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**AUC SUPPORTS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AFRICA'S FIRST BIOTECH ACADEMY
THROUGH NEW MINAPHARM COLLABORATION**

Cairo, December 9, 2025 – The American University in Cairo (AUC) and Minapharm Pharmaceuticals announced a new strategic partnership to strengthen biotechnology and pharmaceutical education, research, and innovation in Egypt, the region, and across Africa. Through the new partnership, the University will help establish the first African Biotech Academy, with AUC leading efforts on curriculum design, accreditation processes and academic integration. Presenting an innovative model of integrating academic excellence with industry leadership, the partnership prepares students for successful careers in the rapidly expanding biotechnology sector.

“This collaboration will significantly broaden the practical academic pathways available to our students in a sector that urgently needs local talent,” said AUC Provost Ehab Abdel-Rahman. “By joining forces with Minapharm, AUC reaffirms its commitment to empower the next generation of biotech leaders.”

The collaboration will facilitate knowledge exchange between AUC and Minapharm, including joint workshops, research projects, conferences, and expert talks from AUC faculty and

Minapharm professionals. It opens new career opportunities for students studying biotechnology, as the University will support Minapharm by connecting it with qualified graduates for potential recruitment. Minapharm professionals will also mentor students and support thesis projects in the biotechnology program.

“This partnership merges Minapharm’s 25 years of biomanufacturing and R&D expertise with the academic excellence of AUC, driving the advancement of biotech education and research,” said Shaheer Bardissi, co-CEO and executive board member at Minapharm. “Together, we aim to further enhance the biotech landscape in emerging markets through a wealth of intellectual and technical resources.”

Bardissi will serve on AUC’s industry advisory board, which is a collection of professionals and experts in the field who advise on industry trends and opportunities. The company will further provide technical support and access to its facilities and laboratories for joint research projects.

The development of this new initiative was led by Andreas Kakarougkas, assistant professor of cell and molecular biology and director of the biotechnology graduate program at AUC’s Nancy Hopkins Department of Biology, who initiated a search for an industry partner that could collaborate on joint research projects and provide experiential learning opportunities.

“This partnership will give biotechnology students a lot of opportunities for hands-on experience,” Kakarougkas said. “They can intern at the company to see how industry operates compared to academia, which can help them make more informed decisions after graduation.”

Currently, only students in the graduate biotechnology program are eligible to participate in the partnership, but Kakarougkas says there is room for growth, noting that the scope can definitely extend well beyond this program, as Minapharm’s manufacturing and research and development divisions could offer opportunities for AUC students studying engineering and business.

The new partnership builds on AUC’s commitment to advancing research and innovation while creating opportunities for students to gain practical experience in biotechnology, which is a critical industry to the future of health and economic development in Egypt and beyond.

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Founded in 1919, The American University in Cairo (AUC) is a leading English-language, American-accredited institution of higher education and center of the intellectual, social, and cultural life of the Arab world. It is a vital bridge between East and West, linking Egypt and the region to the world through scholarly research, partnerships with academic and research institutions and study abroad programs.

The University offers 39 undergraduate, 52 master’s and two PhD programs rooted in a liberal arts education that encourages students to think critically and find creative solutions to conflicts and challenges facing both the region and the world.

An independent, nonprofit, politically non-partisan, non-sectarian and equal opportunity institution, AUC is fully accredited in Egypt and the United States.