



May 2010

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BIO2010 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION: 3 - 6 MAY 2010

The Governor of Victoria, Professor David de Kretser AC, led a Victorian delegation of investors and biotechnology companies to the recent BIO 2010 International Convention in Chicago, USA.

This year, the global event for biotechnology hosted a record-number of partnering meetings and highlighted a broad array of speakers addressing critical global challenges and the top issues in biotech.

Hosted by the USA Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO), the event drew 15,322 industry leaders from 49 states and 65 countries.

Victorian announcements at BIO2010 in Chicago include:

[Victorian Commercialisation Fund invests in treatment for Alzheimer's disease](#) - A Victorian developed drug that targets an enzyme believed to cause Alzheimer's disease will be taken into pre-clinical development. The Medical Research Commercialisation Fund has provided \$650,000 to [Bace Therapeutics](#) to develop a drug to block beta secretase in Alzheimer's disease patients. The Bace Therapeutics program builds on the findings of researchers from the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research who discovered two compounds that bind to beta secretase (also called BACE1). Further development of these compounds was done in collaboration with the University of Melbourne.

[New bioelectronics lab to see into the future](#) - Victoria is establishing its first bioelectronics laboratory which will play a lead role in the development of an advanced bionic eye. The laboratory, being set up by National ICT Australia's (NICTA's) Victoria Research Laboratory at the University of Melbourne, will design and test the advanced electronics to be included in the bionic eye, enabling patients to recognise faces and read large print. When completed the new facility will be the leading bioelectronics laboratory in the Asia Pacific region.

[Victorian researchers trial revolutionary new eye treatment](#) - A revolutionary new laser treatment for one of the leading causes of blindness is showing promise in a dry age-related macular degeneration trial. The trial is being conducted at the Melbourne-based Centre for Eye Research Australia (CERA), which is leading the world in treatment for the debilitating disease. The Victorian Government provided \$540,000 through [Victoria's Science Agenda Investment Fund](#) for CERA to conduct the trial.



[Victorian technology for a bioenergy fuelled future](#) - New technology developed by Victorian scientists at the Department of Primary Industries has reprogrammed photosynthesis – the natural process of plants converting sunlight and carbon dioxide into biomass and usable energy – increasing its potential for bioenergy generation.

[Platypus genome](#) - One of Australia’s most unique animals, the platypus, could hold the key to finding a new generation of medicines to kill off drug-resistant “superbugs.” Scientists from the Victorian Department of Primary Industries are the first in the world to isolate, synthesize and test a number of platypus proteins, leading to the discovery of several new antimicrobials – substances similar to antiseptics which kill off bacteria.

GOVERNMENT NEWS

On 5 May 2010, the Minister for Innovation, Gavin Jennings, announced the recipients of the [Victoria’s Science Agenda Investment Fund](#) (VSA IF) sustainability grants. Minister Jennings said that the grants would lead to growth in Victoria’s innovative green sector and create jobs for Victorian families.

Projects receiving VSA IF sustainability grants include:

- Polymers CRC Pty Ltd – environment friendly systems for suppressing evaporation in water storages (\$1.5 million);
- Swinburne University – Victoria-Suntech Advanced Solar Facility for nanoplasmonic solar technology (\$3 million);
- Monash University – Harvesting water in cities as water supply catchments using biofiltration (\$3 million);
- Melbourne University – Victorian Centre for Aquatic Pollution Identification and Management for pollution detection and monitoring of inland waters (\$2.98 million); and
- RMAX – Biodegradable replacement for expanded polystyrene foam products (\$800,000).

The Victorian Government is investing \$145 million over four years in Victoria’s Science Agenda as part of its commitment to supporting and encouraging innovation.

RESEARCH NEWS

On 28 May 2010, infectious diseases specialist Dr Marc Pellegrini from the [Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research](#) received the Frank Fenner Award from the Australasian Society for Infectious Diseases, recognising Dr Pellegrini’s efforts to understand human responses to chronic infections.

On 16 May 2010, the [Alfred Hospital](#) launched an Australian-first, state-of-the-art gated radiotherapy technology to provide better treatment for cancer patients and ensure greater chances of survival. The cutting-edge equipment and software will be able to treat cancers of the lung, breast, liver, gallbladder, bile duct and liver metastases, countering the effects of organs that move due to breathing and digestion during radiation therapy. As part of the Victorian Government’s \$150 million [Cancer Action Plan](#), this new technology strengthens Victoria’s position as a world leader in cancer treatment and its commitment to increase cancer survival rates in Victoria by 10 per cent by 2015.

On 7 May 2010, distinguished cancer researcher, Professor Suzanne Cory, was elected by her peers as President of the [Australian Academy of Science](#) – an institution that has been dominated by male scientists since its formation in 1954. As the first elected female President she takes over the role from outgoing President, Professor Kurt Lambeck.



