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## Acquiring: a Strategy for Success

The past year has been exciting for Bionomics - new licensing agreements, increased revenue, and the much publicised acquisitions of Neurofit Preclinical Research and Iliad Chemicals. The team is more focused than ever, with the foundations to achieve their ambitious goal of becoming a \$200 million company in three years firmly in place.

"We are certainly at one of the big inflection points in terms of value," said Dr Deborah Rathjen, CEO of Bionomics Limited.

Dr Rathjen has been with Bionomics since 2000, and has had broad experience in immunology from the bench to the boardroom. In her five years at Bionomics she has overseen the raising of capital for their operations, moving to their own purpose-built premises in the Thebarton Bioscience Precinct and advancement of their research programs.

Bionomics' research strengths has always been the combination of genomics with proprietary biology platforms. Listed in 1999, the company of 40 staff has established technology platforms for target validation and drug candidate screening in epilepsy, anxiety, angiogenesis and breast cancer.

However, the intention of Bionomics has always been to become a fully integrated drug discovery and development company. For the past two years Bionomics has been actively seeking mergers and acquisitions to advance the company's pipeline. The result has been the completion of two acquisitions, both within the last 12 months.



Dr Rathjen explained the targeted approach to the acquisitions. "We wanted to have a strong pipeline of therapeutic compounds and we wanted to have the capacity to drive drug discovery and development rapidly into the clinic. Each of the acquisitions brought a component of that vision for Bionomics to the table."

Bionomics acquired Neurofit Preclinical Research in December last year at a cost of €1.25 Million. The French contract research company provides Bionomics with preclinical development capabilities for the central nervous system (CNS), links with European pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies and intellectual property rights to a Parkinson's disease animal model, as well as a compound series with potential for the treatment of neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's disease.

As well as utilising Neurofit's CNS capabilities in the further development of current compounds, Bionomics intends to maximise Neurofit's revenues from contract research, which approach €1 Million per annum.

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Just months later – in July – Bionomics finalised the \$9 million acquisition of Iliad Chemicals (Iliad). As well as bringing additional, more advanced drug candidates in the areas of CNS disorders and cancer, Iliad will provide a strong team with chemistry expertise. The Iliad acquisition brought two advanced preclinical development programs – targeting established blood vessels in cancer and a potassium ion channel in multiple sclerosis. In addition Iliad founder, Dr Bernard Flynn has joined the Bionomics management team as Vice President Chemistry.

“We are extremely pleased with the support we have received from Bionomics’ major shareholders,” said Dr Rathjen, referring to a substantial placement of shares accompanying the acquisitions. “We also recognise the huge vote of confidence the Iliad shareholders gave Bionomics by investing directing into Bionomics as part of Bionomics recent capital raising.”

Of the \$6 million raised, \$2.9 million was received from Iliad shareholders Start-up Australia Ventures and Australian National University. Dr George Jessup of Start-up Australia Ventures has joined the Bionomics board, bringing many years of experience in the commercialisation of medical technologies.

The acquisitions have also had a major impact on the focus of research in the Bionomics laboratories. “All the people that were engaged previously, involved in target validation are now actually testing compounds in animals. Its really exciting. The project teams for each of

the therapeutic compounds are so energized and enthusiastic,” said Dr Rathjen.

Alongside these acquisitions, Bionomics has been ensuring an ongoing revenue stream through the provision of contract research and licensing of diagnostics. The last financial year has seen a considerable increase in revenue of 60%.

Business Development will continue to capitalise on the research expertise of the company and their advanced biological platforms and proprietary chemistry platform, and maximise the potential of evolving diagnostic technologies through licensing.

So now Bionomics has three lead compounds with impressive programs and the infrastructure to drive these compounds rapidly into the clinical setting. Already one of their new lead compounds has moved forward by 12 months putting them closer to clinical trials and the team is more enthusiastic and focused than ever. But can they achieve their goal of turning from a \$20 million company to a \$200 million company in three years?

As Dr Rathjen explains “We wanted a very aspirational goal. We wanted to aim for something that would set us apart. Completing the Neurofit and Iliad acquisitions are significant building blocks for fulfilling this aspiration.”

**For more information on Bionomics, visit [www.bionomics.com.au](http://www.bionomics.com.au).**

## Anti-Cancer Gel Completes Safety Trial



PharmaQest is an evolving university spin-off company with a promising product.

