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Challenge No 2: Missing industry hubs

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Lack of industry hubs is a challenge for Asia Pacific life sciences industry



The Asia Pacific region, barring the developed nations of Australia and Singapore, needs "critical mass" where interdependent biotechnology firms can exist and support each other directly and indirectly with or without the support of the ancillary industry. The lack of such industry hubs is a hurdle before companies operating in the region (Read about all 10 challenges for businesses in APAC).

"The region doesn't have a real critical mass of biotech hubs, such as in the West, like in Boston or San Francisco," points out Dr Joseph Santangelo, CEO Inviragen, Singapore.

In the West, cities like Boston or San Francisco in the US, the Medicon Valley spanning the waterway between Denmark and Sweden, the Swedish city of Uppsala, cities of Strasbourg and Nantes in France, Milan in Northern Italy, and Edinburgh in Scotland, have biotech hubs.

Dr Bhuwnesh Agrawal, chairman and managing director, Roche Diagnostics India, says, "Geographical distribution of institutions and biotech firms and poor infrastructure mean that the efficiency of the workforce is significantly reduced and the time taken for service increased. We definitely need better infrastructure, which is well-recognized by all stakeholders, and this can only be dealt in the long term."

Dr Anna Lavelle, CEO, AusBiotech, points out that Australia lacks infrastructure for the medical technology industry. It needs to look at developing critical mass, such as that in the New South Wales, she says.

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