

FORTY51 VENTURES

Newly established venture capital firm with focus on venture formation and venture building in biotechnology mainly in Central Western Europe

Basel
Switzerland

www.forty51ventures.com

Founded: January 2021
Co-Founders: Sascha Oliver Bucher
Sara Núñez-García
No. of employees: 6
Type of Ownership: Private
Primary stock exchange: N/A

April 2021: Started in Basel by three experienced Partners, Forty51 Ventures targets seed and early-stage investments in underfunded Biotech clusters in Switzerland, Germany, Eastern France, Northern Italy, and Austria.



Venture Valuation (VV) interviewed Sascha Oliver Bucher, Co-Founder and Partner.

VV: It is surprising to learn that your targeted geographical area, including Switzerland, is underfunded.

Bucher: Investment in the European biotech industry is increasing but mostly in late stage financing.

Switzerland, while considered an innovative life science country, has one of the lowest rates of local venture capital investment as measured by GDP per capita compared to other high-tech industrialized countries, like the US, UK or Israel.

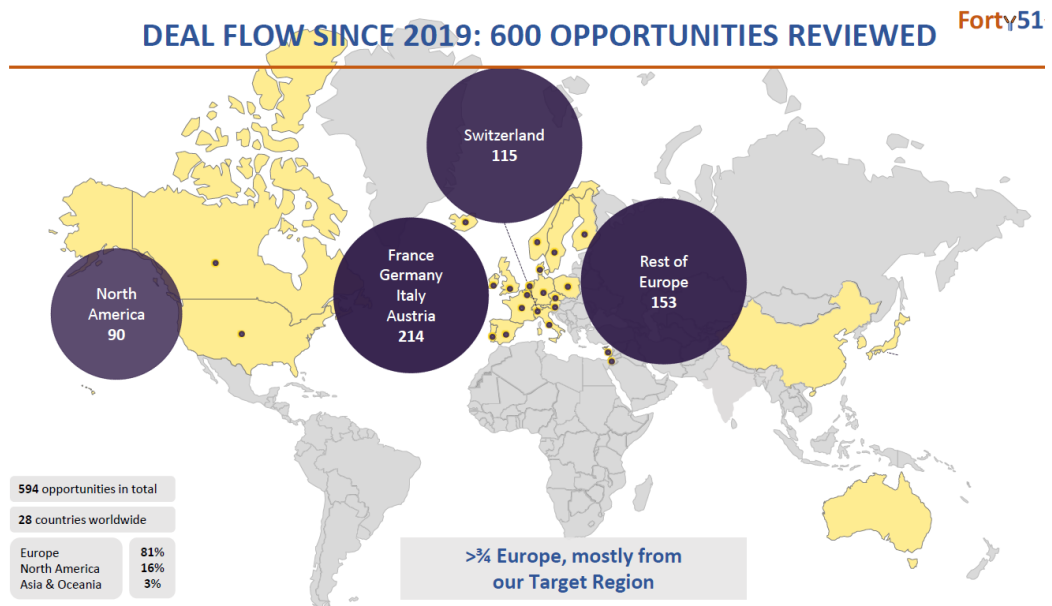
The innovation hubs in Switzerland, Germany, Eastern France, Northern Italy and Austria are financially relatively underserved. We observe a high density of scientific and medical innovation in this area. True venture builders are needed there to help translate such innovation into products.

We are determined to provide existing and potential entrepreneurs with our deep industry expertise in research, pre-clinical and clinical drug development, M&A transactions, and above all, our network of global leaders in biotechnology.

VV: Since 2019 you have already received around 600 seed and early stage investment requests through your global network.

Bucher: We keep in touch with universities, hospitals, private and public investors, incubators, Big Pharma and Biotech. The chart shows the number of seed and early stage investment opportunities by region from 28 countries worldwide: 81% from Europe, 16% from North America, and 3% from Asia.

We have received from our target area almost ¾ of the investment opportunities in Europe.



VV: You are agnostic to disease and modality. So how do you sort out these investment opportunities?

Bucher: There is vast development expertise in the team, so we examine every opportunity very carefully. At the same time, we deprioritize deals that would take too much time to proceed and therapeutic indications which might be difficult to build without interest from late stage private and public investors. Also, by frequently talking with Big Pharma and Biotech, as potential acquirers, we evaluate what they are looking for.

VV: You are actively building your portfolio to hit the ground running upon closing.

Bucher: We are currently building three prospective investments. They are all in our target region.

The first investment is a spin-off company from EPFL (Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne) in the neurodegeneration space based on the research of a renowned professor. The second investment is a carve-out from a biotech company in the fibrosis/inflammation space. The third is a German company in the inflammation/autoimmune space.

We have confirmed to our investors that the first closing is anticipated mid-year 2021, and the final close at 135 million EUR.

In spite of the current COVID-19 pandemic affecting business activities, we have been able to raise funds from many investors whom we have known for years as well as from their close contacts.

Nevertheless, we are always looking for new LP (Limited Partner) relationships that we can build over time as well as entrepreneurs who are searching for financial support and industry expertise.

VV comments after the interview:

McKinsey & Company's 2019 article on Biotech in Europe¹ pointed out: "Europe's strength as a global powerhouse for scientific research and publication does not yet translate into patents for new medicines: the United States originates about three times as many as Europe and China about nine times as many." The same article also mentioned: "Europe's share of new drugs could grow if its Biotechs are able to attract more investment; they currently receive only 20 percent of the funding their US counterparts do." Venture capital firms like Forty51 Ventures, who provide opportunities to scientists, academics, and medical professionals to become entrepreneurs, will certainly boost the Biotech industry in Europe

Contact **Mariko Hirano**, m.hirano (at) venturevaluation.com

Venture Valuation specializes in independent assessment and valuation of technology-driven companies in growth industries, such as the Life Sciences (Biotech, Pharma, and Medtech), ICT, Femtech, Nanotech, Cleantech and Renewable Energy. In addition to valuation products, Venture Valuation offers high-quality, focused information services like the global business development database, Biotechgate.com and this "*Let's Interview Series*" with companies with interesting technologies and services. We select and interview thriving companies and organizations all over the world.

¹<https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/pharmaceuticals-and-medical-products/our-insights/biotech-in-europe-a-strong-foundation-for-growth-and-innovation>