

Beyond the Elevator Pitch: Inside Start-up Stories

asked by **DCZ**  **HeadhunterAngels**

” **With our engineered biosynthesis, we accelerate drug development and make new medicines accessible to everyone, everywhere.”**

*Jan Degen,
COO of kez.biosolutions*



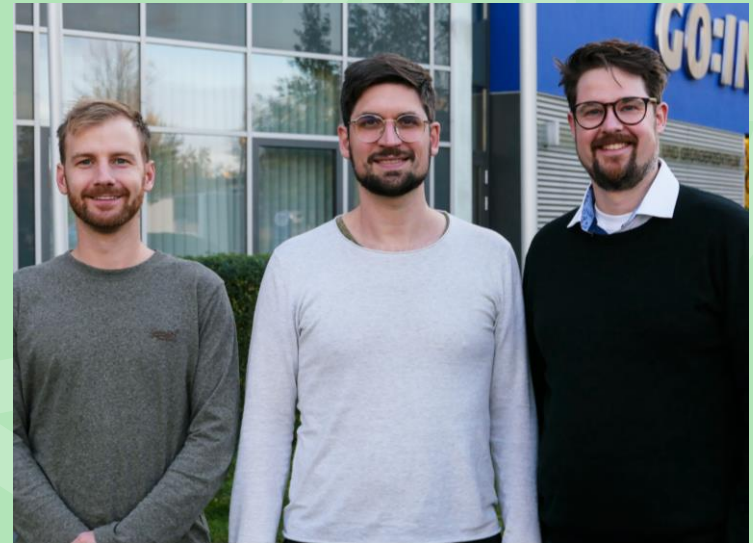
Spotlight on
JAN DEGEN

Co-Founder &
Managing Director

1. What key issue does your company tackle, and what impact will it have on the world?

Imagine, you could simplify complex drug development!

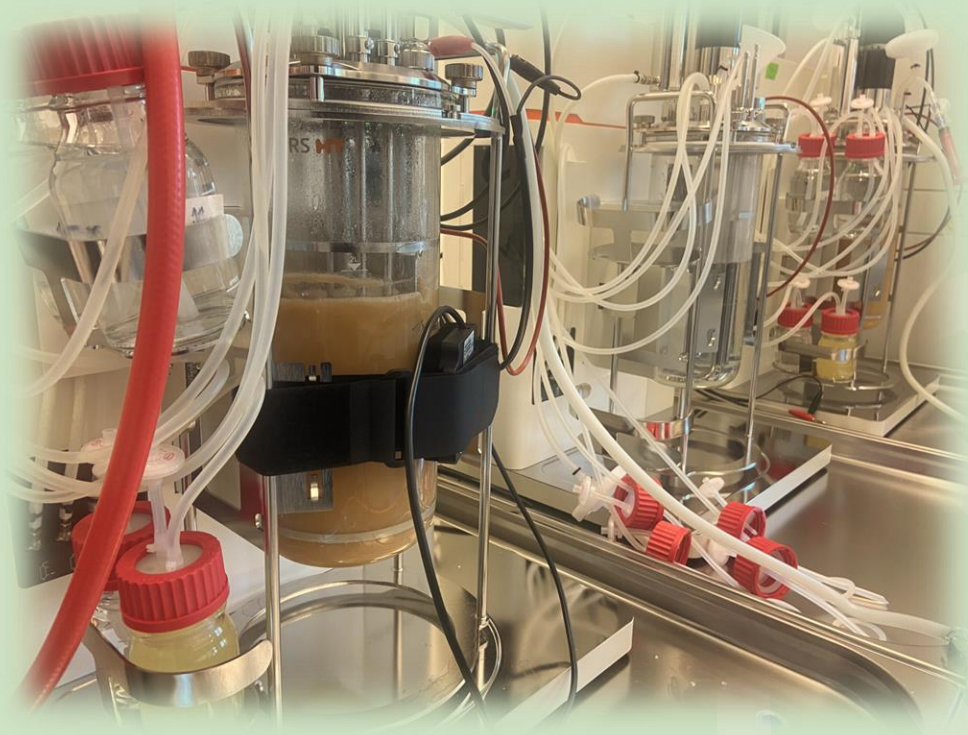
” We are developing novel drugs by **harnessing potent natural compounds** called polyketides. While some of them are already used in cancer treatment, antibiotics, and immunosuppression, **they mostly have been too complex to develop** - until now.



Our tech enables the creation of effective drugs in bioreactors, making new treatments affordable and accessible to everyone.

2. What special skills or innovations make your company stand out?

” We **unlock** over **10,000 polyketides** for human use, pioneering a patented process that exponentially increases new variants to **discover the best molecules**.



Although we just started in 2022, we've combined organic chemistry, microbiology, genetic engineering, and protein chemistry to harness the **synergy of human-structured science** and **nature's robust production processes**.