“Our Phase I safety study has been a very exciting development,” said Kellie La Fontaine, PharmaQest’s development manager. “We have now formulated our product and tested it for the first time on people.”

PharmaQest is a spin-off company from UniSA’s Centre for Pharmaceutical Research. This year, its commercialisation strategy has brought opportunities and investment to South Australia.

PharmaQest’s product is an anti-cancer gel that has the potential to stop non melanoma skin cancers in their tracks.

Its key ingredient is a compound that has the ability to prevent the recurrence of skin cancers on sun damaged skin. Its target users are older people, with a history of sun exposure, and people at high risk of developing non-melanoma skin cancers (NMSCs).

“The gel is different from a sunscreen,” said Ms La Fontaine. “Sunscreens prevent sun damage, while our anti-cancer gel can be applied to people in high risk groups, with a history of skin cancer to prevent it recurring.”

NMSCs account for 95% of skin cancers and have a significant impact. As many as two thirds of Australians can expect to develop a NMSC in their lifetime.

Current treatment for NMSCs to involve burning or surgically removing the cancer. Although NMSCs are often thought to be less dangerous than melanomas they can be disfiguring and if left untreated can

life-threatening. PharmaQest’s gel has the potential to prevent the development of NMSCs in high risk individuals, with benefits to patients and the health care system.

“The gel has the potential to reduce GP costs considerably – it takes time and resources to remove skin cancers,” said Ms La Fontaine.

“The associated health costs of NMSCs are estimated to be more than \$250 Million dollars every year. These costs are higher than for any other type of cancer.”

Last year PharmaQest received \$2 million investment from Origin Capital for formulation of the gel, and the commencement of Phase I clinical trials represents an important achievement for the company.

“We are also working with other South Australian companies – Hamilton Laboratories and CMAX at the Royal Adelaide Hospital – to develop our product.”

The successful commercialisation of this technology may also lead to the development of potential products for a number of skin disorders including psoriasis.

“We have private investors both here and overseas,” said Ms La Fontaine. “We are looking at developing a number of products, building our company and employing new people.”

The results of PharmaQest’s Phase I trial are due out in November.

**For more information email [kellie.lafontaine@unisa.edu.au](mailto:kellie.lafontaine@unisa.edu.au) or visit [www.pharmaqest.com.au](http://www.pharmaqest.com.au).**

# AgBio Carnival 2005

The focus was on collaboration, communication and commercialisation. South Australia's AgBio Carnival was a meeting of minds from companies, universities, government and commercialisation bodies from interstate and overseas.

The message was clear: the agricultural sector, a \$27 billion export earner for Australia, faces some tough challenges over the coming decades. Held at the Waite Campus of the University of Adelaide, the AgBio Carnival was organised by AusBiotech and sponsored by SARDI, the University of Adelaide and Bio Innovation SA.

It provided a unique opportunity for researchers based at the Waite's key research bodies – CSIRO, SARDI, the University of Adelaide, the Australian Centre for Plant Functional Genomics and the Australian Wine Research Institute – to network with delegates from industry, government and commercialisation bodies.

"Some people have the notion that research scientists sit in their ivory towers," said Prof Geoff Fincher, Director of the Waite.

"The AgBio Carnival made it easy for scientists to talk about the potential applications of their research and get intelligence back from marketers and consumers."

"Events like this are important for collaboration and making connections between people with complementary expertise in different aspects of agricultural biotechnology."

The Carnival will now become an annual event. Peter Bradley, chair of the South Australian branch of AusBiotech and coordinator of the two-day programme, said it showcased some of the state's success stories.

"Our aim was to show that the exceptional quality of scientific research at the Waite Campus offers opportunities for commercialisation," he said. "We achieved that by presenting examples of best practice."

One example was Tarac Technologies Pty Ltd, a South Australian company celebrating its 75th anniversary this year, that finds unique ways to recycle by-products of the wine-making process.

The results are brand new products with a value of their own. Vinlife® – Tarac's grape skin and seed extract rich in antioxidants - was snapped up by Wendy's and incorporated into their 99% fat-free Chocollo® ice-cream last year.

"We have proven that Vinlife works in clinical trials relating to heart health," said Suzanne Roe, Tarac's R&D manager. "Lots of companies

and researchers have ideas, but very few of them succeed. We have succeeded."

In 2003, trials at CSIRO found that Vinlife helps arteries to expand when greater blood flow is needed. The outcome can be better heart health and circulation.

