

Cytiva fuels biotech development in Australia and New Zealand

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VivaZome Therapeutics wins top prize with its potential to provide off-the-shelf regenerative medicines. Part of Cytiva's BioChallenge global series, the inaugural challenge for the Australia and New Zealand region received 32 applications from various universities and companies.



Cytiva, a global life sciences leader, announces the winner of its first BioChallenge for the Australia and New Zealand region (ANZ). The competition attracted 32 proposals from academic institutions and start-up companies across the region's biotechnology industry. They were evaluated by a panel of independent judges. VivaZome Therapeutics, an emerging exosome-derived therapies developer, was ultimately being awarded the top prize valued at approximately AUD \$200,000.

Since the global BioChallenge was launched in 2018, Cytiva has overseen more than 130 projects. The company has provided approximately four million USD of products and services to support research, bioprocessing development, and commercialization. In the first ANZ BioChallenge, the focus was on empowering biotech researchers and companies in three areas: cell engineering, process development and isolation as well as chromatography and filtration purification.

VivaZome's winning entry depicted the company's efforts to develop a universal exosome manufacturing process, with an aim is to produce off-the-shelf regenerative medicines without existing hurdles of delivering live cells to patients. Professor David Haylock, CEO of VivaZome Therapeutics, says "Our team is working to be a global leader in providing novel, valuable and safe exosome-derived therapies for devastating and life-threatening diseases. To make our vision real, we value the opportunity provided by BioChallenge to download industry experience and know-how from Cytiva.

Jarrold Belcher, Director, Researcher Exchange and Development within Industry Initiative, MTP Connect, says "The Cytiva Biochallenge provides funding and services & expertise to winning applicants to help grow local biomanufacturing in Australia. We appreciate industry support like this contributing to the commercialization efforts of Australia's world-class research."

In 2021, Cytiva, along with the Financial Times' research arm Longitude, compiled a global index based on a survey of 1165 biopharma executives and healthcare policymakers across 20 countries. The Index ranked the ability of the biopharma industry to respond to five major challenges in supply chain, talent, research and development, manufacturing, as well as government policy and regulation. The index identified talent pool and R&D collaboration as restraints to the ANZ biopharma industry to achieving self-sufficiency. As a committed industry leader, Cytiva hopes to support the industry by turning challenges into opportunities.

Tim O'Meara, Project Leader for the ANZ BioChallenge at Cytiva says "excellent research facilities, world-class capabilities and a strong but flexible regulatory regime have made ANZ a powerhouse of biotechnology. We hope BioChallenge can help discover and showcase promising industry researchers and companies with the support of Cytiva's expertise, products, and services."

As part of the award, Cytiva will provide VivaZome and the other award-winning companies with its well-sought Fast Trak Services and training worth nearly AUD \$360,000 throughout 2022. Cytiva will also seek to nurture and further develop early-stage innovations through joint efforts.