

Bright Island

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Northern Ireland

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A hot spot for new start-ups.

The last few years have seen an increase in the number of employees and sales in the region. The reason: excellent science coupled with the focus to translate good ideas into products. There has been stress to spend more on science. It is estimated that about €1.2 billion will go into Irish science by 2007, with a strong focus on biotechnology, information technology, and communication technology. Several biomedical institutions have been beneficiary to these investments. For example, Dublin Molecular Medicine Center got close to €27 million money already. The Center is a partnership between biomedical departments at Trinity College and University College Dublin, and the Royal College of Surgeons. According to some available information, about €320 million has been earmarked for biotech.

Development agencies in the region, Enterprise Ireland and Invest Northern Ireland, have been leading from the front to promote biotechnology throughout the island. Enterprise Ireland's biotechnology strategy is focused in four areas: start-ups, venture capital, applied research, and incubators. Also an Irish Bioscience Venture Capital Fund has been established. Invest Northern Island considers biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, clinical trials, nanotechnology, medical devices, and biomaterials are the key areas of growth. .

University of Ulster and Queen's University are the main drivers of research in the region. Ulster University has a £14.5

million Center for Molecular Bioscience. The University's Science Innovation Center and Science Parks is home to over 25 companies. Wyeth Biopharma Campus is a major development in Ireland. Wyeth is constructing a billion-dollar facility for protein manufacture and research, at Grange Castle, north of Dublin. Cover 1.2 million square feet, it is being claimed as the largest such facility in the world. The Northern Ireland is in the making of what is touted as the equivalent of Switzerland (famous for watches) in the Biotech.