

**/ Wellington Partners signs collaboration agreement with KfW Banking Group to finance young Life Science technology companies /**

*Frankfurt/Munich, October 16, 2006.* Wellington Partners has entered into a collaboration agreement with the KfW Banking Group to finance young technology companies within the framework of the ERP Start-Up Fund. As a Wellington Partners co-investor, KfW will provide up to three million euros per company. Wellington will select and support suitable companies, especially in the forward-looking Life Science market.

Wellington General Partner Dr. Rainer Strohmenger is convinced that the collaboration agreement offers enormous opportunities, especially to young Life Science companies: "We're currently seeing a second generation of biotech companies in Germany who are being faster, more targeted and closer to the market in developing their products – and these are precisely the ones we want to finance together with KfW. This collaboration will significantly strengthen the financial latitude enjoyed by our portfolio companies."

Department Director Robert Schlösser outlines KfW's objectives under this collaboration: "What we want to do with the ERP Start-Up Fund is to work together with strong partners to finance as many promising technology companies as possible. This structure enables us to be fast and close to the market in doing that." Launched in the year 2004, the ERP Start-Up Fund promotes innovative technology companies that are less than six years old and satisfy the EU Commission's criteria for small companies. The fund can invest up to three million euros of equity capital per company, with a maximum of €1.5 million being provided in an initial round of financing. The fund always invests together with a lead investor, who advises and supports the companies being promoted with respect to all economic and financial aspects.

**About KfW Mittelstandsbank:**

KfW Mittelstandsbank supports small and medium enterprises not only with favorable financing, but also in the form of individual advice during all phases of the company's development. It additionally offers a custom-tailored, transparent portfolio of equity capital financing offerings for financing start-ups, young technology-oriented companies and established small and medium enterprises.

**About Wellington Partners:**

Wellington Partners ([www.wellington-partners.com](http://www.wellington-partners.com)), formed in 1991, ranks among Europe's most successful early-stage investors. With €415 million currently under management, the firm focuses on helping European entrepreneurs build companies with large global market opportunities, mostly in the areas of information technology, media convergence and life science.

To date, Wellington Partners has invested in over 85 companies, selling a third of them at a profit, in seven cases through an IPO. Serving as the lead or co-lead investor, Wellington Partners has already accompanied such successful high-tech players as biotech company Actelion or software vendor SAF AG in their IPOs, and guided online service company Ciao AG, for example, in its merger with Greenfield Online, software company Meiosys in its merger with IBM and German auctioneer Alando when acquired by eBay.

**Please address queries to:**

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