



Massachusetts Life Sciences Center announces new international partnership program

Regions of Australia, Belgium, Canada and France will partner with Massachusetts companies to apply for joint life sciences R&D funding

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CHICAGO, USA – The [Massachusetts Life Sciences Center](#) (MLSC) announced today at the 2013 BIO International Convention the launch of a new International Collaborative Industry Program (ICIP). The creation of ICIP stemmed from international demand to partner with Massachusetts life sciences companies in jointly advancing R&D efforts for new products and processes intended for commercialization.

The MLSC will partner with [Victoria](#), Australia; the [Wallonia](#) region of Belgium; [Quebec](#), Canada; and [Alsace](#) in France to award funding to support winning projects demonstrating innovative and collaborative research and development (R&D) in Massachusetts and in the partnering regions. The program will enable company partners from biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, diagnostics and bioinformatics to submit project applications.

Through the MLSC, Massachusetts is investing \$1 billion over 10 years in the growth of the state's life sciences supercluster. These investments are being made under the Massachusetts Life Sciences Initiative, proposed by Governor Deval Patrick in 2007, and passed by the State Legislature and signed into law by Governor Patrick in 2008.

The MLSC has a number of existing international partnerships with regions such as Israel, Northern Ireland, Catalonia and Finland. These partnerships have fostered collaborative research arrangements between both companies and academic institutions. The new program will build on these existing partnerships to promote collaboration in more of the world's leading life sciences clusters.

"Massachusetts is a global leader in the life sciences industry because of our strong public and private investments in innovation" said Greg Bialecki, Massachusetts Secretary of Housing and Economic Development. "By expanding our collaborations with the other leading life sciences clusters around the world, we are setting Massachusetts up for success in the 21st century global economy."

An eligible project will be in late-stage R&D, and will consist of one Massachusetts company and one company from one of the four international partner regions. Winning partners emerging from this competitive process will each be funded by an agency in their own geography.

“No one country or region can address on its own the urgent health challenges that still face our global community,” said Susan Windham-Bannister, Ph.D., President & CEO of the MLSC. “In Massachusetts we believe that the life sciences breakthroughs of tomorrow will be grounded in new models of international collaboration, like the strategic alliances that we celebrate today with Victoria, Wallonia, Quebec and Alsace.”

During this inaugural round of ICIP, the MLSC Board of Directors has authorized a total of up to \$1.5 million for winning Massachusetts companies. Grants will range from a minimum of \$100,000 to a maximum of \$500,000, and companies will match the funding that MLSC provides. The international agency will fund their local company winners. The Phase I project applications are due in September, 2013, and announcement of the winners is expected in March, 2014.

“Victoria and Massachusetts share many features, including a global reputation for excellence within life sciences,” said Victorian Minister for Technology Gordon Rich-Phillips. “This new initiative will greatly benefit the Victorian life sciences industry by providing greater opportunities to develop products, processes and services as well as by focusing on ways to grow and support our vibrant biotechnology industry.”

“The Walloon Government decided to grant a budget of 1.500.000\$ to foster one of the most strategic partnerships in the field of biotechnologies and health,” said Jean-Claude Marcourt, Vice-President and Minister Economy of the Government Wallonia in Belgium. “Wallonia is a worldwide top leader in the field of life sciences. Indeed, the region is the first producer of vaccines in the world. The realization of this agreement demonstrates the political wish of Wallonia of reinforcing and globalizing its clusters, notably BioWin.”

“Research and innovation play a central role in the growth of the life sciences sector in Quebec,” said Quebec’s Minister of Finance and Economy, Nicolas Marceau. “Our participation in the International Collaborative Industry Program is thus strategic for Quebec. In fact, project funding through the Quebec Consortium for Drug Discovery (CQDM) will strengthen the innovative base of our companies and consolidate the strong links we share with Massachusetts, particularly in link with the joint declaration signed in 2009 with the Massachusetts Office of International Trade and Investment. Quebec’s participation in this program is thus in line with the actions that our government is putting in place to adapt to the new business model of the world industry that suppose partnerships and collaborations in the field of research and innovation.”

