

Flagship life sciences conference demonstrates strength and value of sector

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Singapore - The AusBiotech 2018 annual national three-day conference concluded in Brisbane after attracting over 1,000 delegates from 20 countries, the largest international delegations from the United States, China, Korea, and New Zealand – to network, collaborate and discuss sector successes and issues. The buoyant sector heard from world-class speakers, congratulated the AusBiotech and Johnson & Johnson 2018 Industry Excellence Award winners, saw four new launches, and included an early stage investment presentation stream – a first for the AusBiotech conference.

AusBiotech launched an interactive online platform for international science-funding matching, along with the output from two regenerative medicine projects at AusBiotech 2018, indicating the significance and potential growth available within Australia.

The BioExchange platform is the first major milestone of AusBiotech's Australia-China Life Sciences Partnership Programme and aims to increase awareness, and thus, opportunities for communication, collaboration and commercialisation between the life sciences sector in Australia and China. BioExchange will become a power tool, connecting the best of Australia's medtech, e-health, and life science projects to known Chinese fund and industry partners for optimal business matching. This will result in reduced risk and costs to Australian companies, and also provides companies a staged market-entry into China.

BioExchange is supported by MTPConnect, the Medical Technologies and Pharmaceuticals Industry Growth Centre, and consortium partners ChinaBluesky Partners, Therapeutic Innovation Australia, KPMG, King & Wood Mallesons, Asialink Business and FB Rice.

The second launch at the conference was the Regenerative Medicine: Opportunities for Australia report. The report maps out the Australian sub-sector in detail, identifying priority areas and goals to make Australia globally competitive. The project was initiated by AusBiotech's Regenerative Medicine Advisory Committee, which is made up of member companies and research institutes, who will use the report to identify ways to improve and engage the national regenerative medicine sector and to address key advocacy areas.

MTPConnect's Project Fund Program is a competitive, dollar-for-dollar matched funding program investing in big, bold ideas to improve the productivity, competitiveness and innovative capacity of Australia's medical technology, biotechnology and pharmaceutical sector. MTPConnect is supported by the Australian Government's Industry Growth Centres Initiative.

Addressing the global development of the regenerative medicine sector, AusBiotech also launched RMLink, a regenerative medicine directory, together with the Forum for Innovative Regenerative Medicine (FIRM). The directory lists all members in Japan and Australia who work within the sub-sector, enabling global access to talent, expertise, education and partnerships. RMLink is a member-only benefit and will be available on the respective websites.

Japan is a recognised leader in regenerative medicine, and FIRM was formed to quickly establish social systems and ensure access to the benefits of research. AusBiotech and FIRM signed a Memorandum of Understanding at AusBiotech 2017 and it is pleasing to see this directory launched, maximising on our international partnerships.

The final regenerative medicine focused launch at the conference was for the Snapshot of Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine Companies in Australia 2018. Co-developed with the NSW Stem Cell Network, it is the fourth version of the directory. This directory compiles public information on Australian stem cell and regenerative medicine companies across Australia into one document. The first edition was printed in 2015, and this year expanded to include regenerative medicine organisations as well. The report can be found on our AusBiotech website.

The NSW Stem Cell Network is a professional community with an interest in all forms of stem cells.

AusBiotech 2019 will be held 30 October – 1 November 2019, at the Melbourne Convention Centre.