

## ExcellGene Promotes Dr. Divor Kiseljak to Chief Operating Officer to Drive Recombinant Protein Design, Expression, and Manufacturing

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Monthey, Switzerland -PRESS RELEASE- ExcellGene SA, a private-company offering services of research, development, and manufacturing for the biopharmaceutical industry for 20 years, announced today the promotion of Dr. Divor Kiseljak to Chief Operating Officer (COO). Dr. Kiseljak joined the Company in 2012 as a Process Scientist to further ExcellGene's expertise in transient gene expression, which was part of his doctoral work.

He has most recently held the role of Director of Process Science at ExcellGene and has directly interacted and coordinated with the Company's clients in academia and industry on diverse projects, ranging from recombinant protein design to gene expression and protein product delivery.

Divor grew up in Croatia, obtained a Masters' Degree in Molecular Biology from Faculty of Science at University of Zagreb and obtained his Dr. es. Sci. (PhD) from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (EPFL) working on HEK-293 cells in the laboratory of Emeritus Professor Dr. Florian Wurm, Chief Scientific Officer of ExcellGene.

"Since his time in my laboratory," Dr Wurm stated, "I have been impressed by his significant contributions to the understanding of mechanisms and barriers for transfected DNA to be converted into high-protein yields in cultivated mammalian cells. And over the past 10 years, Divor Kiseljak has continued to grow into new leadership positions, making him a natural fit as our new COO."

Dr. Kiseljak was the scientific leader for ExcellGene's Ebola virus vaccine project. The rapid conversion of different Ebola GP1,2 constructs into purified protein was largely based on his work. More recently, he contributed towards elucidating how the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein may be influential in an immunological context<sup>1</sup>, and towards the production of high-quality SARS-CoV-2 spike protein expressed from bioreactor-grown CHO cells<sup>2</sup>.

"I am grateful," Dr. Kiseljak says, "not only on a personal level, but also for what it means to the many new ventures and projects we have recently initiated at ExcellGene. The future is bright with many surprises ahead!"

More about Dr. Kiseljak and his current activities can be viewed on [his LinkedIn profile](#).

### References

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Human PBMCs by Lipopolysaccharide and SARS-CoV-2 Spike Protein Is Regulated by  $\alpha$ -1 Antitrypsin. *Int. J. Mol. Sci.* **2021**, 22, 7941. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijms22157941>

2. Pino, P.; Kint, J.; **Kiseljak, D.**; Agnolon, V.; Corradin, G.; Kajava, A.V.; Rovero, P.; Dijkman, R.; den Hartog, G.; McLellan, J.S.; Byrne, P.O.; Wurm, M.J.; Wurm, F.M. Trimeric SARS-CoV-2 Spike Proteins Produced from CHO Cells in Bioreactors Are High-Quality Antigens. *Processes* **2020**, 8, 1539. <https://doi.org/10.3390/pr8121539>

## About ExcellGene

ExcellGene SA, a privately-owned company, offers high quality research, development, and manufacturing services in three key areas: recombinant therapeutics, vaccines, and diagnostics. The Company, spun off from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne (EPFL), recently celebrated 20 years of helping academic and industry partners. ExcellGene focuses on manufacturing sciences offering services that include difficult to manufacture protein therapeutics and the development of gene therapy products (AAV). Host cells to generate these incorporate CHOExpress<sup>®</sup> and HEKExpress<sup>®</sup> systems, which have delivered products for clinical use from bioreactors at scales of 100 to 2500 Liter. The Company has pioneered many innovations utilizing recombinant animal cells in bioreactors and has shared insights and know-how through numerous scientific publications. Recently, with SARS-CoV-2, ExcellGene has delivered milligram to gram quantities of CHO-produced spike protein preparations of the Wuhan, Alpha, Beta, Delta, and Omicron variants. Visit [www.excellgene.com](http://www.excellgene.com) to learn more.

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