

Commercial Biodiversity

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South West

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The South West of England is particularly strong in bio-medical applications.

The success of the biotechnology in The South West of England is a reflection of the UK model of essential strengths in strong bioscience base and growing entrepreneurial culture. It has wide a spectrum of biotechnology offering from agribio to manufacturing to marine sciences and bio medical applications. It is a strong pocket for bio-medical applications. Like else where in the UK, bioscience has grown on account of proactive university business-support initiatives and collaboration with businesses.

In the South West, there are three key locations where the bioscience activity has reached critical mass. These being: the Plymouth-Exeter arc, Bath-Bristol arc, and South West Wiltshire (Porton). The region has a good academic research base, with six of the 11 regional universities rated as "excellent" to biotechnology sector. For example in 2001, RAE, Bristol University had 18 science and engineering units rated as "internationally excellent". Similarly, University of Bath has top-rated pharmacy department, including the Centre for Extremophile Research (CER). Besides there are several other

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public and private research organizations like the Centre for Applied Microbiology Research, the Plymouth Marine Laboratory, Brixham Environmental Laboratory, and the Campden & Chorleywood Food Research Association, which carries out research on behalf of its industrial membership.

There are some 40-50 companies undertaking core R&D, 90-100 companies supporting the sector, and 10-15 developing companies (1-2 years). The region has benefited from the DTI's Biotechnology Exploitation platform. Further the South West of England Regional Development Agency (SWDRA) plays an active role in nurturing and developing the biosciences sector in the region. It works in collaboration with the support of organizations like BioApproaches, Bio Elf, and Western Arc, all of which provide business and professional development assistance for bioscience in the South West.

A comprehensive package of support is available to biobusiness in the South West region.