups pitch to expert juries in three stages to obtain financing, gain direct feedback, and access an international network of 200 successful entrepreneurs and investors. Winners of Venture Kick are eligible for an InnoBooster grant of CHF 150,000 and an additional CHF 850,000 investment from the Kickfund.

Since its launch in 2007, Venture Kick has supported 1,121 Swiss startup projects with CHF 80 million from private donors. Thanks to financial support, coaching, and networking with investors, this initiative has led to the emergence of 750 thriving startups and the creation of 14,500 jobs. Venture Kick alumni companies have attracted investments of CHF 9 billion and represent 66 companies ranked in the TOP 100 Swiss Startups in 2024 (<https://www.top100startups.swiss>).

Venture Kick is an initiative by the Kick Foundation, launched and supported by a private consortium, operated by Venturelab. The supporting foundations and private philanthropic partners include Gebert Rűf Stiftung, Ernst Gűhner Stiftung, Fondation ALCEA, Hauser-Stiftung, Andrű Hoffmann, Hansjűrg Wyss,

Martin Haefner, Fondation ProTechno, ESA BIC Switzerland, Swisscom, Lichtsteiner Foundation, and Deep Tech Nation Switzerland Foundation.

Find more information on venturekick.ch, with [all startup projects supported by Venture Kick](#), and follow the success stories of our startups on [Facebook](#), [X](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

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