

Media Release

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For immediate release

Seeking Australia's top life science students

The search is on for Australia's brightest life science students as they design solutions to bio-issues that affect our health, quality of life and our future.

Student life-scientists and bio-entrepreneurs are invited to apply for the annual awards and present their research, vying for the AusBiotech-GSK Student Excellence Award 2009.

The award program aims to recognise and encourage promising researchers who are working on innovations to extend and enhance our lives, including medicines, diagnostics and medical devices, as well as solutions to address food shortages and climate change.

Previous winner for NSW, Mr Leo McHugh from the University of Sydney, was honoured for developing a new software package to assist in proteomics research, the study of proteins and their functions. The proteins present (or absent) in disease samples compared to the protein profiles of normal tissue can assist scientists to elucidate the biochemical processes underlying disease. Leo's software, named PINNACLE, uses a powerful artificial intelligence approach and his results showed more protein identifications when compared against a number of leading packages.

"The student awards program, made possible through GlaxoSmithKline's (GSK) support, is a key driving factor in the development of our future bio-industry leaders," said AusBiotech CEO, Dr Anna Lavelle. "Student research is a critical factor in the life cycle that takes discoveries through the commercialisation process to reach and benefit the community."

"GSK is proud to support the student awards. While it's always valuable to celebrate achievement in science, it is also so important to encourage an understanding of the business aspects of the bioscience field for those entering it. This leads to better research outcomes and a stronger people 'pipeline' for academia and industry in Australia," said Dr Ashley Bates, Head of R&D Alliances Australia/NZ, GSK.

The Awards, which are now open and close on 7 August, recognise one winner in each state. National winners will gather to share research and receive their awards at the annual international conference - **AusBiotech 2009, Melbourne, 27 – 30 October**. For more information visit: www.ausbiotech.org or contact Lorraine Chiroiu lchiroiu@ausbiotech.org or 0429 801 118

AusBiotech, Australia's voice on biotechnology, represents more than 3,000 members, encompassing medicines, medical diagnostics and devices, agriculture, alternative fuels and climate change. AusBiotech is dedicated to the development, growth and prosperity of biotechnology in Australia.

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