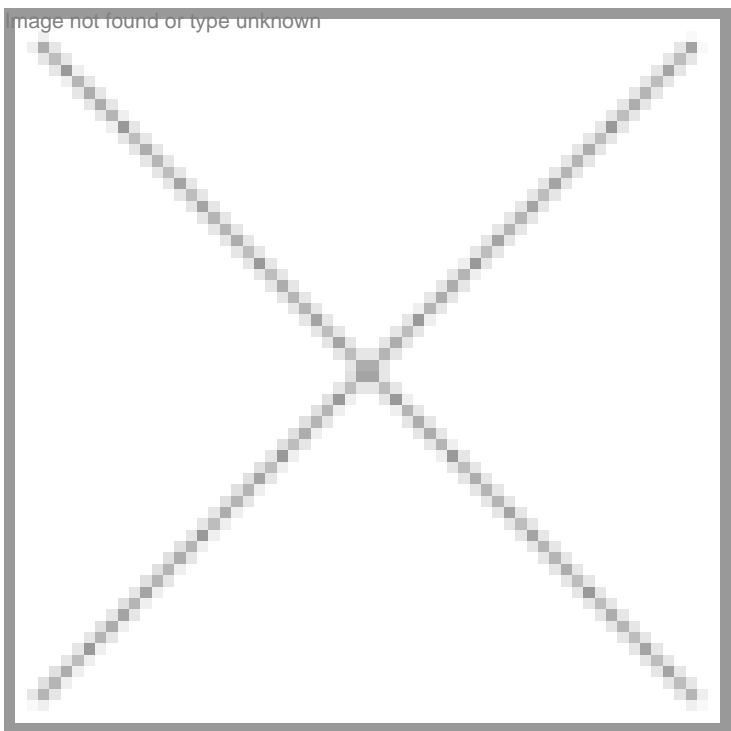


'Melbourne aims to be among the top five biotech hubs in the world'

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'Melbourne aims to be among the top five biotech hubs in the world'

-Gavin Jennings, Minister for Innovation, Victoria Government, Australia

The state of Victoria released a 2007 Biotechnology Strategic Development Plan, at AusBiotech 2007. Through this plan, the Victorian government will take action to drive growth across biotechnology sectors. Gavin Jennings, Minister for Innovation, Government of Victoria, Australia, who released the 2007 Biotechnology Strategic Development Plan, aims to take Melbourne to the top position in the biotechnology world. Some excerpts from the interview:

What is the strategy you are deploying to make Melbourne one of the top five biotech clusters in the region?

Melbourne aims to be one among the top biotechnology hubs in the region. To achieve this, we are banking on building infrastructure, research capacities and intellectual capital, and make partnering connection between researchers and people who take up research beyond early innovation stage to the clinical trial and commercialization stage. We want to continue to build up that infrastructure as much as we can. We have evidence to show that there is an increase in area of research and innovation. There is an increase of 66 percent in terms of investments critical to mass of people who operate from Melbourne. Our biotechnology industry is valued at over A\$21 billion.

How much investment Victoria government has made to develop the growing biotechnology industry?

The government of Victoria has invested A\$2 billion in the last six years in the innovation space, which is combination of medical device and biotechnology space including the infrastructure development.

AusBio 2008

Melbourne to host AusBiotech 2008

Melbourne is capital of Victoria.

Victoria is home to 141 biotech companies, 15 major medical research institutes, seven teaching hospitals and nine universities

Melbourne has joined London and Boston as one of the only three cities in the world with two universities in the global top 20 rankings.

Novotech invests \$7 m to set up India office

Novotech, Australia's largest Contract Research Organization (CRO) will set up operations in Mumbai, India with an investment of about \$7.2 million. The Mumbai office will be the first Asian operations for Novotech to be operational by the end of this year.

Alek Safarian, CEO, Novotech said, "Many of our US clients are looking at entering Asia, and so offering a seamless operation serves a growing client base from the Australian and American regions. Novotech is highly regarded in the US and the EU for managing the Australasia/Asia Pacific component of global trials, and a stronger presence in Asia would further guarantee the Novotech stamp of excellence in high standard, speed, efficiency, and reasonable cost trials."

Narayan Kulkarni
in Brisbane, Australia