3. What inspired you to found this company?

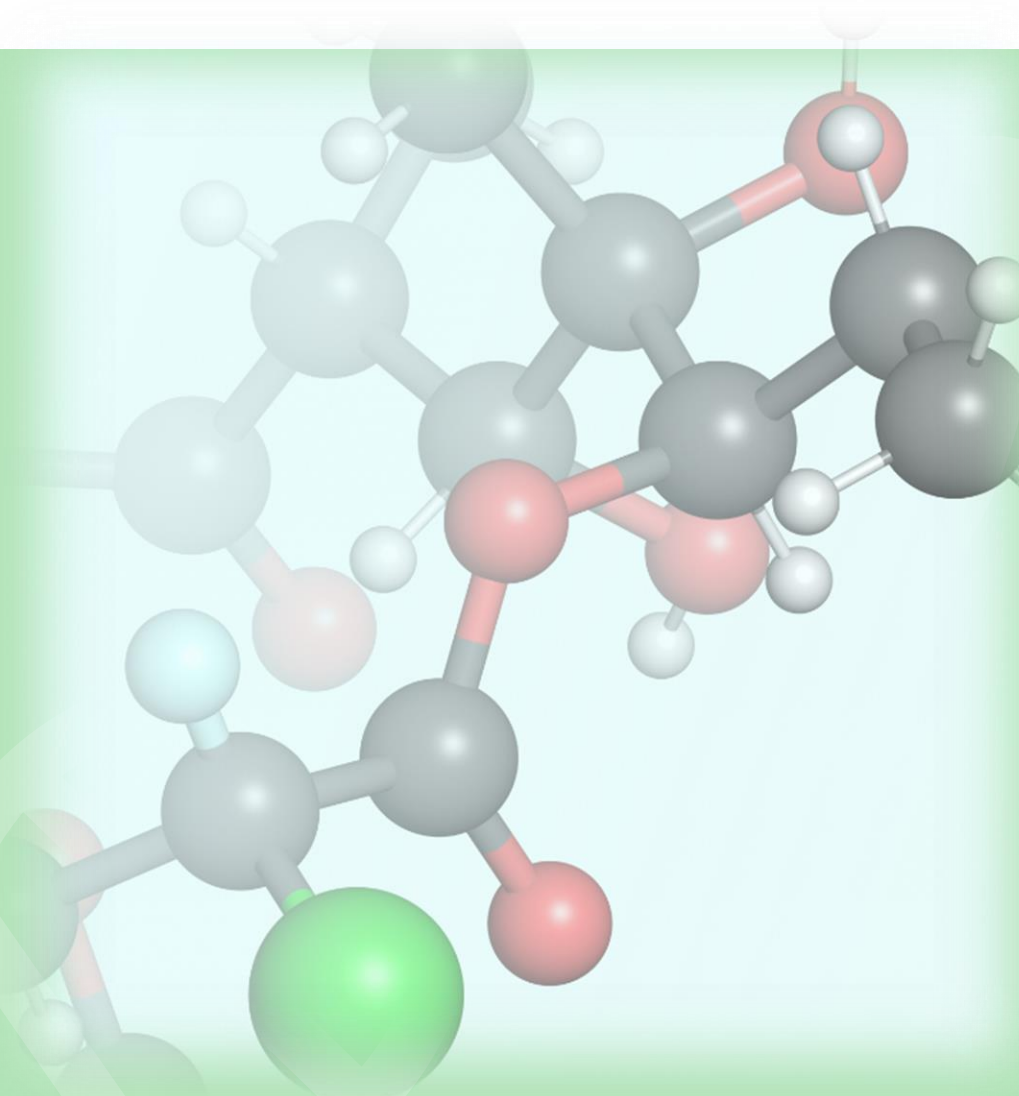
” I always knew I’d start a company one day, but I wasn’t going to be the one with the underlying idea. When Alex showed me his pitch, I immediately said yes. After 15 years in other industries, I wanted to do something with a **clear positive impact** and create the kind of work environment I enjoy.



4. What makes your company attractive to investors?

” Our patented technology is **fast and versatile**: it is developed only once and **can be applied to any polyketide target** immediately, **creating a large number of new drug candidates** within a few weeks.

And we're **the only ones able to create those molecules**, providing a rare combination in red biotech. Paired with our strong IP position, we provide the grounds for strong growth.



5. Why is your company a great place to work and attract top talent?



” Our nicely equipped lab covering different scientific fields is an excellent **playground for scientists**, and we develop cutting-edge technology together!

As an early-stage tech startup, we’re **always open to new ideas** and adjust accordingly, making it an exciting and dynamic place to work with the opportunity to leave your mark on our culture.

6. What advice would you give your past self at the start of your startup journey?

” Coming from a different field, I had a steep learning curve. So it’s crucial to take advice every now and then.

And contrary to popular belief:

Gut decisions can lead to great things.

It’s very beneficial to stay naive and not overthink at times. 😊

7. Can you share a fun fact or running gag in your team?



”

We managed to be ill for both of our two Christmas events so far. To make up for that, we went for bicycle tours in the summer to the beer gardens in and around Berlin—telling everyone about the marvelous Christmas party we’re having.

In a Nutshell



 Location: **Potsdam, Germany**

 Foundation: **2022**

 Financing: **Pre-Seed**

 Team: **3**

 Web: <https://www.kez.bio/>

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