



Victoria Biotechnology e-bulletin

July 2010

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](#).

HIGHLIGHTS

On 16 July 2010, [CSL Ltd](#) (ASX:CSL) announced a major biotechnology project at CSL's manufacturing site in Broadmeadows, Australia. The centrepiece of the project will be the creation of Victoria's first large scale biotechnology facility for the late stage development of new therapies for cancer, bleeding disorders, inflammation and infection.

CSL's Broadmeadows site currently houses state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities that produce a range of highly specialised medicines. CSL's investment will include enhancements to the site to support the integration of the new biotech facility and to ensure it has the appropriate infrastructure to cater for expanded activities into the future.

The project will represent a total investment of \$235M over 4-5 years and will result in 320 jobs during construction. Following completion, the investment will create over 330 new highly-skilled positions.

The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments had supported the CSL investment which would further position Victoria as an international leader in biotechnology.



The [Victorian BioPortal](#) is one of only two biotechnology portals in the world. With the site's six month milestone approaching in mid September, the Portal has achieved pleasing results as the BioMelbourne Network continues to build and source unique content.

The portal is updated with new information almost every working day, sometimes 2-3 times a day as news is received. The news and events section is the most popular section on the portal followed by the ToolKit - which lists the many Victorian biotech specialist service providers that support the sector.

Of particular importance is the consistent number of unique visitors to the site each month (approximately 1,000) and the 'hang time' on the portal. The average time spent on the portal is reasonably high with anywhere between 5 minutes and 3 minutes per visitor. The portal is also reporting a steady increase in the number of international visitors, with the highest cohort coming from the United States and from South East Asia.

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



On 7 July 2010, the [Melbourne Centre for Nanofabrication](#) (MCN) was opened by Premier Brumby and Minister Jennings. MCN will provide Australia's leading scientists and engineers with the tools to build miniature devices that could potentially revolutionise the health care and environmental sectors. The Victorian Government has provided \$15 million in funding for the MCN through its [Science, Technology and Innovation initiative](#) along with a matching grant of \$15 million from the Commonwealth Government.

On 7 June 2010, the winners of the 2010 Premier's Award for Health and Medical Research were announced. [Dr Julia Archbold](#) won the 2010 Premier's Award for Health and Medical Research for her research into understanding why organs are rejected after transplantation.

Three other Victorian young scientists received Commendation awards at the ceremony:

- [Dr Radwa Badawy](#) for her research into epilepsy using transcranial magnetic stimulation where she has been able to prove increased excitability in humans with epilepsy;
- [Dr Benjamin Howden](#) has focused his research on the superbug Golden Staph which is resistant to antibiotics and has developed ways to evade the human immune system; and
- [Dr Mark McKenzie](#) has discovered how insulin producing cells are destroyed in diabetes.

On 27-30 July 2010, CSIRO held the [11th Annual Protein Expression Workshop](#) supported by the Victorian Government. The workshop fosters information exchange on protein expression systems and their application to biotechnology and biomedical research and for the first time this year included a hands on workshop at the new [Recombinant Protein Production Facility](#) in Clayton.

The [Victorian Platform Technologies Network](#) is a joint initiative of The Bio21 Cluster, Monash University, and the Victorian Government to facilitate access to R&D services and infrastructure. The Network runs a central online directory where you can search for specialist services or facilities and find out how to access them.

RESEARCH NEWS

On 22 July 2010, [Walter and Eliza Hall Institute for Medical Research](#) announced its scientists have identified the three protein fragments that make gluten - the main protein in wheat, rye and barley – toxic to people with coeliac disease. Their discovery opens the way for a new generation of diagnostics, treatments, prevention strategies and food tests for people with coeliac disease.

On 21 July 2010, [Murdoch Childrens Research Institute](#) (MCRI), announced it has begun clinical trials of a new vaccine to protect newborn infants against rotavirus, a life-threatening diarrhoeal disease that kills half a million children worldwide each year.

On 20 June 2010, during the Vice-President of the People's Republic of China visit to Australia, His Excellency Mr Xi Jinping officially opened the [Chinese Medicine Confucius Institute](#) (CMCI) at RMIT University. The CMCI at RMIT will promote Chinese culture through enhancing community awareness of appropriate use of Chinese medicine. It will also strengthen the Chinese medicine educational and research partnerships with institutions in China. RMIT University's Division of Chinese Medicine is the largest provider of Chinese medicine study in Australia and is officially accredited as a World Health Organisation (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Traditional Medicine.

AusBiotech is currently calling all life science and bio-engineering students to show off their research and apply for the [2010 AusBiotech-GSK Student Excellence Award](#). Applications close 13 August.

COMPANY NEWS

On 26 July 2010, [Biota Holdings Ltd](#) (ASX:BTA) announced the commencement of a Phase II clinical trial of the antiviral drug BTA798 in patients with chronic asthma. BTA798 is orally administered and active against human rhinovirus, a virus often associated with the common cold.

On 23 July 2010, [Prima BioMed Ltd](#) (ASX:PRR) announced that it has commenced patient enrolment for its Phase IIb clinical trial for the CVacTM ovarian cancer therapy vaccine with the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).



