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Evotec pairs up with Second Genome to gut out some R&D

March 18, 2015 | By Damian Garde

Hybrid researcher [Evotec](#) has signed a deal with microbiomics biotech Second Genome to lend out its drug discovery capabilities in hopes of crafting treatments that harness the power of the gut.

Under the deal, [Second Genome](#) will trade an undisclosed upfront payment for access to Evotec's sizable molecule database and the screening technology to crawl it. The German-headquartered contractor is also in line for further payments tied to preclinical, clinical and regulatory milestones for any resulting products.

Second Genome's work is focused on tapping the power of the microbiome, an ecosystem made up of more than 100 trillion microorganisms living in the body that, thanks to the explosive growth of genomics, has fueled a fast-expanding new field of drug development as scientists begin to chart just how it affects human health. Teaming up with Evotec, the company is hoping to identify novel small-molecule compounds that can treat microbiome-mediated diseases, hunting for early-stage candidates to expand its pipeline.

"The partnership with Evotec allows us efficiently to translate our unique microbiome discovery platform efficiently into tangible drug molecules for clinical development," Second Genome Chief Business Officer Mohan Iyer said in a statement.

The agreement follows a 2013 deal in which Second Genome paired off with Johnson & Johnson ([\\$JNJ](#)) to develop microbiomic therapies for ulcerative colitis.

Meanwhile, Evotec is looking forward to a big year as it prepares to close an expansive deal with Sanofi ([\\$SNY](#)) in which the drugmaker will invest at least €250 million (\$310 million) over 5 years in Evotec, handing over a French research site and forging deep R&D ties with the company.

Evotec splits its business into two halves: EVT Execute, which operates like a CRO, and EVT Innovate, which outlicenses internally developed candidates. The former half largely pays the bills, thanks to risk-sharing deals with the likes of [Boehringer Ingelheim](#) and Roche ([\\$RHHBY](#)), but Evotec has taken strides to build up its internal efforts through acquisitions and licensing agreements.

- read the [statement](#)

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