



# How PhDs are building Careers in Science Start-ups

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Head of Talent  
KdT Ventures



## Background on KdT

- Founded in 2017
- Manage \$150M over 3 funds
- 45+ portfolio companies
- Invest in biotech, biopharma, medtech, neurotech, synbio



# KdT Ventures





## Background on Yusuf

- PhD from Georgia Institute of Technology
- Joined a boutique Life Science executive search firm (medtech, diagnostics, digital health)
- Joined LifeSci Search (biopharma, biotech, medtech)
- Joined KdT to grow portfolio companies from individual contributor level to executive leadership



# What do you enjoy that others find boring?

Mark Manson - Choose your struggle

- Everyone enjoys what feels good.
- What pain do you want in your life? What are you willing to struggle for?



## Careers after the PhD

- R&D Bench Science/Engineering - Individual Contributor
- Business Development / Strategy Consulting / Venture Capital
- Regulatory Affairs
- Sales and Marketing
- Investor relations / Communications / PR
- Patent Law / Tech transfer
- Production / Manufacturing
- Talent Acquisition

Young + Hungry is the common theme for start-ups hiring PhDs.



# Elegen



- Microfluidic platform for DNA synthesis, assembly, and cloning
- Delivers long strand DNA in 7 business days
- DNA constructs up to 7kb; working toward >20kb.
- >95% sequence perfect, low error rate
- Based in San Carlos, CA. Hiring scientists with cloning experience.



## Cella Farms

Cella Farms

- Pioneering microbial protein technology
- Fermenting grains into nutritionally complete high protein flours
- 9 essential amino acids, 3-6x more protein, 50% lower carbohydrates, sustainable
- Microbe discovery/Strain Development, bioprocessing/fermentation, applications R&D
- Based in Alameda, CA. Hiring Fermentation Scientists, Food Technologists, Strain Engineers



# Cypris Materials



CYPRIS

- Reinventing the color industry
- Structural color: Polymer coating that reflects UV, visible light, and IR
- Applications in CPG, automotive, cosmetics, printed goods
- Based in San Leandro, CA. Hiring Formulation Scientists and Color Scientists (polymers, materials, chemistry)





**STRM.BIO**



**STRM·BIO**

- Designing extracellular vesicles (EVs) for *in vivo* gene therapy delivery
- Natural carriers of nucleic acids and proteins
- Non-viral, non-toxic, immune silent, non-replicating
- Amenable to large scale manufacturing
- Based in Boston. Hiring Manufacturing/Process Development Scientists, Gene Therapy Scientists



## Syenex



- Mammalian synbio platform company
- Developing novel enveloped delivery vectors (EVs) for the cell & gene therapy industry
- Platform business model - focused entirely on developing new technology and discovering new cell type specific vectors
- Based in Chicago, IL. Recruiting top tier mammalian synbio PhD graduates



# Networking for your next job

Unless your field of study is highly transferable to industry, you need to network.

Mass applications won't get you far

Informational Interviews

Be willing to take a risk (young and hungry); prove your worth. You will move up fast.



## Thank you. Questions?

- Feel free to connect with me on LinkedIn
- Check out our KdT job board: <https://www.kdtvc.com/>