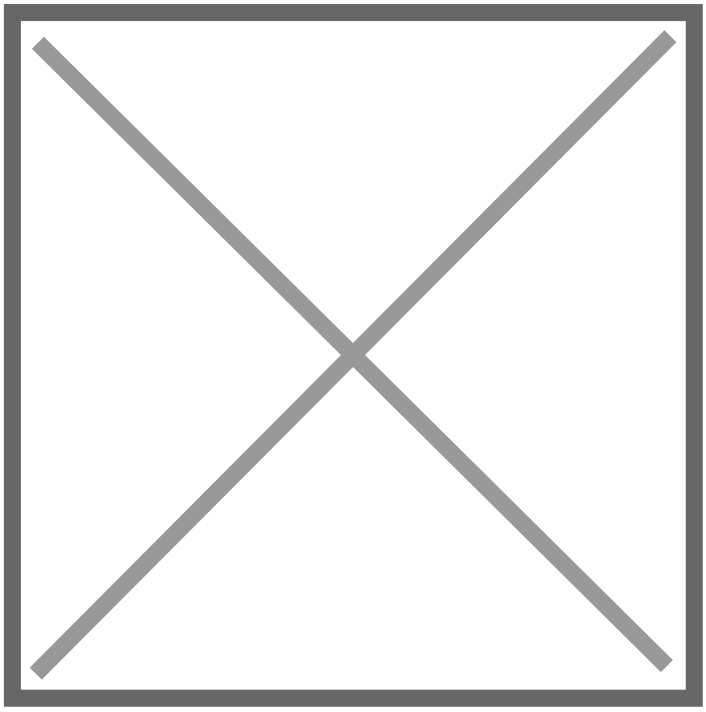


Brisbane attracts top biotechs

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The sixth edition of Australia's largest annual biotech event "AusBiotech 2007" in Brisbane attracted over 1,300 visitors from across academia, government agencies and private sector.

Brisbane, the capital of Queensland, is a hub for the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industry in Australia. Brisbane boasts of world-class hospitals and medical and research institutes offering a highly competitive cost of research and development, clinical trials and manufacturing.

Phylogica takes burns drug into human trials

Australian drug discovery and development company Phylogica has said that its underdevelopment burns drug, PYC35B will progress to human trials in 2008.

Phylogica CEO Dr Stewart Washer said the company had received good results from the latest pre-clinical study conducted independently by Fiona Wood's McComb Foundation.

"The dose response study using the Phylomer peptide D-PYC35B in a mouse wound repair model found that at a low concentration (3 micromolar) there was a significant improvement in both the rate of wound healing as well as a significant reduction in the size of scar formation," Dr Washer said.

Welcoming the delegates and exhibitors to the four-day national biotech conference and exhibition themed "Smart Targeting Into Global Markets", Desley Boyle, Minister for Tourism, Regional Development and Industry for Queensland, said "We are proud that last year, the world's first cervical cancer vaccine, Gardasil was launched following a discovery by Queensland scientist Prof. Ian Frazer. Queensland scientists are now working on projects like painkillers from a marine shellfish; cancer treatments from kangaroo bacteria; unmanned aerial vehicles with robotics inspired by bees; using algae to produce hydrogen as a fuel; DNA testing to find the most tender beef cattle; organ, bone and tissue regeneration; growing your own replacement arteries; a skin patch that delivers vaccines and a new drug that inhibits fat cells." Queensland companies have 23 lead candidates in drug development, with a good number of these going to phase III clinical trials.

Dr Anna Lavelle, CEO of the biotechnology industry umbrella group, AusBiotech informed that at this event there were about 400 international visitors and over 87 international speakers. "The event is now on the radar of big pharmas looking for

partnering and investment opportunities," Dr Lavelle said.

At the event, the top 12 pharmas were present as were the top five biotech companies. Over 130 exhibitors from India, Italy, Korea, Malaysia, Japan, Taiwan, New Zealand, China, United Kingdom and Canada participated in this mega biotechnology event of Australia.

The next AusBiotech will be held from October 26-29, 2008, in Melbourne. Capital of the state of Victoria, Melbourne is home to CSL and Sigma Pharmaceuticals-Australia's two largest listed companies.

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