

Dr. Thomas Diefenthal

Born in 1960, Thomas Diefenthal studied biology, with his main focus on genetics, at the University of Cologne and wrote his dissertation (1985-1986) in the field of cancer genetics. He was a scientist at the Max-Planck-Institute for Plant Breeding & Genetics in Cologne from 1986 to 1989. In 1988 he received a doctorate for his work on regulatory genes.



In 1990, he joined the research team of the food stuffs company Weissheimer Malt, building up their department for biotechnology in cooperation with the Carlsberg Research Laboratory in Copenhagen (DK). The department worked on the use of the yeast enzyme system for industrial synthesis (technical enzymes). At the end of 1994, he and a colleague founded Maltagen Research GmbH. He was managing partner until 1999. Together with an American partner, the company developed a new method for manufacturing pharmaceutical products from genetically modified plants.

In 1999 Thomas Diefenthal took over the role as Managing Director of BioPark Regensburg GmbH. In this role he built up the Innovation and Foundation Centre for Biotechnology in Regensburg on the University Campus in three construction phases in 2001, 2006 and 2011 for a total of 42 million €. With 18,000 m², 35 leaseholders and 718 employees, the BioPark is the second largest biotech center in Bavaria. In addition, Thomas Diefenthal coordinates the Bioregion Regensburg Cluster, which has been certified with the Silver Label in accordance with the European Cluster Excellence Initiative, and currently has 66 companies and 5,671 employees.

Thomas Diefenthal is a jury and coach member in the Business Plan Competition in North Bavaria and a mentor investor for the Region of Upper Palatinate. In this role he has accompanied a total of 71 startups, and given investment assistance to young biotechnology companies in the region totaling 839 million €. He has conducted several on-site and profile analyses in the region with the consulting companies Capgemini and Detecon International. He put these results successfully into action, as a repeat for the Initiative “Healthcare Regensburg – managed by BioPark” in 2017. The last study in 2021 showed that sales had doubled to € 2.9 billion within 10 years in the healthcare sector. In 2023, he launched BioPark Jump, an accelerator/incubator in the BioPark to better promote the translation of research into application and start-ups.

Dr. Diefenthal was selected as one of twenty leaders in the countrywide project in Germany “Shaping Processes of Change - Management and Leadership” by Wirtschaftswoche and Dale Carnegie Germany. Since 2014 he is Vice President of the German Association of Innovation, Technology and Business Incubation Centers (BVIZ) in Berlin. Since 2018 he has been Ambassador of the City of Regensburg.

Regensburg, November 2024