COMPANY NEWS

On 25 May 2010, [Cyclopharm Ltd](#) (ASX:CYC) announced that it has received approval to sell in China the Technegas Plus Generator, which is used to assist in the diagnosis of Pulmonary Embolism. With approximately 400 nuclear medical centres located in China, there is an opportunity for Cyclopharma to upgrade existing models and to increase the installed base of generators in China.

On 24 May 2010, [AorTech International plc](#) (AIM: AOR) announced a non-exclusive technology licence and material supply agreement with an undisclosed multi-billion dollar NYSE listed company to use AorTech's proprietary biostable co-polymer Elast-Eon™ as an integral part of a drug delivery platform for urological catheters. This agreement will generate revenues for AorTech through up front, volume related milestone and co-development payments. Initial orders have already been placed and filled.

On 21 May 2010, [Immuron](#) (ASX:IMC) and Nycomed Australia Pty Ltd announced they intend to collaborate to complete the development of an antibody-based product based on Immuron's technology and existing pre-clinical program to prevent influenza in humans. Immuron and Nycomed Australia Pty Ltd also announced on 5 May 2010, the signing of a licensing agreement enabling Nycomed to distribute Immuron's oral antibody product, Travelan, a tablet that reduces the risk of travellers' diarrhoea.

On 17 May 2010, [Clinuvel Pharmaceuticals Ltd](#) (ASX:CIUV; XETRA-DAX:UR9; ADR:CLVLY) announced that afamelanotide has been included in the list of drugs reimbursable by the Italian National Health System for the treatment of erythropoietic protoporphyria (EPP). Afamelanotide can now be prescribed as a photoprotective drug for Italian patients diagnosed with EPP.

On 11 May 2010, [Genera Biosystems](#) (ASX:GBI) announced a new collaborative arrangement with [Healthscope Ltd](#) (ASX: HSP), to develop a novel molecular diagnostic test capable of detecting and distinguishing up to eighteen different pathogens that may infect the respiratory tract. RTI-plex™, as the test is to be known, will be based upon the same AmpaSand™ diagnostic platform used in Genera's PapType HPV test, also used in Healthscope's diagnostic laboratories.

On 4 May 2010, [Circadian Technologies Ltd](#) (ASX:CIR) released data demonstrating that its lead anti-cancer therapeutic, VGX-100, significantly inhibits tumour growth in a variety of different animal models of human cancer. VGX-100 inhibits the development of blood vessels that are required for tumour growth and may inhibit cancer spread by suppressing the development of lymphatic vessels.

NOW OPEN

The [Governor of Victoria Export Awards](#) is one of the most prestigious business awards in Victoria. The awards celebrate success, excellence and achievement in export. They also honour the creativity and vision that so often distinguishes our exporting sector.

This is an opportunity to celebrate and build on your export success, as well as raise your profile in Australia and overseas. The Awards are conferred in a total of 12 categories, and all winners are automatically entered into the Australian Export Awards, providing companies with the potential for further recognition and business success.

An Export workshop will be run to assist companies in completing an award application and also update their export plans on Tuesday 15 June, Victorian Business Centre, University Hill, Suite 16, Level 1, 20 Enterprise Dve, Bundoora (9.00 AM to noon). For information on the workshops, contact Collins Rex on 9328 4814 or collinsrex@aiex.com.au.

For further information contact Nicole Andrews on 9651 9845 or via email at nicole.andrews@diird.vic.gov.au.

Entries close 9 July 2010.



UPCOMING EVENTS

- 21-25 June [NSTI Nanotech Conference and Expo 2010](#), Anaheim, California. Interested in attending and being part of an Australian trade mission? If so, contact Vanessa Heuser, Small Technologies Cluster by phone 0434 918 524 or via email Vanessa@stc-melbourne.com
- 23-24 June [ChinaBio Partnering Forum 2010](#), Suzhou, China. Interested in attending and being a part of a Victorian trade mission? If so, contact Candice Basham at candice.basham@diird.vic.gov.au
- 28 June - 1 July [11th International Symposium on the Genetics of Industrial Microorganisms](#), Melbourne
- 9 July [New Synchrotron and Neutron Users Symposium](#) - this full day symposium is targeted towards researchers and postgraduate students wanting to learn more about how synchrotron and neutron techniques can be utilised in their research applications, Monash University Clayton campus.
- 15 Sep [Medical Innovation and Strategies Conference 2010: Wireless and Consumer Health](#), Duke University, Durham, North Carolina
- 21-22 Sep [Bio India 2010](#), Hyderabad, India
- 26 Sep - 1 Oct [OzBio 2010](#), Melbourne
- 19-22 Oct [AusBiotech 2010](#), Melbourne

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