

Lohmann & Rauscher GmbH & Co. KG

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Advanced wound healing through partnering

Lohmann & Rauscher, a leading international provider of high-quality medical devices and hygiene products for hospitals, medical practices and consumers for over 160 years, is looking to identify partners to drive innovation in advanced wound care over the next decade.

Building on its extensive experience in the development and commercialization of wound-healing solutions, from conventional dressings to more sophisticated wound therapies (e.g., negative pressure wound therapy), Lohmann & Rauscher (L&R) is looking for new opportunities to establish partnerships in advanced wound care to drive innovation in the space for decades to come.

Unlike healing acute small wounds, which for the most part is not problematic, the treatment of larger and deeper acute wounds—such as those caused by burns or traumatic injuries—or hard to heal wounds associated with certain diseases—such as diabetes or persistent infections—requires a suite of solutions that are more complex than a simple dressing. Opportunities for innovation cover a variety of areas ranging from new materials and medical technology solutions to new therapy concepts (**Box 1**).

“L&R prides itself in nurturing a culture of innovation in the medical field,” said CEO Wolfgang Suesse. “Our corporate philosophy is to be the preferred solution provider and a reliable partner in the fields of medicine, nursing and hygiene worldwide.”

A healing pipeline

L&R's extensive pipeline of medical technology solutions for advanced wound care includes products in all stages of development.

In the area of negative pressure wound therapies, for example, L&R is expanding its portfolio through the development of sophisticated solutions and new applications in close collaboration with clinicians. New applications are tailored to every wound phase and indication.

At the cellular level, and together with a startup company, L&R is developing an alternative medical technology that mediates wound disinfection and wound healing simultaneously. The preclinical research associated with this project is being performed by two other research organizations in L&R's partner network.

Another ongoing effort at L&R is the R&D of novel antimicrobial products for either improved efficacy (e.g., next-generation antimicrobials) or additional benefits such as effectiveness against biofilm. In the area of biofilm control, for example, L&R is collaborating with the University of Florida and the University of Copenhagen.

According to Suesse, “Our in-house and external R&D activities are the foundation on which our company was successfully developed. We invest in extensive research to develop new products and to find the best solutions for patients and medical professionals.”

BOX 1: FACTS ON POTENTIAL PARTNERING OPPORTUNITIES

Key medical areas

- Wound healing
- Infection control
- Hemostasis
- Pain prevention, relief and control
- Scar prevention and treatment
- Regenerative/personalized medicine

Key technological areas of innovation

Ingredients and materials for wound care products:

- New materials, including biomaterials
- Biocompatible materials consisting of proteins, enzymes, cells and/or tissues
- Next-generation antimicrobials with low potential for resistance and toxicity
- Antibiofilm agents for infection control

Medical technologies for wound care:

- New medical technologies for all areas of wound care
- New applications for negative pressure wound therapy
- Diagnostics, sensors and biomarkers for wound evaluation, preferably with a subsequent treatment recommendation
- Smart solutions

New therapy concepts

- Holistic approaches, from diagnostics via debridement to healing

New solutions should:

- Be directly related to an indication and provide a clear path to application
- Have a target implementation of no more than 5–10 years
- Not be a pharmaceutical (although these are not categorically excluded)

Partnership ethos

L&R is an international family-owned company that has built its reputation on both the quality of its reliable products and services and its fairness and transparency with its partners. With four R&D sites strategically located in Germany, Austria, France and the United Kingdom and over 4,100 employees worldwide, the company is well positioned to offer the best value proposition to potential partners ranging from startups and smaller companies to established enterprises. Each new partnership opportunity is welcome and will be carefully evaluated and reviewed by the L&R innovation team.

“The secret of our success throughout our long history has also been recognizing trends in the healthcare markets at an early stage and proactively integrating them into our business activities,” said Katharina Merz, head of innovation management at L&R. “We have always been keen to set up new collaborations with research organizations and universities as well as with individual researchers or clinicians.”

L&R has a very flexible approach to partnerships and will work with potential partners to develop and implement a business model that is best suited for each individual situation and for both partners. Cooperation arrangements can range from joint development or straight licensing agreements to the formation of joint venture companies and even mergers and acquisitions. For example, L&R is a shareholder of the Austrian Center for Medical Innovation and Technology and is working with the center on projects such as the development of sensors for wound diagnostics.

One example of an L&R asset deal is the bio-cellulose dressing Suprasorb X from startup company Xylos Corp. In this deal, L&R acquired patents surrounding the technology. On the basis of this development, the company successfully launched a product with exciting wound-healing characteristics while continuing to develop this biomaterial product in collaboration with the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna.

On the other end of the spectrum, L&R has historically differentiated itself from its competitors by establishing a number of long-standing collaborations with research organizations to develop new materials and platforms. At the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, L&R is an active member of the Christian Doppler Laboratory for Advanced Cellulose Chemistry and Analytics; at the Universities of Copenhagen and Florida, L&R is involved in research programs to further biofilm research.

According to Suesse, “L&R's biggest strength is its ability to translate medical needs into excellent products and solutions owing to its unique combination of access to users, its high-quality manufacturing practices and its vast collaborator network, allowing L&R to seize opportunities and rapidly develop innovative ideas.”

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