

# Media release



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## Pioneers of Australian biotechnology recognised at AusBiotech 2010

**Three pioneers of Australian biotechnology were recognised today for their long-serving commitment to the industry, each receiving the *AusBiotech 2010* Chairman's Excellence Award, sponsored by Roche. Mr Leon Serry, Dr John Ballard and Dr Simon Carroll each accepted the accolade for their outstanding contribution to biotech in Australia.**

The AusBiotech excellence awards are a tribute for those who have contributed to the shaping of the Australian biotechnology sector; working within a company or as an individual. This year's winners personify the depth and quality of the Australian biotechnology industry.

Mr Leon Serry was the founder and managing director of Circadian. He has made an outstanding contribution to the Australian biotechnology industry and academic and commercial sector. Leon has pioneered the development of a vibrant industry based on innovative and sensitive technology transfer from the Australian medical research community throughout the last 20 years, overcoming significant scepticism and numerous funding crises. A few years ago, Sir Gus Nossal described Leon as the father of the Australian biotechnology sector.

Dr John Ballard, currently a Director of BR Angels, is one of the founding and most significant leaders of the Australian biotechnology industry. Dr Ballard has a long-standing commitment to promoting the industry that extends well beyond his employed positions. He is known for taking a particular interest in the establishment of innovation centres and seed funding capital to support spin-out companies from universities and other public sector institutions. Dr Ballard has been recognised for his passion for helping start-up biotech companies grow and thrive, driven to put back into the industry the skills and learnings that he has gained over the last 20 years.

Dr Simon Carroll was the longest serving AusBiotech Board Member to date, having been a passionate and active participant from the inception of AusBiotech until his retirement in August this year. During his tenure as chair and deputy chair, AusBiotech was successfully transformed into a sustainable, recognised champion and advocate of the sector and a strong voice for members' interests. Dr Carroll has seen some challenging times for Australian biotech, but also been a driving force for the current success we are all enjoying. It is widely recognised that he has been an overseer

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to the growth and development not only of AusBiotech as an organisation, but the wider biotechnology industry in Australia.

In presenting the awards, AusBiotech Chairman Dr Deborah Rathjen, said: "We have some of the best biotech minds in the world, so this award certainly carries with it global recognition and esteem. These three gentlemen represent the pioneers of Australian biotechnology; the very people whose long serving passion and dedication have seen our industry become what it is today."

Stella Xu, Executive Director at Roche Partnering Asia, commented on the award presentations: "As the biggest biotech company in the world, Roche is keen to explore new ways of working with Australia's biotech industry to accelerate innovation in healthcare for patients around the world. Australia has many excellent scientists and the AusBiotech Excellence Awards showcase the best."

"Together we all play a role in helping to deliver new, life-saving medical treatments as well as other biotechnology successes that turn our great science into a commercial reality. Success at any level, be it corporate or at a national level is only made possible through the endeavours of individuals and I am proud today to be playing my part in honouring those people whose creativity and determination have played a transformative role in Australian biotechnology," Xu continued.

*AusBiotech 2010* is the annual conference of AusBiotech and the premier biotechnology conference for Australia and the Asia-Pacific. The conference attracts over 1400 delegates from across the world each year and is renowned for its agenda-setting programs, significant business analysis and world class Business Matching Program.

For additional event information visit the conference website at: [www.ausbiotech2010.com.au](http://www.ausbiotech2010.com.au).

**ENDS**

#### **About AusBiotech**

AusBiotech is Australia's voice on biotechnology, and represents more than 3,000 members, encompassing medicines, medical diagnostics and devices, agriculture, alternative fuels and climate change.

For further information, interviews, or media registration for *AusBiotech 2010*, please contact:

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