“Alsace BioValley is particularly proud to be the French Health competitiveness cluster to partner with the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center. In the current economic situation, this agreement represents new business opportunities for our companies and, thanks to our French partner OSEO (Public Bank of Investment), funding for cooperative projects. It also offers personalized access to international high-level expertise,” said Jean-Yves Bonnefoy, Alsace BioValley President.

“Congratulations to the Life Sciences Center and their partners in Victoria, Wallonia, Quebec, and Alsace,” said Tom Gradel, Acting Director of the Massachusetts Office of International Trade & Investment. “These collaborative efforts will further strengthen the innovative ecosystem in the Commonwealth and our reputation as a global destination for business.”

For more information about ICIP, visit www.masslifesciences.com/icip or email icip@masslifesciences.com.

About the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center

The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC) is a quasi-public agency of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts tasked with implementing the Massachusetts Life Sciences Act, a 10-year, \$1-billion initiative that was signed into law in June of 2008. The MLSC’s mission is to create jobs in the life sciences and support vital scientific research that will improve the human condition. This work includes making financial investments in public and private institutions that are advancing life sciences research, development and commercialization as well as building ties among sectors of the Massachusetts life sciences community. For more information, visit www.masslifesciences.com.

About the International Collaborative Industry Program (ICIP)

The MLSC’s International Collaborative Industry Program (ICIP) seeks to promote collaboration and idea exchange between life sciences companies around the world, as well as to stimulate the development of new products or processes intended for commercialization. ICIP accepts project proposals rooted in the life sciences:

Biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, diagnostics and bioinformatics. Projects sponsored together by a Massachusetts life sciences company and a company from one of the participating international partner regions are eligible to apply for joint funding from the MLSC and the respective international partner agency.

About the Department of Business and Innovation, State Government of Victoria, Australia

The Department of Business and Innovation helps grow Victoria's diverse and vibrant economy by supporting pro-business policies and programs and the development of innovative industries. This includes focusing on science policy, including biotechnology and medical research, and the implementation of related life sciences programs. For more information, visit www.biotechnology.vic.gov.au or www.business.vic.gov.au/bgb.

About BioWin

BioWin is the health competitiveness cluster of Wallonia, a region of Belgium (South of Brussels). Created in 2006, its ambition is to federate all stakeholders from Wallonia participating in innovation and training in the field of health biotechnology and medical technologies. BioWin's objectives are to create a new culture of openness and partnership favorable to innovation in Wallonia; to train, attract and retain in Wallonia a human capital of excellence; to help the edification of collective infrastructures and technological platforms; and to promote internationally the strengths of the Walloon region in the area of health biotechnology and medical technologies. For more information visit www.biowin.org and the BioWin blog at <http://win-health.org>.

About the Québec Consortium for Drug Discovery (CQDM)

The CQDM is a meeting place for all stakeholders in the biopharmaceutical research whose primary mission is to fund research projects in partnership between academia and the public sector hospitals, and pharmaceutical and biotechnology private sector. Innovative initiative in Canada, CQDM has a two-fold goal: To accelerate the process of drug discovery and drug development safer and more effective. Project funding is made possible through contributions from the Quebec government and key industry players as Pfizer Canada, AstraZeneca, Merck, Boehringer Ingelheim (Canada) Ltd., GlaxoSmithKline, Eli Lilly Canada Inc., Novartis Pharmaceuticals Canada Inc. For more information, visit www.cqdm.org.

About Alsace BioValley

As a French world-class cluster dedicated to therapeutic innovations, Alsace BioValley is the one-stop contact for optimizing any R&D development or business project in Europe. Located in the Alsace region, part of the famous French-German-Swiss BioValley and home to a unique concentration of international life sciences and healthcare players, Alsace BioValley will help any life sciences and healthcare companies interested in new projects and partnerships in Europe to search for outstanding scientific or industrial partners, to develop very innovative R&D projects, to find the best innovative technology -- patent or scientific expertise, or to set up and locate in the Alsace region. For more information visit www.alsace-biovalley.com or www.biovalley.com.

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