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## **BioGenerator Leads Investment in AgTech Company, Apse**

*Apse announces new CEO, John Killmer*

ST. LOUIS – March 3, 2015 – [BioGenerator](#), an evergreen investor that creates, grows and invests in promising companies and entrepreneurs, announced the closing of a seed financing with \$200,000 of BioGenerator investment in Apse, Inc. The company is developing technology for cost-effective manufacturing of RNA (ribonucleic acid), with an initial focus on agricultural pest control applications.

“Apse has developed unique technology that will allow for more cost-effective, non-GMO crop traits, and safer herbicides and insecticides than what is currently available. As the original investor in Apse when it was founded, BioGenerator believes there is tremendous potential for the company’s technology,” said Dan Broderick, vice president for BioGenerator.

Other investors in this round of funding include Missouri Technology Corporation, the Helix Fund and private individuals. The investment will allow Apse to continue to advance their technology and develop additional strategic relationships with large agriculture companies.

With the closing, Apse announced the hiring of John Killmer, PhD, as president and CEO. Killmer has over three decades of agtech leadership experience, with 25 years at Monsanto in senior roles including President of Monsanto China. “I am excited to join a promising young company that has made great progress developing its technology,” said Killmer. “Spray on traits, highly specific and safer insecticides, and other applications of exogenous RNA appear to have a tremendously exciting future in agriculture.”

Killmer also joins the Apse board of directors, which includes experienced executives John McAlister, PhD, former CEO of Tripos; David Smoller, PhD, former CSO of Sigma-Aldrich; Juan Arhancet, PhD, former Monsanto Research Fellow and the founder of Apse; Nathan Lakey, CEO of Orion Genomics; and Pete Seggelko, former VP at Dow AgroSciences, along with Dan Broderick and Charlie Bolten of BioGenerator.

In addition to investing a cumulative total of \$410,000 in Apse, BioGenerator has provided other resources to help grow the company. Apse is a client at the BioGenerator Labs, which provides a unique, no-cost, fully-equipped innovation environment with wet labs and offices. BioGenerator Entrepreneurs in Residence also served as initial mentors and executives of the company.

St. Louis is a rapidly expanding agtech hub with established companies and research institutions like Monsanto and the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center, international companies like KWS and Kaiima selecting the city for their U.S. headquarters, along with a growing pool of startups. In July of 2014, BioGenerator led the first financing of Arvegenix, a new St. Louis agtech company founded by former Monsanto executives. “BioGenerator sees great opportunities in agtech in the region and has made an effort to expand our investment in this important sector,” said Eric Gulve, PhD, president of BioGenerator. “In 2014 alone, BioGenerator invested \$500,000 in St. Louis agtech startups and we look to be even more active in this area in the future.”

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**About BioGenerator**

BioGenerator produces a sustained pipeline of successful bioscience companies and entrepreneurs in St. Louis by creating, growing and investing in promising new enterprises. BioGenerator is a nonprofit subsidiary of BioSTL, which advances St. Louis' prosperity by cultivating a thriving bioscience sector, building regional capacity to capitalize on St. Louis' world class medical and plant biosciences. Please visit [www.BioGenerator.org](http://www.BioGenerator.org) for additional information. Follow BioGenerator on Twitter [@BioGeneratorSTL](https://twitter.com/BioGeneratorSTL).

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