"We continue to work in partnership with the best researchers in South Australia and interstate," said Ms Roe.

"Our commercialisation and marketing processes are integrated with our R&D – you cannot separate the two. You have to know what the market wants and then access the best science available."

What the market wants – according to Dr David Topping, in his presentation, as Chief Research Scientist at CSIRO Human Nutrition - is healthier more nutritious food, with proven benefits for human health, particularly given the increase in diseases such as diabetes and colorectal cancer.

"Broad acceptance of technologies such as genetic modification will only come when people can see real benefits for themselves and their families," said Peter Bradley. "This is why so much focus is now on developing healthier food."

There are increasing demands for agriculture to become more efficient simply because food production will have to double over the next 25 years if it is to feed the world's growing population, explained Mark Tester, Federation Fellow at the Australian Centre for Plant Functional Genomics.

"To achieve this, scientists have to be given the freedom to work without one hand tied behind their back," he said, referring to some State Governments' moratoria on genetically modified crops.



A panel discussion, chaired by Prof Fincher, confirmed that biotechnology has enormous potential to meet the challenges facing Australian farmers such as drought, salinity and disease.

The technology can also enable them to grow crops with value added qualities to ensure improved margins and an increased share of the global market.

## AgBio Stats

- Agriculture is worth over A\$27 billion to Australia in annual production
- 16% of Australian biotechnology firms operate in the Agriculture Biotech sector.
- Genetically modified crops are now grown in 17 countries and occupy 81 million hectares. A further 45 countries are conducting R & D.

# Drawn to Innovation

Dr Anna Lavelle is drawn to creative, innovative people. That's why she became AusBiotech's CEO.



Dr Lavelle took up her position with AusBiotech in June. She saw an opportunity to build on the peak industry body's first four years and lead it into its next phase of development.

"Our role is to advocate for industry. Our role is to respond to government, and initiate change," said Dr Lavelle.

"I would like to strengthen our focus on sectorial areas, increase our international connections and also strengthen our linkages at state and federal government level."

Dr Lavelle recognises that different sectors of the biotechnology industry such as medical devices, agriculture, human health and bioinformatics have different needs and priorities.

There is also recognition that all sectors share common ground: a "pipeline" from research, through product, to market.

She sees the industry as a matrix with sectorial interests intersecting with the processes of discovery and innovation. The aim is to streamline such processes by bringing people, companies and organisations together.

"AusBiotech can make a difference by acting as the broker, as a bridge, to support interaction and networking as much as possible," she said.

"Our aim is to maximise opportunities for people to discover that they have synergistic interests of commercial and other benefit."

AusBiotech's conferences and international missions will continue to form the backbone of its networking events.

Under Dr Lavelle's leadership, there are also plans to offer professional development as part of AusBiotech's networking opportunities, to enable members to learn from each other.

"It could be about improving your longevity as CEO or gaining a deeper understanding of the biotech industry," she said.

"There could also be opportunities for young people to develop their skills, encouraging them to choose the industry as a career."

Dr Lavelle also plans to draw on her experience as former National Director of R&D at the Australian Red Cross Blood Service, where she brought states and territories together to streamline business development.

"South Australia is the quiet achiever in terms of biotechnology on a national scale, and has some significant companies," she said. "This experience could be used to mentor others."

Over the next few years, Dr Lavelle expects a period of consolidation, after rapid expansion in the biotechnology sector. She also sees an opportunity to work with some of Australia's leading innovators and creative minds.

"The butterfly has emerged from the chrysalis and now we need to go to the next stage," she said.

"I am interested in achievement, innovation and enabling people to do what they do best. We want the industry to be successful in Australia. We want people to be retained in the industry. We want to retain the reputation that Australia has for being highly innovative in the biotechnology sector."

## Dr Anna Lavelle: Career Highlights

- 1985 Awarded a PhD in Genetics from the University of Melbourne and became a lecturer in microbiology, molecular biology and genetics at Monash University
- 1998 Joined the Australian Red Cross Blood Service as Director of Strategic Planning and Business Development
- 2002 Appointed Director of Intellectual Capital and National R&D.
- 2005 Joined AusBiotech as CEO

## Protein-enriched food from winery waste

The Australian wine industry is set to benefit significantly from a novel technology being developed at the University of South Australia that enables winery waste water to be turned into a valuable protein-rich feed source for farm animals.

