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### User at a Glance

Eppendorf knows the users of its products and their specific requirements for various applications very well. Here, we would like to introduce some of our valued customers - or rather: let them introduce themselves by answering five questions - about themselves, their employer and current challenges they face in their market.

For this issue we have interviewed Kfir Molakandov about his work and private life. He is Head of Diabetes Cell Therapy Department at Kadimastem (Israel).

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### What three words would your colleagues use to describe you?

I believe, my colleagues would describe me as creative, thoughtful, and cooperative.

### Where and how did you spend your last vacation?

Though Israel is a relatively small country, the landscape is very versatile, from the desert down south to the snowy mountains up north. On our last family vacation, we went to the northern part where the temperatures are cooler and the rivers are flowing. We enjoyed hiking and experienced a thrilling adventure rafting down the beautiful Jordan River. We also visited Nimrod's Fortress, a 13th century medieval crusader's fort.

### What do you especially like about your job?

I am grateful, that I am part of the leading team of a clinical stage biotech company. A company that is engaged in the development and production of innovative regenerative cell therapies intended to treat diseases currently considered incurable. The dynamic work environment in our company is full of enthusiasm that provides ongoing learning opportunities. Heading the Diabetes Cell Therapy Department, together with my team, we feel honored for having the opportunity to further develop our cell therapy solutions intended to provide treatment to millions of diabetes patients.



Kfir Molakandov, PhD, Head of Diabetes Cell Therapy Department at Kadimastem in Ness Ziona, Israel.

### How did you get in touch with Eppendorf bioprocess equipment?

Our company, Kadimastem, is part of the interdisciplinary TECHNOBEAT consortium consisting of renowned



experts working in different fields from cell therapy to tissue engineering. The TECHNOBEAT project aims to provide new treatment options for patients suffering from heart failure due to the loss of heart muscle tissue following myocardial infarction (heart attack). Within this project, we have developed unique cGMP protocols for large scale expansion of Pluripotent Stem Cells (PSCs) in bioreactors. For these expansion processes, we have used the DASGIP and the DASbox systems that enable online monitoring, sampling, and a wide range of culture volumes. Since then, we are utilizing these technologies for the generation of large quantities of high-quality PSC-derived pancreatic islets for the treatment of insulin dependent diabetes.

### In your opinion, what is the most exciting challenge in your area of science at the moment?

The cell therapy industry presents a range of scientific and clinical challenges. The major challenges in PSC-derived pancreatic islets therapy have to do with appropriate delivery systems, cell protection from host immune response, as well as the need for cell retrieval. The ideal product is expected to enable long term satisfactory function, maintaining the capacity to restore normal blood glucose levels. Research and development activities of both industry and academia are focused on finding the appropriate mechanisms and solutions. We are happy to lead such efforts through different projects and collaborations, promoting cell therapy as a viable solution for millions of patients suffering from diabetes.

