

*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

The Healthcare Businesswomen's Association Announces Inaugural Pitch Competition for Women Innovators with Cash Prizes Up to \$100K

Addressing Funding Inequity by Empowering Female Founders in Healthcare with Access to Capital and Resources

FAIRFIELD, N.J. Thursday, 27 June, 2024 – The Healthcare Businesswomen's Association (HBA) is pleased to announce the launch of its first-ever [Pitch Competition for Women Innovators](#), set to take place on 25 September, during the [2024 HBA Annual Conference](#) in Toronto, Canada. This groundbreaking event aims to address the significant funding gap faced by women entrepreneurs in healthcare and life sciences, where only 3 percent of venture capital funding goes to female founders, and an even smaller percentage to women of color.

"We are thrilled to host our first Pitch Competition for Women Innovators. By providing a platform for women-led startups to showcase their groundbreaking ideas and solutions, the HBA aims to close the funding gap and drive the future of healthcare forward," said Mary Stutts, CEO of the HBA. "We are pleased that our corporate partners and venture fund leaders are joining us to accelerate the impact of women innovators."

Adding a wealth of experience as a longtime life sciences investor, the pitch competition will be emceed by HBA's 2022 Woman of the Year, Beth Seidenberg, M.D., Co-founding Managing Director of Westlake Village BioPartners and General Partner at Kleiner Perkins.

"We are delighted to partner with the Healthcare Businesswomen's Association (HBA) in the important work of supporting women innovators in health & life sciences," said Dr. Maura Campbell, President & CEO of OBIO®. "The HBA specializes in advancing women in the business of healthcare, and OBIO® provides comprehensive supports to companies commercializing their technologies in this industry. We are very proud of what we have achieved through our Women in Health Initiative (WiHI) Seed Program, and this new partnership combines the strengths of both organizations, giving us a collective opportunity to strengthen support for women entrepreneurs in the healthcare and life sciences sectors."

Promising startups in the healthcare or life sciences sector, with at least 51 percent female ownership, are encouraged to apply to participate in the competition. Early-stage companies that have raised between \$2M and \$5M in capital, and later-stage companies that have raised over \$5M in private capital are eligible to participate. Cash prizes up to \$100K will be awarded to the winning pitches with additional prizes to 2nd place and an Audience Choice winner. Additionally, there is a potential opportunity for companies to secure an equity investment, pending due diligence. Pitch competition

participants will have access to HBA's Innovation Hub and can meet with key industry venture fund leaders and potential investors and financial advisors.

Application Details

Applications for the opportunity to pitch are currently open; the deadline to apply is 21 July 2024, and there is a non-refundable fee of \$200 to apply. To be eligible, companies must be a private legal entity, and a high-potential health science company focused on developing innovative products or services. A complete list of eligibility requirements can be found on the pitch competition [website](#). All pitches received by the deadline will be reviewed by an esteemed panel of judges, comprised of individuals from venture capital and corporate venture entities. Applicants will be notified in early August if their pitch is chosen to be part of the competition in Toronto on 25 September 2024.

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About the Healthcare Businesswomen's Association (HBA):

The Healthcare Businesswomen's Association (HBA) is a global organization dedicated to furthering the advancement and impact of women in the business of healthcare. With more than 80 locations throughout the world, the HBA serves a community of nearly 150 Corporate Partners, representing a workforce of five million employees. The HBA is focused on advancing women's wellness and health equity, funding women's innovation, and building the pipeline for the health ecosystem workforce of the future. The HBA also provides distinctive global recognition of outstanding individuals and companies to promote visibility of their achievements in advancing women in the workplace.

About OBIO®:

Founded in 2009, OBIO® is a not-for-profit, membership-based organization engaged in strategy, programming, policy development and advocacy to further the commercialization of human health technologies that position Canada as a leader in the international marketplace. OBIO® advances this goal through collaborative partnerships with industry, the investment community, academia, the healthcare system and government. For more information, please visit obio.ca and follow OBIO® on [LinkedIn](#) and [X](#).

Media Contacts:

Nicole Randall
Global Head of External Affairs
Healthcare Businesswomen's Association
Tel: (973) 575-0606 ext. 732
Email: nrandall@hbanet.org

Doriane Rey
Senior Manager, Marketing & Communications
OBIO®
Email: dorianerey@obio.ca