Dr Bo Jin, Director of UniSA's Water Environment Biotechnology Laboratory, said that by using an integrated production and treatment process, the technology not only converts winery waste water into a value-added product but makes the water reusable for farm irrigation.

"The wine industry produces a substantial quantity of waste water containing high levels of organic materials that is costly to treat. Because this waste comes from the food source, grapes, it is rich in carbohydrate materials and contains very few toxins," said Dr Jin.

UniSA researchers are developing an integrated biotechnological treatment and production process that enables organic waste material to be removed from winery waste water streams cheaply. This involves the use of super micro-organisms that convert the waste into a fungal biomass protein feed for farm animals including pigs, poultry and fish, as

well as aquaculture industries. The researchers have already identified two super micro-organisms that would be suitable for this conversion process.

The new process will have multiple benefits. As well as generating an important value-added food source, it helps the environment by lowering the impact on water resources and reducing pollution of natural watercourses and waste deposited to landfill.

"We call our program sustainable environment and resource management. By integrating production and treatment processes we also integrate environment protection and resource recovery," Dr Jin said.

Dr Jin will work with the Australian Water Quality Centre and wineries to progress his innovative environmental engineering project from the laboratory to a demonstration pilot plant to be installed in one of the wineries.

"This food recovery is expected to become a valuable source of income for wineries while the treatment process is a very economical method of recycling waste water."

**For further information, contact Dr Bo Jin at [bo.jin@unisa.edu.au](mailto:bo.jin@unisa.edu.au).**



## Developing Natural Products in the Biotech Setting

TGR BioSciences Pty Ltd (TGR) is an example of one of Adelaide's biotechnology companies with a different approach: developing nutraceuticals from natural products.

The recent in-license of technology from GroPep Limited and concurrent capital-raising has enabled TGR to be involved in Phase II clinical trials of a product for the treatment of a debilitating side-effect of chemotherapy.

The majority of biotechnology companies focusing on the development of compounds aim to create new therapeutics. Whilst having impressive returns with strong market value, the development of therapeutics is extremely expensive and only the initial discovery and early clinical development can be achieved by our small biotechnology companies.

Thebarton-based TGR is a biotechnology company doing it different. Established in 2001 out of the CRC for Tissue Growth and Repair, TGR has expertise in the discovery, characterisation and preclinical development of growth factors. In particular, the company is focused on the development of natural products for the treatment of gut, bone and skin health.

"Cheese whey waste – a by-product in dairy manufacture – has shown to have therapeutic benefit for a number of applications," explained Dr Leanna Read, CEO of TGR, "There are currently six patents surrounding its application in skin and gut health."

In August 2005, TGR in-licensed additional Whey Growth Factor Extract (WGFE) technology from GroPep Limited. WGFE is a biologically active milk extract of naturally occurring proteins known to be fundamental to the tissue healing process. While the extract isn't new to TGR, the intellectual property provides an additional application of the technology: for oral mucositis.

Oral mucositis is a side effect of chemotherapy and radiotherapy resulting in mouth ulceration and inflammation. Of the approximate 2 million patients worldwide undertaking cancer treatment per annum, around 40% develop oral mucositis, which can be so severe as to result in the inability to eat and the postponing of subsequent rounds of cancer treatment. Current technology for its treatment is both expensive and invasive. The WGFE technology offers a more affordable, easier and effective alternative.

The in-licensing coincided with an investment of \$3 million from the Nanyang Innovation Fund managed by Nanyang Ventures.

In seeking capital, Dr Read was surprised by the interest in the nutraceutical area. "There are a number of funds with particular interest in agricultural derived nutraceuticals. There's a strong market for these products," she said.

In addition to funding current development programs at TGR, the \$3 million will go towards undertaking a Phase II trial for the treatment of oral mucositis using this new technology. Although the trial is not

required to gain regulatory approval for the product, it will provide validation of its effectiveness for marketing purposes.

Nutraceuticals are not subject to the stringent regulatory hurdles of therapeutics as they are derived from natural food products that have a history of safe use.

"The low regulatory hurdle means that the costs and the time to market associated with the development of these products are significantly lower. It enables small biotechnology companies, such as TGR, to be involved in getting the product to the market," said Dr Read.

The oral mucositis technology is not the first of TGR's to be on the market. In 2002, TGR entered into an agreement with Beta Alistine<sup>TM</sup> to supply milk whey protein for the production of a skin cream.

