

## Media Release

### **EditForce raises 870 million JPY**

**Fukuoka, Japan, 1 March, 2019** – EditForce Inc. (“EditForce”) has announced that it has raised 870 million yen (7.84 million US dollars) by March 1, 2019, from six new and existing investors in the Series B2 round, as described below.

EditForce, a venture company with a unique DNA/RNA editing technology, was founded by KISCO LTD. and Takahiro Nakamura, PhD, Associate Professor, Kyusyu University in 2015, and it is supported by The University of Tokyo Edge Capital Co., Ltd. (UTECE) and QB capital, LLC. It has been developing its independent pentatricopeptide repeat (PPR) protein platform technology. The technology has a distinct feature that enables the editing of not only DNA but also RNA, highlighting its difference compared to other technologies, and is thus expected to be applied to a wide range of fields. The platform technology has also different mechanism to work and isolated IP from other existing DNA editing technologies. EditForce decided to focus on the pharmaceutical field since 2017 and is making efforts to develop PPR to be applied in the field of novel pharmaceutical development through business alliances with multiple pharmaceutical companies.

In this round, in addition to KISCO LTD., which has supported EditForce since its foundation, UTECE, a lead investor in the Series B round and QB Capital, LLC, which has supported EditForce as a venture company from Kyushu University, EditForce has raised funds from Newton Biocapital, ITOCHU Technology Ventures, Inc., Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), and K4 Ventures Good Kaisha. By taking full advantage of the broad networks and deep expertise owned by these corporations, it endeavors to successfully apply the unique PPR technology worldwide in pharmaceuticals, agriculture, and chemistry fields.

Dr. Takahiro Nakamura, President of EditForce commented, “I believe investments by corporations with various backgrounds and deep expertise in EditForce clearly show that the PPR protein platform, the fundamental technology of our company, is highly regarded as a valuable tool in various fields. In order to develop the PPR protein platform as a globally recognized and broadly used technology from Japan, we must expend our utmost efforts into research and development of the technology while also making “products” based on the technology as soon as possible. In our medium-term plan, we focus on the area of pharmaceuticals with increasing demand in the market.”

Dr. Toshiyuki Mori, Investment Partner of Newton Biocapital, a co-lead investor in the Series B2 round, commented, “As Newton Biocapital’s first investment project in Japan, we are extremely pleased to have invested in EditForce, which has unique and distinguished DNA/RNA editing technology. By bringing experienced members in drug R&D and global business development experts, we look forward to contribute to expand the business of EditForce

Mr. Koji Abe, Senior Vice President at ITOCHU Technology Ventures, Inc, another co-lead investor in this round, commented, “EditForce’s unique DNA/RNA editing technology is indispensable core tool for gene therapy. PPR platform also has a huge potential to be applied in other bio-related industries in addition to pharmaceuticals in the future. We are very excited to be able to support the company to grow as a key player in the industry and deliver significant benefits to the global society.”

**Investors:**

- The University of Tokyo Edge Capital Co., Ltd. (UTEK)
- QB Capital, LLC
- Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST)
- Newton Biocapital
- ITOCHU Technology Ventures, Inc.
- K4 Ventures Godo Kaisha (The Kansai Electric Power Group)

**About EditForce:**

It is a venture company that is developing a PPR protein platform technology as the DNA/RNA editing tool.

<u>Headquarters:</u>	Fukuoka Tenjin Fukoku Seimei Bldg., 4th Fl. 1-9-17 Tenjin, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka-shi, Fukuoka 810-0001, Japan Phone +81-92-741-8484
<u>Capital:</u>	753, 925, 350 JPY as of March 1, 2019
<u>President:</u>	Takahiro Nakamura
<u>Board of Directors:</u>	Takashi Ono (Board Director, COO) Takekazu Kishimoto (KISCO LTD. President) Teruyuki Fukuda (KISCO LTD. Executive Officer) Atsushi Usami (The University of Tokyo Edge Capital Co., Ltd, Partner)
<u>Audit and Supervisory Board:</u>	Yasunobu Akimitsu (KISCO LTD. Finance and Accounting Depart, General Manager) Tomotaka Goji (The University of Tokyo Edge Capital Co., Ltd, Managing Partner and President)

**About PPR platform technology:**

PPR is a protein that was discovered in plants, which regulates the gene expression by binding RNA or DNA in a sequence-specific manner. PPR proteins are also found in humans and yeasts, and they have similar functions to those of plants. Dr. Takahiro Nakamura (associate professor, Kyushu University, and president of EditForce) and Dr. Yusuke Yagi focused on the PPR proteins and elucidated the recognition mode of RNA/DNA by PPR proteins. This elucidation paves the way to a new technology for the rational design of artificial PPR proteins targeted to specific RNA/DNA sequences. Versatile DNA/RNA editing tools can be created by integrating the PPR protein with various enzymes.

