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This publication is produced by the [Biotechnology Team](#) in the Victorian Government Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development to update readers about biotechnology news and activities in Victoria, Australia. To subscribe [click here](#), or to read a back issue [click here](#).

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### **INAVIR APPROVED FOR SALE IN JAPAN**

[Biota Holdings Ltd](#) (ASX:BTA) announced that its development partner, Daiichi Sankyo has received approval to manufacture and market Inavir® in Japan. Inavir® is Daiichi Sankyo's brand of laninamivir octanoate, previously known as CS-8958. The approved indication is for the treatment of influenza in adults and children.

Inavir® is the first drug of a new class of long acting neuraminidase inhibitors (LANIs) to address the limitations of current influenza products, which require daily or more frequent dosing. Neuraminidase inhibitors are antiviral agents rather than vaccines, that provide both for the treatment of an established influenza infection or for the prevention of influenza prior to exposure.

The new class of LANIs provides the opportunity to medicate patients on a "one and done" basis. This increases the likelihood that patients will use the product properly and as intended and reduces the cost of storage and transport per course, which assists stockpiled.

In 2003, Biota and Daiichi Sankyo merged their respective LANI programs. Under the co-ownership agreement, Daiichi Sankyo held an option to manufacture and sell laninamivir in Japan, in return for funding an extensive range of Japanese clinical trials. Under the agreement, Biota will receive a royalty on all sales in Japan and may also qualify for certain sale's milestone payments. Biota and Daiichi Sankyo have been in discussion with a number of suitable companies for the licensing of laninamivir in the rest of world. (13 September 2010)

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### **THE START COHORT STUDY OF STROKE**

A new collaboration between [CSIRO Preventative Health Flagship](#), [Florey Neuroscience Institutes](#), [University of Melbourne](#), [Melbourne Health](#) and [Neurosciences Victoria](#) will conduct the [START cohort study of stroke](#), which is designed to integrate imaging and biomarker analysis to identify patients at risk of stroke.

The START Cohort will collect and analyse information derived from brain imaging and blood samples taken from 200 Australian stroke victims with the aim of discovering and validating new diagnostic biomarkers to identify patients at risk of recurrent stroke and post-stroke depression.

It is hoped identifying stroke biomarkers will greatly advance research into preventing or delaying the onset of this debilitating medical condition. (13 September 2010)



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## RESEARCH NEWS

On 24 August 2010, the winners of the [2010 L'Oréal Australia for Women in Science Fellows](#) received their Fellowships from Johan Berg, Managing Director of L'Oréal Australia, at a ceremony at Melbourne Museum. The winners included:

- Marie-Liesse Asselin-Labat, [Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research](#) - investigating how breast cancer starts and why it can reappear years after treatment
- Rowena Martin, [University of Melbourne](#) and Australian National University, Canberra - giving new life to old drugs in the global fight against malaria.

On 18 August 2010, Monash University [Professor of Immunology Charles Mackay](#) was awarded the 30th annual [GlaxoSmithKline Australia Award for Research Excellence](#) for his work which discovered a possible link between diet and inflammatory diseases such as asthma. A world expert in immunology and inflammation, Professor Mackay discovered a molecule called GPR43 which may act as a mechanism linking diet to inflammatory diseases such as asthma, which is on the rise in western societies.

The award is one of Australia's most prestigious and longest-running medical research awards celebrating the best scientists and their work in Australia with potential to improving human health.

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## COMPANY NEWS

[Acrux Ltd](#) (ASX:ACR) announced a maiden profit of \$46.6 million, resulting in diluted earnings of 28.7 cents per share. The result was driven by revenue of \$56.1 million. Acrux's financial position was transformed in March 2010 following the signing of an exclusive agreement with the pharmaceutical company Eli Lilly for the global commercialisation of Axiron™. Acrux received US\$50 million on signing and is eligible for further milestones of up to US\$285 million, as well as royalties on worldwide sales of Axiron. (24 August 2010)

[Halcygen Pharmaceuticals Ltd](#) (ASX:HGN) announced maiden profit and dividend, following the acquisition of Mayne Pharma. Halcygen announced underlying operating earnings of \$12.2M, which are as expected for the year ending 30 June 2010. Halcygen has declared a fully franked dividend of 2.0 cents per share and intends to make a special dividend of 1.0 cents per share payable in the first half of calendar 2011 following consideration of the half year financial performance. (31 August 2010)