In addition to the development of compounds, TGR undertakes contract bioactives screening for other companies using their proprietary high throughput assay system that measures the functional responses in cells. TGR also sells assay kits to companies that wish to undertake their own screening. These two business units provide TGR with a valuable source of cash-flow as well as create important strategic alliances.

TGR is set for a busy year ahead: developing their nutraceutical compounds through clinical trials and marketing, and commercialising their platform technologies through contract screening and assay kit sales. The number of staff will no doubt rise from the 20 they are today – as more resources are required in project management and marketing – and the timing for the company to list on the stock exchange may only be a couple years away.

**For more information visit [www.tgr-biosciences.com.au](http://www.tgr-biosciences.com.au).**

### New Pro Vice Chancellor at UniSA

Prof Caroline McMillen has recently been appointed as Pro Vice Chancellor and Vice President Research and Innovation at the University of South Australia.

Prof McMillen takes up the position in early December when current Pro Vice Chancellor, Prof Ian Davey, retires.

A graduate of Oxford and Cambridge Universities, Prof McMillen has an international reputation as a health researcher with a focus on the factors that determine successful health outcomes before and immediately after birth. She has attracted more than \$11 million in research grants over the past 15 years and is currently a lead investigator in an NHMRC Program Grant.

**For further information, visit [www.unisa.edu.au](http://www.unisa.edu.au).**

## Small Size – Big Impact

July's Networking Forum "Small Size, Big Impact – Nano Meets Bio" had an impact on South Australia's bioscience community, attracting almost 300 people.



As the name suggests, the focus of the evening was on nanotechnology – what it is, how it can be applied, and its implications for the future.

Gavin Rezos, the Managing Director of Australia's largest nanotechnology company, pSivida, explained that nanotechnology is widely regarded as "the next big thing" to transform science and technology.

"The world has had an industrial revolution and been transformed by the rise of computer technology," he said. "The future, however, lies in exploring the exploiting technology that works beyond the miniature: in dimensions of one billionth of a metre."

Nanotechnology is the convergence of many disciplines - including Chemistry, Physics, Biology and Engineering – at a miniature scale. It has potential application to many aspects of our lives - from Health and Medicine, through Manufacturing, Energy, Environment, Transport and Construction.

Targeted drug delivery – the development of "smart pills" - sun protection and desalination are just three areas where "nano meets bio", according to Prof John Ralston, the Director of the Ian Wark Research Institute at the University of South Australia.

"The opportunities offered to biotechnology companies and researchers are ripe for exploitation," he explained.

Nanotechnology is predicted to drive the next growth cycle in the information evolution.

"Currently, nanotechnology represents 1% of the Life Sciences market," said Professor Susan Greenfield, speaking as chair of the UK's nanotechnology initiative.

Australia has its share of nanotechnology research. There are four companies listed on the Australian Stock Exchange and more than

30 private companies that operate in the nanotechnology area.

Dr Dan Johnson, the coordinator of the event from Bio Innovation SA, explained that South Australia was developing a profile as a hub for nanotechnology research.

"South Australia boasts two universities at the forefront of nanotechnology research: the University of South Australia - under the institute name 'Ian Wark Research Institute' - and Flinders University," he said. "Flinders University was the first in the world to introduce a nanotechnology degree."

The Ian Wark Research Institute employs more than 130 staff and postgraduate students, manages a turnover of \$10 million per annum and is home to national nanotechnology research centres with international collaborations. Similarly, Flinders University has national nanotechnology linkages and has identified nanotechnology as a research priority.

### Nano in the news...

Researchers at the University of South Australia's Bio and Polymer Interfaces Sector at the Ian Wark Research Institute have developed a new way to encapsulate active ingredients in phospholipid emulsion droplets.

Led by Assoc Prof Clive Prestidge, the technology is a breakthrough for therapeutic and cosmetic compounds, which may be hard to formulate due to instability, insolubility or poor bioavailability.

Bio Innovation SA through a CDI grant, together with Itek, UniSA's commercialisation company, will jointly fund proof of concept experiments using the patented technology.



## New SARDI R&D Director

Dr Pauline Mooney has been appointed Director of Research and Development at the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI).

Dr Mooney was Group Leader - Health and Foods at HortResearch in New Zealand before she took up the post in late August.

Dr Mooney studied botany, genetics, microbiology, plant pathology and phycology in South Africa before majoring in molecular biology for a PhD at Sydney University.

"My background and experience have been quite diverse," said Dr Mooney. "My experience will help me to come up to speed quickly with the science in the various divisions of SARDI."

