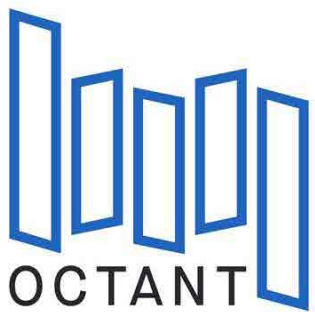




Sri Kosuri

Courtesy of Octant

Octant raises \$30M in Series A



OCTANT WAS STARTED BY SRI KOSURI, an assistant professor at UCLA College of Chemistry and Biochemistry.

For decades, biotechnology and the development of drugs has focused on increasing the specificity of drugs against singular targets or genes.

Octant challenges the status quo by shedding this methodology for a new approach of applying synthetic biology to drug discovery.

“We believe the future of treating complex disease will require rational approaches to understand and engineer *polypharmacology* – drugs that simultaneously alter the activity of multiple drug targets and pathways. Multi-targeted drugs can solve some of the most vexing problems in drug discovery today, such as on-target toxicity, cell-type specificity, avoiding off-target effects, and widening therapeutic windows. We have been building a platform that combines large-scale synthetic biology in human cell lines, high throughput chemical synthesis and screening, informatics and machine learning – all in

“We believe the future of treating complex disease will require rational approaches to understand and engineer – *polypharmacology*”

– Octant

an effort to understand and engineer polypharmacology at unprecedented scales”. (Octant website)

By taking this new path, Octant hopes to help treat some of the most common societal diseases such as obesity, psychiatric disorders and cardiovascular diseases.

Based in Emeryville, CA, the startup has raised \$30M in Series A financing with investments from a16Z, 8VC, SV Angel, Allen & Co and other private investors. **IM**



Tom Novak

Courtesy of Autobahn

Autobahn Labs and UCLA announce partnership



SAMSARA BIOCAPITAL, a leading life sciences investment firm, Evotec SE, a global drug discovery alliance and development partnership company, and KCK Ltd., a family investment fund, announced the launch of Autobahn Labs, a novel virtual incubator partnering with top academic and research institutions to catalyze early-stage drug discovery and development. Autobahn Labs also announced a first-in-kind strategic collaboration with UCLA Technology Development Group to identify and advance the most promising areas of scientific research with the greatest potential for patient therapies.

“Autobahn Labs was created to be a catalyst for translational research, working with academic scientists and institutions to design and execute an accelerated path to deliver transformational new therapies,” said Thomas Novak, PhD, Chief Scientific Officer of Autobahn Labs. “We are very excited to partner with UCLA, a university with a premier reputation for innovation in the life sciences, to realize the potential of that innovation for patients.”

“UCLA TDG’s mission is centered on innovation, research, teaching and entrepreneurship to benefit society,” said Amir Naiberg, Associate Vice Chancellor, CEO & President of UCLA Technology Development Group. “TDG is exploring new models for Tech Transfer, this novel strategic collaboration with Autobahn Labs allows us to partner with industry experts earlier than ever before. We believe this

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– Tom Novak

will enable us to accelerate the transformation of our early scientific research into new drugs.”

Built on a model of long-term partnership and collaboration, Autobahn Labs invests earlier than traditional venture financing models, providing intellectual, financial and physical capital to efficiently and effectively advance new scientific discoveries from novel concept to preclinical drug candidate. Working in partnership with leading scientists and university tech transfer offices, the incubator identifies and de-risks early-stage research projects with significant therapeutic potential. Autobahn Labs creates jointly-owned new companies and invests up to \$5M per project. This model provides Principal Investigators with scientific and operational strategy as well as direct and immediate access to Evotec’s state-of-the-art drug discovery and development technologies and capabilities, including more than 3,000 scientists with proven drug discovery expertise.

[Read full press release here.](#) **IM**