

bitBiome raises 700M JPY to accelerate growth

September 4, 2020 | News

This new funding will unlock the vast untapped potential of microbes in various industries using bit-MAP[®], a unique microbe-focused single-cell genomics platform



Japanese startup bitBiome, Inc., an emerging leader in microbiome analytics, has raised 700 million JPY (approx. \$6.6m US) in Series B financing from previous and new investors including The University of Tokyo Edge Capital Partners, Universal Materials Incubator, and other Japan-based venture capital firms. This new funding brings bitBiome's total equity financing to 1.05 billion yen (approx. \$10m US), and will support the company's growth toward unlocking the vast untapped potential of microbes in various industries using bit-MAP[®], a unique microbe-focused single-cell genomics platform.

• Progress

bitBiome's bit-MAP[®] system is a unique single-cell genomics platform for microbes, with a mission of *unlocking the potential of microbes*. The company has grown rapidly through collaborative research with various corporate and academic partners.

Since its last financing in January 2019, bitBiome has strengthened its Business Development, R&D, and Administration divisions through new hires and CEO/COO participation, and built up its team. R&D and analytical capabilities were enhanced through acquisition of lab facilities and equipment as well as bioinformatics capabilities. The maximum number of single cells that can be analyzed per month was successfully expanded from 2,000 genomes to over 20,000 genomes. Additionally, eight international patent applications have been filed to reinforce the technological superiority of the bit-MAP[®] system.

• New funding

bitBiome's newly raised capital will be used to accelerate growth in the following areas:

- In-house research to analyze the relationship between microbes and disease states
- Purchasing lab equipment (including a next-generation sequencer) to further strengthen R&D capabilities and throughput
- Acceleration of global business development
- Securing and maintaining intellectual property
- Talent acquisition

bitBiome is leveraging the Series B financing to launch a large-scale study on patient stool and saliva samples for more than 20 diseases, including cancer, intestinal diseases, autoimmune diseases, and neuropsychiatric disorders. Patient samples will be obtained from patients registered on the panel in cooperation with QLife, Inc. a Japan-based clinical solution provider. bit-MAP®, bitBiome's proprietary microbe-focused single-cell genomic platform, will provide unprecedented insight on the link between oral and gut microbes and disease states. For each disease, bitBiome will engage with partners for collaborative research towards novel drug or biomarker discovery, as well as access to the developed proprietary datasets.

bitBiome is excited to work with corporate and academic partners towards *unlocking the potential of microbes*.

Funding investors for this round

- **New**

Universal Materials Incubator Co., Ltd.
IDATEN Ventures
Vital Ventures, Inc.

- **Existing (additional investment)**

The University of Tokyo Edge Capital Partners Co., Ltd.

- **Comments from investor**

The University of Tokyo Edge Capital Partners Co., Ltd. Atsushi Usami

bitBiome has developed proprietary microbial single-cell analysis technology that can decipher all the genetic information from a single microbe with high accuracy. Based on this highly accurate microbial genome database, bitBiome is providing services to create new therapeutics, diagnostics, industrial enzymes and other useful substances, as well as to elucidate the mechanisms of diseases and medicinal effects. We expect that this funding will enable the company to further contribute to the development of the biotechnology industry and medical care through the participation of more commercialization members and global business expansion.