On 21 July 2010, [Mesoblast Ltd](#) (ASX:MSB; ADR:MBLTY) announced that the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has issued a licence to Mesoblast to manufacture and supply its proprietary Mesenchymal Precursor Cell (MPC) products.

On 15 July 2010, [Starpharma Holdings Ltd](#) (ASX:SPL, OTCQX:SPHRY) announced it had received clearance from the FDA to commence a phase 2 study to investigate VivaGel® for the treatment of bacterial vaginosis (BV).

On 14 July 2010, [Avexa Ltd](#) (ASX:AVX) announced that it has entered into a license agreement with the Shanghai Institute of Organic Chemistry (SIOC) to develop one of Avexa's HIV integrase inhibitor series. Under the terms and conditions of the license SIOC will be responsible for all future development costs for the program in China and will pay Avexa 50% of any net commercialisation revenues. Avexa retains all development and marketing rights for the program outside of the China region.

On 13 July 2010, [Ceramic Fuel Cells Ltd](#) (AIM/ASX:CFU) has been awarded the prestigious Innovation NRW.INVEST AWARD for 2010, by the Government of North Rhine-Westphalia in Germany. Earlier this month they appointed Harvey Norman to distribute the company's BlueGen gas-to-electricity generators through the Harvey Norman commercial division franchisee.

On 13 July 2010, [Clinuvel Pharmaceuticals Ltd](#) (ASX:CUV; XETRA-DAX:UR9; ADR:CLVLY) announced that it obtained positive results in a study which investigated SCENESSE® (afamelanotide) in a 12 month, Phase III crossover study (CUV017). In one Australian and seven European centres, SCENESSE® was evaluated for its ability to provide preventative pharmaceutical therapy in EPP patients who are known to suffer from phototoxic reactions following exposure to sun and light.

On 12 July 2010, [BioDiem Ltd](#) (ASX:BDM) announced the Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine (LAIV) had been granted regulatory approval for marketing in India. NasoVac was launched by the Indian vaccine company, the Serum Institute of India. This is the first approval for marketing of BioDiem's LAIV outside of Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

On 18 June 2010, [Benitec Ltd](#) (ASX:BLT) announced that a US Patent has been granted by the United States Patent and Trademark Office. The patent covers the use of an RNA interference construct (with multiple promoters) to inhibit the level of Hepatitis C virus in animal cells, tissues and organs.

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.

[Competitive Business Fund](#) provides funding on a co-contribution basis to support growing and competitive businesses with the potential to move into new markets, develop processes and solutions, or invest further in their business to enhance their competitiveness and capitalise on emerging opportunities. Applications close at 5pm AEST on Friday 6 August 2010.

[Smart SMEs Market Validation Program](#) promotes innovation in business and government by supporting R&D for demonstration projects. Victorian public sector entities identify needs requiring new technology solutions, and engage SMEs to explore the feasibility of technology solutions and conduct the R&D to proof-of-concept. The proposed 'solution' must be a new technology solution to meet the specified requirements of the Victorian public sector entity. Round 2 is currently open for Government agencies to submit technology requirements.

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

EVENTS

- 15 Aug [Australian Synchrotron Open Day](#)
- 17 Aug [BioMelbourne BioBreakfast](#), The Road Less Travelled - Commercialising niche and neglected diseases
- 24 Aug [Victoria Research Laboratory of NICTA "Meet the Founder Interview"](#) features Dr Andrew Conway, founder of Silicon Genetics
- 24 Aug [BioMelbourne BioWorkshop](#), "Divorce" for Research Collaborators
What you need to know about exit clauses, IP ownership and asset management.
- 30 Aug-1 Sep Melbourne will host the [63rd Annual United Nations Conference for Non-Governmental Organisations](#) on the theme "Advance Global Health: Achieve the Millennium Development Goals." The UN conference is registration only attendance, but a Public Program of events, branded "Making Health Global", will be open to the public from 27 Aug to 5 Sep. See Press and Making Health Global Website (launched in August) for details of events.
- 21-22 Sep [BioIndia 2010](#), Hyderabad. This forum brings together the biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies from North America, Europe and Asia to meet and explore business opportunities with India's biotech sector. BioIndia provides opportunities for Victorian biotech companies to have private one-on-one meetings with investors, large biotech and pharmaceutical companies and emerging Indian biotech companies. Eligible Victorian biotech companies attending BioIndia are entitled to funding under the [Biotechnology International Partnering Program](#) (BIPP).
- 29 Sep - 1 Oct [BioJapan 2010](#), Yokohama (interested in attending? contact [Austrade](#))
- 19-22 Oct [AusBiotech 2010](#), Melbourne
- 12 - 14 Nov [The 2nd 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](#)). Eligible Victorian biotech companies attending BioEurope are entitled to funding under the [Biotechnology International Partnering Program](#) (BIPP).

PRIVACY NOTE: The Victorian Government is committed to protecting your privacy when you access and interact with this publication. This publication supports and endorses the privacy principles that protect your personal information. However, where links are offered to third party sites, the Victorian Government is not affiliated with these sites and has no control over and is not responsible for their content, privacy practice or policies. The Victorian Government does not warrant that the functions contained in these sites will be uninterrupted or without error and it cannot be responsible for viruses or other harmful components transmitted from these third party sites.