Dr Mooney has been working for HortResearch since 1990 and was responsible for 300 staff working in future horticulture and gene technology research before her move to South Australia.

"HortResearch has been going down the commercialisation route," she said. "The process can be challenging. At SARDI I hope to act as a bridge between scientists and commercialisation partners."

Dr Rob Lewis, SARDI's Executive Director, said Dr Mooney would be "a major asset to the Institute".

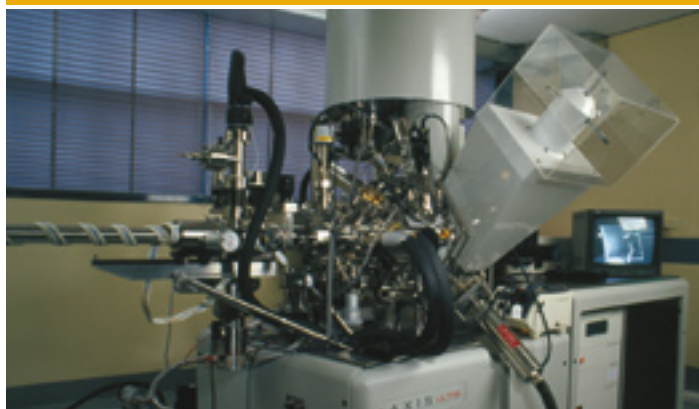
He also said she would drive future innovation and success within SARDI.

**For further information about SARDI, visit [www.sardi.sa.gov.au](http://www.sardi.sa.gov.au).**

## Adelaide Facilities

## Nano Meets Bio at AIB Labs

The Wark Biointerface Technology Facility, one of eleven AIB Labs in South Australia, has become a key national resource for biotechnology and nanotechnology research.



The Wark™ is the Australian Research Council Special Research Centre for Particle and Material Interfaces and is well known for its expertise in measuring and monitoring the properties of surfaces and interfaces.

The recently established Wark Biointerface Facility now provides services and expertises also for Biomaterials. Practical applications include soft, deformable emulsion droplets in pharmaceutical products.

The Facility offers Atomic Force Microscopy, X-ray Photoelectron Spectroscopy and Time-of-flight Secondary Ion Mass Spectrometry to the research community and bioscience industry.

Atomic Force Microscopy captures images of molecules and cells at an interface and can be used to investigate interactions between molecules, surfaces, particles, emulsions and biological cells.

The Time-of-flight Secondary Ion Mass Spectrometer can be used to find individual proteins on materials and surfaces by detecting their characteristic peak intensity patterns.

The X-ray Photoelectron Spectroscopy can be used to analyse the composition of materials surfaces and protein films, as well as interactions between them.

"Our research institute is one of a kind in that it has a unique concentration of specialist equipment in one place," said Philip Moore, the Manager of Scientific Services at the facility. Biotechnology researchers are finding our instruments to be invaluable to their research and we are experienced at dealing with industry clients."

For more information about The Wark Biointerface Technology Facility contact [philip.moore@unisa.edu.au](mailto:philip.moore@unisa.edu.au).

AIB Labs is a joint initiative between Bio Innovation SA and key research facilities in South Australia to ensure that major equipment and competencies are shared by the State's bioscience research community.

**To find out more visit [www.bioinnovationsa.com.au/equipment.htm](http://www.bioinnovationsa.com.au/equipment.htm).**

## Science in the Spotlight

The Australian Science Media Centre, launched in Adelaide last month, is national in scope.

"The aim of the centre is to make sure that the public have access through the media to evidence based science," said the Centre's CEO, Dr Susannah Elliott.

"It will communicate news and views from the scientific community to the public in a more proactive way."

The Centre is the brainchild of Baroness Professor Susan Greenfield, who set up a similar Centre in London three years ago.

When a major science news story hits the headlines, the Centre responds by providing briefings and arranging interviews with qualified scientists.

The aim is to improve the scale and accuracy of science reporting and contribute to informed public debate on scientific issues.

In the UK, the bioscience industry has been one of the key sectors to benefit: the UK Centre has played a central role in encouraging news outlets to take a more balanced approach in their coverage of the GMO debate, for example.

Dr Elliott is a cell and molecular biologist. She leaves a position as Deputy Director and Communications Director of the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme in Sweden to take up her post in Adelaide this month.

One of her first jobs is to compile a database of scientific experts from across the country, who can communicate developments in their field to the news media and to readers, viewers and listeners.

