

PRESS RELEASE

Bertelsmann Thrives as a Global Investor

- **46 new and follow-on investments in first half of 2021**
- **269 active investments in companies and investment funds, including 16 unicorns**
- **Largest investment to date of €500 million in Brazil**
- **More than €1.4 billion invested since establishment of own investment funds**

Gütersloh, September 29, 2021 – In the past 15 years, Bertelsmann has invested more than €1.4 billion in digital companies and funds around the world. In the current financial year 2021 alone, the international media, education, and services group has so far made 46 new and follow-up investments through its Bertelsmann Investments division. At the end of the first half of 2021, Bertelsmann had a total of 269 active investments, including 16 “unicorns” with valuations above a billion USD. Besides investing in companies and funds, Bertelsmann Investments also acquired a direct stake in Afya, Brazil’s leading provider of medical education and training. After review by the antitrust authorities, in August Bertelsmann acquired a 25-percent stake and 46 percent of the voting rights in Afya for €500 million. Bertelsmann Investments had previously helped build up Afya over the years.

Thomas Rabe, Chairman & CEO of Bertelsmann, said: “Investments in companies with innovative business models are part of our growth agenda. They give us access to new technological developments and promising international markets. They enable us to expand selected, long-term holdings, as with Afya in Brazil. And they contribute significantly to our Group profit thanks to a large number of successful exits in recent years.”

A majority of the companies in which Bertelsmann owns stakes operate in business areas that are highly relevant for the Group: They create innovative media offerings, provide services in the e-commerce sector, or operate in areas such as fintech and education, using new technologies and business models.

Shobhna Mohn, Chief Strategy Officer of Bertelsmann Investments, said: “The investments made in 2021 broaden BI’s network both geographically and thematically. With the single investment in Afya, we have taken an important strategic step in the global healthcare education and training market. We also further strengthened our resilient and wide-ranging portfolio in the first half of the year.”

Bertelsmann Asia Investments (BAI), the fund established in 2008, is an expression of Bertelsmann's long-term commitment to China. BAI has invested in nearly 200 start-ups to date, nine of which are currently listed on various stock exchanges. BAI made a total of 26 new and follow-on investments in the first half of the year, e.g. in the pharmaceutical companies ComMedX, NeoX and Galixir, which use artificial intelligence to develop and test drugs for difficult-to-cure diseases. BAI also recorded successful IPOs of Linklogis, one of China's leading technology companies, and DingDong Maicai, a Chinese fresh food delivery service.

Bertelsmann India Investments (BII) strengthened its portfolio with follow-on investments in the Indian direct-to-consumer food platform Licious and the e-commerce service provider Shiprocket. BII also benefited from a successful second partial exit at Eruditus. Even after a third partial exit in September, BII still holds a significant stake in the global executive education platform – the first “unicorn” in the BII portfolio, with an enterprise valuation of USD 3.2 billion.

Bertelsmann Brazil Investments (BBI) benefited from the sale of its stake in the BE2 fund launched by Crescera Capital. The fund had held an interest in Afya since 2014 and was liquidated after the transaction. This represented a very attractive exit for BBI and created the basis for Bertelsmann's long-term investment in Afya.

Bertelsmann Digital Media Investments (BDMI) made 17 new and follow-on investments, including in the NFT marketplace Infinite Objects, the freelance banking app Lance, and My Yoga Teacher, an online provider of yoga classes. The fund benefited from successful exits from the podcast platform Wondery, from the programmatic advertising provider Pubmatic, which went public at a valuation of USD 1.5 billion on the U.S. tech exchange NASDAQ, and from Barkbox, a subscription service for pet supplies. Bertelsmann invested in Barkbox in 2012; the company is now valued at USD 1.6 billion.

Beyond this, BI has decided to make further fund-of-funds investments in the VC markets of Southeast Asia, Africa, and Europe, to strengthen the BI network in these regions and to benefit from their promising growth dynamics.

For more information: <https://www.bertelsmann-investments.com/>

About Bertelsmann

Bertelsmann is a media, services and education company that operates in about 50 countries around the world. It includes the broadcaster RTL Group, the trade book publisher Penguin Random House, the magazine publisher Gruner + Jahr, the music company BMG, the service provider Arvato, the Bertelsmann Printing Group, the Bertelsmann Education Group and Bertelsmann Investments, an international network of funds. The company has around 130,000 employees and generated revenues of €17.3 billion in the 2020 financial year. Bertelsmann stands for creativity and entrepreneurship. This combination promotes first-class media content and innovative service solutions that inspire customers around the world. Bertelsmann aspires to achieve climate neutrality by 2030. In 2021, Bertelsmann commemorates the 100th birthday of Reinhard Mohn, the Group's late post-war founder and longtime Chairman and CEO.

About Bertelsmann Investments

Bertelsmann Investments unites Bertelsmann's global holdings in startups. Its activities are focused on the strategic growth regions of Brazil, China, and India, as well as the U.S. and Europe. BI acquires its stakes through the strategic investment platforms Bertelsmann Brazil Investments (BBI), Bertelsmann Asia Investments (BAI), Bertelsmann India Investments (BII), and Bertelsmann Digital Media Investments (BDMI). Bertelsmann owns stakes in more than 160 innovative companies via these funds.

Bertelsmann online



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