

#MeetTheNeed - How Ginkgo Bioworks is Bringing Life Science Innovation to the Development of COVID-19 Testing and Vaccines

General Atlantic launched #MeetTheNeed, an initiative to collect and share the inspiring stories of the entrepreneurs, businesses and organizations making a positive impact around the world. We're amazed at the ways our portfolio companies and the broader GA network have mobilized in response to COVID-19.

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From **Walker Carpenter**, Associate in New York

When looking for responses to COVID-19, the vantage point from the Life Sciences sector is particularly important. We're investing in emerging technologies that can play a role in the national and global response to the virus.

In particular, we've been impressed by the decisive and innovative approach taken by Ginkgo Bioworks, a General Atlantic portfolio company.

General Atlantic first invested in Ginkgo Bioworks in December 2017. We were drawn to the company's industrial and computational approach to biology. A core thesis at Ginkgo is that biology can be an engineering discipline if you design the right technologies around it. For Ginkgo, that meant building a state-of-the-art automated laboratory facility to augment traditional lab scientists with software and robotics. By standardizing and automating lab operations, Ginkgo is able to increase speed, reduce errors, and collect highly reproducible data in high throughput experiments.

Since our initial investment, Ginkgo has improved the efficiency of their facility, allowing the company to deliver experimental data at a greater scale and faster speed than traditional labs.

When COVID-19 hit, Ginkgo quickly leveraged the unique speed and scale of its facilities to help combat the virus. To that end, the Company opened its platform with \$25 million of free Foundry work that any qualified company, individual or institution could use to advance their own research efforts. Well-established and startup partners alike are using Ginkgo's unique capabilities to improve their designs for diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines. Among the Company's most exciting initiatives are its vaccine work with Moderna, a leading mRNA-focused therapeutics company, and Concentric by Ginkgo, a new COVID-19 testing service designed to support schools' and businesses' reopening plans. To increase testing capacity, Ginkgo raised \$70M to fund the development and build-out for an innovative diagnostic based on next-generation sequencing. The round was led by Illumina with participation from General Atlantic and Viking Global.

At General Atlantic, we're continually impressed by Ginkgo's ability to making a meaningful contribution to the national and global effort against the virus.

- Read our article on XP Investimento's efforts in Brazil [here](#)
- Read our article on Life Science Cares' work in Boston and Philadelphia [here](#)
- Read our article on Echoing Green's efforts to support social entrepreneurs [here](#)
- Read our article on Unacademy's commitment to online learning in India [here](#)
- Read the story of Asia Medical's on-the-ground effort to combat COVID-19 in Wuhan [here](#)
- Read the story of Benevity's 'We Are We' Campaign [here](#)

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