

On the occasion of its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Swiss Biotech Association launched the “Swiss Biotech Success Stories”, to celebrate those who have made significant contributions to the Biotech industry across Switzerland. The Swiss Biotech Success Stories not only highlights past successes, but will hopefully also act as a motivator for future achievements and further information can be found at [www.swissbiotechday.ch](http://www.swissbiotechday.ch).

Right from its inception, Bench International partnered with the Swiss Biotech Association in preparation for this launch. Friederike Sommer, SVP Bench International Europe, played a vital role, not only by being the host for the launch event, but also in preparing for the stage presentation, engaging with past and present key members of the 5 identified success stories companies and creating overviews for each organization and sharing their history with the audience. Friederike says: It was a great honor to be able to contribute to this exciting event and I am very pleased that the Swiss Biotech Association has created this platform to the industry. Personally, I gained a great overview and a true understanding of these companies, understanding the challenges they have overcome and how they have grown and developed into these phenomenal organizations and having met various teams members from both past and in present, I can appreciate the wonderful cultures they been able to create. A major takeaway for me was that “There is a greatness within all of us, but greatness is not your destiny... it is a choice”.

Each success story reflected this under very diverse aspects:

Biogen for the many Swiss ingredients in its success story

Glycart (now Roche Glycart) for its role as pioneer in antibody engineering in cancer immunotherapy

Okairos for its innovative T-cell based vaccines for major infectious diseases

Selexis for its advanced technologies in protein expression

Vifor Fresenius Medical Care Renal Pharma, a transformational joint venture

Working in the executive recruiting area with Bench International, focused purely in the life sciences area, we find it essential to understand the culture of an organization, the team that is driving it, so that we can find additional leadership talent, who not only have a proven background in successfully driving an organization, but also who will fit well with the organization and create positive change. It has been wonderful to have this opportunity to learn more about the foundations of the success stories that were presented at the SBA launch event and we are sure there is much more to explore.

Friederike Sommer

SVP Bench International

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