[Broadvector Ltd](#) (ASX:BDV) has opened its IPO offer to raise up to \$8.5 million to advance the clinical development of a new prostate cancer therapy and a second therapy that repairs the common problem of aseptic loosening of hip replacements. Each of these therapies is based upon gene-directed enzyme prodrug therapies known as GDEPT. Broadvector's pre-IPO market capitalisation is \$16 million and the Company is offering 42.5 million new shares at \$0.20 each. The offer opened 10 September 2010 and closes on 8 October 2010. Broadvector is expected to list on the ASX on Friday 15 October 2010. (10 September 2010)

[HealthLinx Ltd's](#) (ASX:HTX) Singapore distribution partner INEX Innovation Exchange Pte Ltd has launched OvPlex™ in Singapore. Under the terms of its agreement with HealthLinx, INEX will have the exclusive rights to market, sell and distribute OvPlex for ten years. Singapore will serve as the platform to launch into the region including India, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam. OvPlex is currently available in Australia and the United Kingdom. Singapore is the third country to launch this cutting-edge test. (3 September 2010)

[Genetic Technologies Ltd](#) (ASX:GTG; NASDAQ:GENE) announced that it has granted a third license to Monsanto, USA. The current license grants Monsanto non-exclusive access to the GTG non-coding patents for all applications in cattle, building on previous non-exclusive licenses of applications in plants and plant products, and in swine. (6 August 2010)

[Prima BioMed Ltd](#) (ASX:PRR) announced that its subsidiary company, Oncomab Pty Ltd has entered into a licensing agreement for the development of a Cripto-1 cancer monoclonal antibody (mAB) with leading Dutch pharmaceutical development company Bioceros. The licensing agreement paves the way for the further development of Oncomab's technology to create a Cripto-1 mAB as an immunotherapy treatment for cancers. (17 August 2010)



[Specialised Therapeutics Pty Ltd](#) and Abraxis BioScience, Inc announced that Medsafe, the New Zealand Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Authority, has approved for marketing Abraxane® for the treatment of metastatic breast cancer after failure of anthracycline therapy. Specialised Therapeutics will commence distribution upon receiving reimbursement approval of Abraxane from the New Zealand pharmaceutical reimbursement authority, Pharmac. Abraxane is currently fully reimbursed for “metastatic breast cancer after failure of prior therapy” in Australia under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. (30 July 2010)

[Universal Biosensors](#) (ASX:UBI) announced that it has been informed by LifeScan (a Johnson & Johnson company), that LifeScan’s new product, OneTouch® Verio™ a test for diabetics to self monitor blood glucose, incorporating technology developed with Universal Biosensors will be made available for sale in Australia from 1 September 2010. Universal Biosensors manufactures the disposable test strips for the OneTouch® Verio™ product in its Melbourne facilities. (9 August 2010)

[Immuron Ltd](#) (ASX:IMC) reported the successful results of an open label Phase I/II clinical trial of two oral formulations of hyper-immune bovine colostrum powder (BCP), Imm122-I and Imm124-E, for the treatment of the liver disease non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH) and aspects of metabolic syndrome. NASH is a chronic inflammatory disorder of the liver, also known as fatty liver disease. Treating NASH is estimated to be a multi-billion dollar market and no effective treatment is currently available. (3 August 2010)

[Circadian Technologies Ltd](#) (ASX:CIR) announced that its subsidiary company, Vegenics Ltd, has been granted US Patent 7785803 claiming diagnostic kits for the detection of VEGF-D in human samples such as blood. VEGF-D, a major novel target for cancer and other diseases, has been shown to be a prognostic indicator of survival or disease progression in a number of different cancer types as well as a biomarker for various respiratory diseases. (6 September 2010)

[Starpharma Holdings Ltd](#) (ASX:SPL; OTCQX:SPHRY) announced the extension of the VivaGel® patent portfolio with the first grant of its patent specifically for the VivaGel® coated condom. The application was granted on 20 August 2010 by the Russian patent office. Starpharma has also filed this patent in major markets including the USA, Canada, Europe, China, India and Japan. (18 August 2010)

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## GOVERNMENT GRANTS AND ASSISTANCE

[Biotechnology International Partnering Program](#) (BIPP) provides financial assistance for eligible Victorian companies to attend overseas biotechnology conferences and trade events. Open for applications now.