**About KISCO LTD.:**

Tokyo, Japan; Takekazu Kishimoto, President

Since its founding in 1921, KISCO LTD. is a specialized trading and business developing company that offering solutions meet customers' needs with a wide range of fields such as chemicals, synthetic resins, electronics materials, packaging materials and biotechnology.

We have trading offices and manufacturing bases in Japan, China, Asia, Americas and Europe, aiming for existence that plays a role as a bridge between advanced materials and customers, and has expanded the scope of our activity areas.

For more information on KISCO Corporation, please visit our web site. [www.kisco-net.com](http://www.kisco-net.com)

**About The University of Tokyo Edge Capital (UTEC):**

Tokyo, Japan; Tomotaka Goji, Managing Partner and President

Since its inception in 2004, The University of Tokyo Edge Capital (UTEC) has conducted venture capital investments pioneering frontiers to solve global issues of humankind, by bringing capital, talent and knowledge, around science and technology. With our latest fund UTEC 4 Limited Partnership founded with the commitment of approx. JPY 24.2 billion in April 2018, we have founded four funds totaling approx. JPY 54.3 billion. We have invested in approx. 100 start-ups, 10 of which went public and 10 were acquired in M&A transactions.

**About QB Capital, LLC:**

Fukuoka, Japan; Tsuyoshi Sakamoto, Managing Partner, Takashi Hondo, Managing Partner

QB Capital, LLC manages the first “industry-academia collaboration” fund established in Kyushu area. QB Capital, LLC invests in research seeds and seed- to early-stage ventures, based on research seeds from universities mainly in Kyushu area. Furthermore, QB Capital, LLC supports the establishment of these venture companies. QB Capital, LLC tackles the development of an innovative industry in Kyushu area and its use in society, by providing “seamless hands-on” support from beginning to growing-stage of these companies.

**About Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST):**

Saitama, Japan; Michinari Hamaguchi, President

JST is an organization that leads Japan’s science and technology (S&T) development as an innovation navigator. JST aim to contribute to the lives of people and the achievement of a sustainable society by promoting S&T for the purpose of opening up opportunities in innovation. Since its foundation, JST’s many outstanding achievements accomplished in collaboration with the government, universities, the industrial sector and public have been earned global recognition. This is the investment program "SUCCESS" for start-ups putting JST-funded R&Ds into practical application.

[www.jst.go.jp/EN/index.html](http://www.jst.go.jp/EN/index.html)

**About Newton Biocapital:**

Brussels, Belgium; Alain Parthoens, Managing Partner

Newton Biocapital is a Venture Capital Fund incorporated in Belgium, focused on financing biotech and life science projects in the "core of Europe" (B, NL, D, F) and Japan for the prevention and treatment of chronic diseases. The fund's approach as lead investor is to support promising start-up projects as well as neglected or undervalued late-stage projects, in order to mitigate the risks and to create investor value. The leadership team consists of specialists with long-standing management and investor experience who coach bio-entrepreneurs through the development stages of their projects.

Newton Biocapital's mission is to generate substantial financial and societal value by providing innovative, breakthrough, and affordable solutions to patients

**About ITOCHU Technology Ventures:**

Tokyo, Japan; Shinzo Nakano, President & CEO/Partner

ITOCHU Technology Ventures, Inc. (ITV) has been engaged in investments in venture companies as well as assisting them with solution to carry out its primary mission of fostering innovative technology venture companies to become a part of the de fact standard in the next generation. Since its establishment in 2000, ITV has been launching four consecutive venture funds and investing more than 150 companies. ITV's investment areas include ICT, finance, infrastructure and energy, agriculture, healthcare and medicine, education, social services for the consumer sector. With its focus on Japan, ITV also invests in potentially prominent foreign companies that create advanced and innovative services or technologies.

**About K4 Ventures (The Kansai Electric Power Group):**

Osaka, Japan; Takashi Morimoto, Chief Executive Officer

K4 Ventures Good Kaisha (K4 Ventures) is a corporate venture capital firm of The Kansai Electric Power Group Company. K4 Ventures invests in venture companies that (1) have potential to grow through collaboration belong to the energy-related industry, telecommunications industry, and real estate and social life industry, or (2) have innovative technologies/visions to provide solutions for customers or world-wide issues, beyond the short-term collaboration. K4 Ventures supports the growth of outstanding venture companies as their partner and promotes collaborations among companies to obtain a synergistic effect. The mission of K4 Ventures is to provide fast, innovative solutions for energy, environmental, and food-supply issues.

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