

BIRD – Israel-U.S. Binational Industrial R&D Foundation to invest \$9.6 million in 10 new projects: The approved projects, with an overall budget of \$24.5 million, involve innovations in the areas of Agrotech, Biotechnology, Electronics, Energy, Foodtech, Healthcare IT, and Life Science

Tel Aviv, Israel – January 28, 2024 – During its meeting on December 19, 2023, held in Washington D.C., the Board of Governors of the Israel-U.S. Binational Industrial Research and Development (BIRD) Foundation approved \$9.6 million in funding for ten new projects between U.S. and Israeli companies. In addition to the grants from BIRD, the projects will access private-sector funding, boosting the total investment in all projects to \$24.5 million.

The BIRD Foundation promotes collaborations between U.S. and Israeli companies in various technological sectors for joint product development. In addition to providing conditional grants of up to \$1.5 million, the Foundation assists by working with companies to identify potential strategic partners and facilitate introductions.

The submitted projects are reviewed by evaluators appointed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) of the U.S. Department of Commerce and the Israel Innovation Authority.

The ten projects approved by the Board of Governors are in addition to the over 1000 projects that the BIRD Foundation has approved for funding during its 46-year history. To date, BIRD's total investment in joint projects is over \$390 million, helping to generate direct and indirect sales of more than \$10 billion.

The projects approved are:

- **Celleste Bio** (Misgav, Israel) and **Mondelez International** (Chicago, IL) to develop and produce on-demand non-fat cocoa solids and cocoa-based powder using cell-based technology.
- **CENS Materials** (Beer Sheva, Israel) and **LiCAP Technologies** (Sacramento, CA) to develop a dry electrode process with carbon nanotube technology dispersion to advance EV battery capacity and performance while lowering production costs.

- **Diptera.ai** (Jerusalem, Israel) and **Vectech, Inc.** (Baltimore, MD) will utilize advances in artificial intelligence to build a process and system to monitor and control the *Anopheles Stephensi* mosquito, a highly competent malaria vector.
- **Greatnix**, dba Opmed.AI (Herzliya, Israel), and **Mayo Clinic** (Rochester, MN) to advance the development of an AI-driven Planner that optimizes procedure scheduling, enhances operating room efficiency, and maximizes resource utilization.
- **Hypervision** (Yokneam Illit, Israel) and **Light Polymers** (Santa Clara, CA) will develop a liquid crystal-based polarized coating technology, methods & systems tailored for Virtual Reality and Mixed Reality optics.
- **Imagindairy** (Haifa, Israel) and **Ginkgo Bioworks** (Boston, MA) to develop and manufacture non-whey dairy proteins at scale and cost parity for novel food products.
- **Israel Aerospace Industries** (Lod, Israel) and **MELD Printworks** (Christiansburg, VA) to develop and approve large civil aviation components utilizing Additive Friction Stir Deposition technology.
- **LahakX** (Ramat Hasharon, Israel) and **Aero Systems West** (San Martin, CA) to develop a heavy payload spraying drone swarm for agriculture and fire prevention.
- **Sheba Medical Center (Ramat Gan, Israel)** and **Serpin Pharma (Manassas, VA)** will perform a Phase II clinical trial to provide a targeted therapeutic to restore immune balance for patients with acute myocardial infarction.
- **Tissue Dynamics** (Rehovot, Israel) and **ATCC**, (Manassas, VA), will develop an advanced organoid kit for cardiac toxicity assessment.

Ms. Mojdeh Bahar, Associate Director for Innovation and Industry Services at the U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and co-Chair of BIRD's Board of Governors said: "This competition cycle attracted an impressive range of proposals exploring the frontiers of technology in areas vital to our future, including advanced manufacturing techniques, next-generation biotechnologies, and exciting developments in EV battery production. After a rigorous evaluation by our Board, we're proud to announce the 10 winning projects. We congratulate this cycle's grant recipients and look forward to the successful commercialization of their products."

Dr. Einat Magal, Acting Chief Scientist of Innovation at the Ministry of Innovation, Science and Technology, and co-Chair of BIRD's Board of Governors said: "One of the expressions of the decades-long strong partnership between Israel and the U.S. is the support shared by both countries in the high-tech industry that finds its expression through the work of the BIRD Foundation. Especially during the recent difficult times, this collaborative work bears greater significance and is a testament to the added value brought by both the Israeli and the U.S. companies. We congratulate the companies of the ten excellent projects that were selected and

hope that this collaboration will continue to bear successful fruits in the future as it did in the past.”

Mr. Jaron Lotan, Executive Director of the BIRD Foundation, said: “At BIRD, we take great pride in awarding grants to a record number of projects that strengthen U.S.-Israeli collaborations, emphasizing innovations geared towards delivering commercial products. In this cycle, we witnessed a diverse range of projects across sectors and geographical regions, showcasing our commitment to fostering impactful partnerships and promoting innovation across diverse realms.”

The deadline for submission of Executive Summaries for the next BIRD cycle is March 7, 2024. Approval of projects will take place in June 2024.

About the BIRD Foundation

The BIRD (**B**inational **I**ndustrial **R**esearch and **D**evelopment) Foundation encourages and facilitates cooperation between U.S. and Israeli companies in a wide range of technology sectors and offers funding to selected projects.

The Foundation supports projects without receiving any equity or intellectual property rights from the participating companies or the projects themselves. BIRD funding is repaid as royalties from sales of products that were commercialized as a result of BIRD support. The Foundation provides funding of up to 50% of a project's budget, beginning with R&D and ending with the initial stages of sales and marketing. The Foundation shares the risk and does not require repayment if the project fails to reach the sales stage.