

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release 1st November 2006



Liverpool John Moores University joins forces with Eden Biodesign: vocational training scheme for North West Pharmaceutical and Biotech Companies

Bioprocess Summer School

Today Eden Biodesign is delighted to announce that in a formal arrangement with the School of Biomolecular Sciences, Liverpool John Moores University, it will be offering a Summer Bioprocess training school open initially to North West biotech and pharmaceutical companies. The course, to be run in 2007, will focus on equipping individuals with both practical hands-on as well as theoretical knowledge required for Biomanufacturing, particularly fermentation and purification. It is hoped that the course will in time act as a module to fit within the framework of a dedicated Bioindustry apprenticeship.

Dr Richard Dennett, Technology Transfer Manager at Eden Biodesign said:

“From our discussions with companies at both local and national level there appears to be a need for practical training on process scale chromatography, viral purification, fermentation and other key skills aimed at non-graduates or graduates who have newly entered our industry. This course will seek to provide practical skills to support SMEs as well as the wider pharmaceutical industry to increase their knowledge of technical and regulatory considerations for bioprocessing that they can apply in their day to day jobs. If successful, we hope to establish this as vocational training modules that we can publish and make available for use by UK companies in other regions of the UK.”

Dr Glyn Hobbs, Reader in Applied Microbiology at the School of Biomolecular Sciences said:

“We already run an MSc degree in Industrial Biotechnology and have developed teaching and practical sessions aimed at preparing students for the biopharmaceutical industries. The Summer School will use some of these facilities along with Eden Biodesign’s more vocational input as practising biomanufacturers. This is an exciting new project aimed at tailoring a course specifically to the needs of the biopharmaceutical sector. Such a course is probably long overdue particularly as the North West has seen such a growth of jobs in the sector of late”.

Existing Industrial Training Partnerships

Eden Biodesign, in its role as the commercial operator of the UK National Biomanufacturing Centre, has already established successful industrial training partnerships with local higher education institutes such as Liverpool University, Sheffield University and Chester University.

Dr Roger Anderson, Deputy Head of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology, University of Sheffield said:

“Students from the University of Sheffield are gaining valuable placement experience with Eden Biodesign, carrying out hands-on research in the biopharmaceutical area that counts as part of their four-year masters degree”.

Dr Julia Ball, Works Based Learning Manager, University of Chester said:

“The students (who worked at Eden Biodesign) had an enjoyable and informative placement experience and developed many new work-based and personal skills including effective working in a laboratory/biopharmaceutical environment. We would like to thank Eden Biodesign for offering our students such a variety of rewarding work based learning placements this year.”

Dr Roger Barraclough, Reader, University of Liverpool said:

“Our students have taken placements in companies both abroad and throughout the UK but we are very pleased that two of our students were able to spend a year at Eden Biodesign on our door-step where they were able to gain unique practical experience in techniques used in a modern world-class biological production facility”.

Ends

Notes to Editors:

Eden Biodesign

- Eden Biodesign is a successful international biopharmaceutical development and manufacturing services business that provides “state of the art” development and manufacturing services to biotech clients across Europe, the USA and Asia. It promises all clients a committed service plus the knowledge and expertise to guide clients through process development, manufacturing, regulatory and technology transfer challenges.

The company uses the principles of “Good Science” at every step of biopharmaceutical development to design programmes and processes that deliver clinical and commercially valuable products, with an accomplished and attentive level of project management that clients need.

The National Biomanufacturing Centre (NBC)

- The £34.35 million National Biomanufacturing Centre, was officially opened today. This is a Government-funded initiative led by the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) additionally funded through the European Regional Development Fund and the Department of Trade and Industry and aims to establish England’s Northwest as one of the foremost Biomanufacturing centres in Europe.

The centre provides the expertise and facilities to support new and existing biotechnology companies, offering product development services designed to fill in the skill and resource gaps that exist within these organizations. It also provides training in Biomanufacturing and analytical sciences, delivering the skilled workforce required to expand the UK biopharmaceutical sector.

There is also an Access Fund of nearly £3 million which is available to qualifying small to medium companies and academic groups in the biotechnology sector to assist them in purchasing development and clinical manufacturing services from the Centre.

Background brief

- The biopharmaceutical market has undergone rapid expansion since its emergence twenty five years ago and has some impressive statistics. By the end of this decade it is expected that 17% of all prescriptions written will be biopharmaceutical products and as a product class the market for Biopharm products has been observed as the fastest growing sector within the pharmaceutical industry^[1].

Over 130 such products are currently being marketed around the world including thirteen blockbuster drugs. The global market for biopharmaceuticals, which is currently valued at around US\$50 billion, has been growing at an impressive compound annual growth rate of 19% over the previous five years^[2]. A trend that looks to continue with innovative science driven by the human genome project accelerating the market into targeting a huge range of diseases from growth deficiency to arthritis to HIV and especially cancer both treatment and prevention.

But this rate of growth comes with challenges. As an international business, established in 2000, we have undertaken biopharmaceutical development projects with clients literally around the world in Asia, Africa, Australasia, USA and of course Europe. While the locations are different a common theme emerges, a shortage of experienced biopharmaceutical development and manufacturing scientists. Closer to home the life sciences skills survey commissioned by the Learning & Skills Council (LSC), JET South Liverpool and MerseyBIO looking at skills needed in the life science sector of Merseyside and Halton published in August reflects the need for very specific skills particularly for technical staff.

^[1] The World Biotech Market Report, 2005 Vision Gain

^[2] Biopharmaceutucals – Current Market Dynamics and Future Outlook, 2005, AS Insights