[First Step Exporter](#) offers financial assistance to Victorian companies seeking to research and explore opportunities in their first export markets. Open for applications now.

[Grow Your Business](#) is a business program that helps small businesses to develop and implement strategies to become internationally competitive by offering a range of planning and management services. Businesses can engage the services of an independent specialist to undertake either one-on-one or group programs. Open for applications now.

[Access Program](#) - Victorian companies planning to establish new export markets or expanding into in the Americas, China, Japan, India, Europe, South East Asia or the Middle East may be eligible to use the Victorian Government Business Office facilities, including desk space and staff support. Open for applications now.

[MAP @ Plug and Play USA](#) assists Victorian ICT and life sciences companies gain a valuable foothold in the lucrative US market. Approved Victorian companies will receive a three-month lease on office 'pods' in the Silicon Valley that are paid for by the Victorian Government. Open for applications now.

[Commercialisation Australia](#) is an Australian Government initiative that assists researchers, entrepreneurs and innovative companies to convert ideas into successful commercial ventures. The support provided by Commercialisation Australia is designed to help successful applicants through the commercialisation process. Assistance is tailored to the needs of each successful applicant and is structured around the key development stages in the commercialisation pathway.



[Export Market Development Grants](#) (EMDG) is a key Australian Government financial assistance program for aspiring and current exporters. Administered by Austrade, the scheme supports a wide range of industry sectors and products, including inbound tourism and the export of intellectual property and know-how outside Australia.

The [Victorian BioPortal](#) offers unique access to Australia's leading biotechnology sector, covering a wealth of information relevant to biotech industry and researchers. The extensive database housed on the BioPortal provides links to every Victorian based organisation that is developing and applying bioscience discoveries to solve today's most urgent challenges in health, agriculture, industry and environmental sustainability.



You can also follow all the news on: Facebook: [Victorian Bio](#), Twitter: [Victorian Bio](#) or [Victorian Bioportal](#), Our Blog: [Invest Victoria: Biotechnologies](#)

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## EVENTS

- Closes 22 Sep [2011 BIO Call for Session Proposals](#) will close on 22 September. BIO will host 125-plus breakout sessions along 15 educational tracks in Washington DC (23-30 June 2011).
- 22 Sep [Australialive Biomedical Science Event](#), Australia House, UK. Speakers include: [Sir William Castell](#) - Chairman of the The Wellcome Trust, [Professor Dame Sally Davies](#) - Director General of Research and Development and Chief Scientific Adviser for the Department of Health and NHS, [Professor William Charman](#) - Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences and [Dr Nadia Rosenthal](#), founder of the Australian Regenerative Medicine Institute. Want to know more? please contact [karla.lampe@invest.vic.gov.au](mailto:karla.lampe@invest.vic.gov.au).
- 28 Sep - 1 Oct [OzBio 2010](#) (Melbourne) brings together the 12th [International Union of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Conference](#), the 21st [Federation of Asian and Oceanian Biochemists and Molecular Biologists](#) Conference and the [ComBio2010](#) meeting. This unique blend of participating societies will generate an outstanding scientific and technological event.
- 29 Sep - 1 Oct [BioJapan 2010](#), Yokohama (interested in attending and being part of the Australian national stand? contact [Austrade](#))
- 5 Oct [BioMelbourne BioBreakfast](#) - The WEHI Journey: Its history and vision for the future.
- 19-22 Oct [AusBiotech 2010](#), Melbourne. This year's conference, with its key theme 'Creating Global Solutions', will focus on the solutions that biotechnology is developing to deliver a brighter future and will bring together representatives from across the biotechnology industry and the globe to produce a world-class event.
- 12 - 14 Nov [The 2<sup>nd</sup> China Jiangsu Conference for International Technology Transfer and Commercialization \(CITTC\)](#). This year's CITTC will focus on the international cooperation in strategic emerging industries such as new energy, biotechnology and medicine, new materials, wireless sensor network and internet of things (WSN/IOT). The event will include a plenary session in Nanjing, business talks and site visits.
- 14-17 Nov [BioEurope 2010](#), Munich (interested in attending? contact [Austrade](#)). Victorian biotech companies attending BioEurope could be eligible for funding under the [Biotechnology International Partnering Program](#) (BIPP).
- 17 Nov - 20 Nov [Medica 2010](#), Yokohama (interested in being part of the Australian national stand? contact [Austrade](#))

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