"The list of experts will include scientists from South Australia and it will include scientists working in biotechnology," she said.



"The more experts we have who can talk to the media in an open and honest way, the better the science communication will be and the better the understanding of the public will be."

**The Australian Science Media Centre (AusSMC), will be open for business by the end of this year.**



# Big Events in Adelaide...

## ComBio2005

**25 - 29 September**

ComBio is a national event incorporating the annual conferences of the Australian Society for Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, the Australia and New Zealand Society for Cell and Developmental Biology and the Australian Society of Plant Scientists. The meeting brings together the societies to offer symposia, a workshop and poster sessions in the themes of: Protein structure and function; Cellular architecture and biology; Gene expression and regulation; Signal transduction; Developmental biology; Plant biology.

**For more information visit [www.asmb.org.au/combio2005/](http://www.asmb.org.au/combio2005/).**

## ASMR Medical Research Week

**10 October**

The local South Australian Branch of ASMR is starting up their committee for for 2005-2006, planning events for ASMR Medical Research Week 2006. Anyone interested in the promotion of the benefits of research to the general public, school students and politicians, increasing awareness of the quality of science that's being done here in South Australia, and helping to secure a future for research is encouraged to attend the first meeting for 2005-2006. This event is being held on Monday, 10th October at 5:30pm at The University of Adelaide, Physiology meeting room, 4th floor, Medical School South.

**For more information, please contact Beverly at [beverly.muhlhausler@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:beverly.muhlhausler@adelaide.edu.au) or Ph (08) 8303 7591.**

## VC Connect

**19 October**

VC Connect brings Australia's leading venture capital firms to Adelaide!

VC Connect will provide a wealth of information and resources for companies who may currently be seeking funds or may consider doing so in the future. Hosted by Australia's leading Venture Capital companies, VC Connect will enable attendees to gain an understanding of the hows and whys of Venture Capital. VC Connect is where attendees can meet investors, learn how to win VC backing and how to evaluate the right VC firm to meet their needs. Leading entrepreneurs provide inspiration on how to grow businesses and what is involved when you seek capital.

**For more information visit <http://www.slatteryitconsulting.com.au/vcconnect.html>.**

## The Second Barossa Meeting: Signaling Networks

**16 - 19 November**

Up to 150 delegates will attend the second bi-annual conference hosted by researchers at the Hanson Institute. The Barossa "Science amongst the Vines" meetings have been designed to draw together leading thinkers to discuss topics of emerging interest in an intimate setting conducive to vigorous debate. The second of these meetings will be held in the Barossa Valley from 16th to 19th November 2005 on the topic of "Signalling Networks". The meeting will focus on what constitutes a physiologically relevant signal and how sets of biochemical signals underlie cellular function. This prestigious event attracts international and national researchers alike, with 11 international and 11 interstate speakers already confirmed.

**For more information visit [www.imvs/immunology/research/vines](http://www.imvs/immunology/research/vines).**

## Did You Know?

Professor Nikolai Petrovsky, the chairman of Vaxine and head of a vaccine research group based at Flinders Medical Centre in Adelaide, was awarded a grant of over \$3 million by the United States National Institute of Health to develop vaccines to protect against bioterrorist attacks.

BresaGen Ltd received an investment of more than \$850k from Adelaide-based venture and development capital firm Paragon Equity Ltd to acquire a 10% equity holding in the Company. The company also signed a contract with the US-based biopharmaceutical company, Pepgen Corporation (Alameda, CA) to progress the development of its auto-immune, inflammatory and viral therapies.

The University of South Australia was recently successful in winning more than \$6.5 million in Federal Government Australian Research Council Linkage Grants to support 14 industry linked research projects and is now ranked first in the state and seventh in Australia for industry partnered research exploring real world issues.

Job seekers and those looking for staff can upload their CV's and vacancy information to the Jobs Noticeboard on Bio Innovation SA's recently updated website at [www.bioinnovationsa.com.au](http://www.bioinnovationsa.com.au).

Bio Innovation SA has moved premises. You can still find us at 33 King William St, but we are now on the 15th floor. All other contact details remain the same.

## People on the Move

Craig Rogers has left South Australia and his position as Clinical Operations Manager at CMAX to take on a new role at Clinical Trials Victoria.

Francis Placanica is moving on from his position of Vice President Legal Affairs and Intellectual Property at Bionomics Ltd.