

## Indian Stem Cell Companies explore collaborative opportunities with Cambridge



**18th March 2010**

The Babraham Research Campus this week hosted a delegation of Indian stem cell companies, organised by the East of England Stem Cell Network (EESCN) and UKTI. Six of the subcontinent's leading regenerative medicine companies not only learnt about the Eastern region's world class strengths in stem cell science and regenerative medicine, but its ability to foster international research collaborations and to sustain new businesses.

EESCN aims to foster a world-leading regenerative medicine technology cluster in the East of England. The Network's Director, Julian Hitchcock said, "Stem cell science and regenerative medicine offer significant opportunities to increase not only health, but wealth and employment. The East of England is in a particularly strong position, because it is already the strongest region for stem cell sciences and regenerative medicine outside the United States (which is one reason why Pfizer Regenerative Medicine opened the pharma world's first dedicated site here). However, to succeed there has to be an openness, not only to the excellent work being undertaken in other centres around the UK, but to that being conducted overseas. Collaboration is very definitely the way forward in such a complex and challenging field. We're therefore delighted to welcome these six Indian stem cell companies to Cambridge."

Tim Willis, Head of International Relations at BBSRC added, "BBSRC's new strategic plan, published in January 2010, outlines the importance of international partnerships in achieving its strategic priorities, which include agri-food science, crop science, animal diseases and life sciences underpinning health. BBSRC has enjoyed a long and mutually beneficial partnership with India and looks forward to building on this."

Dr Nigel Whittle, R&D Specialist of UKTI's R&D Programme said, "UKTI is delighted that the Babraham Institute, a centre of excellence in epigenetics and regenerative medicine, has agreed to host the inward mission of Indian stem cell organisations. The mission provides an excellent opportunity for the UK and the region to showcase its unparalleled expertise and capabilities in regenerative medicine. We hope that the mission will lead to significant collaborations in the field."

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### Notes for Editors

**The Babraham Institute**, an independent charitable organisation located six miles south-east of Cambridge, is an institute of the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council. Carrying out world-leading innovative research and advanced training with relevance to the biomedical, biotechnological, pharmaceutical and healthcare communities, the institute underpins government's national responsibilities for healthcare research and training. Research focuses on the mechanisms of cell signalling and gene regulation, which underlie normal cellular processes and functions, and on how their failure or abnormality may lead to disease. The latest technologies are being used to study the basis of conditions such as neurodegenerative disorders, foetal abnormality, cancer and diseases of the immune and cardiovascular systems. The commercialisation of the Institute's research is managed by its trading subsidiary, Babraham Bioscience Technologies Ltd. Website: [www.babraham.ac.uk](http://www.babraham.ac.uk)

**Babraham Bioscience Technologies Ltd** is the wholly-owned subsidiary and trading arm of the Babraham Institute and delivers the Knowledge Exchange remit of the Institute. Bringing together scientific, technological and commercial excellence, BBT supports innovation and enables the successful exploitation of biomedical research based on both technologies emanating from the Babraham Institute and bioventures relocating to the Babraham Research Campus. BBT has established a Technology Development Lab (TDL), a fully-equipped biology and chemistry laboratory, to support innovation in biotechnology and biomedical fields. This pioneering concept was designed to accelerate the translation of early-stage concepts and technologies into viable commercial propositions. It does so by providing access either to equipment, facilities or procurement of TDL research staff to undertake the work. The services offered by the TDL are particularly helpful for cash-limited start-ups, helping to reduce cash-burn during the critical early stages of the technology development curve. Website: [www.babraham.com](http://www.babraham.com)

**The Babraham Research Campus** is the UK's leading knowledge-driven Biomedical Park where world-class research, business know-how and entrepreneurial excellence come together to stimulate effective knowledge transfer. The campus provides a unique and highly successful environment that actively fosters innovation. BBT has taken a prominent role regionally, initiating and leading partnerships to promote knowledge and skills flow and has established a reputation for successfully translating innovative science into viable business opportunities through partnerships for wealth creation. This is stimulating inward investment to the campus and contributing to regional development. Babraham plays a pivotal role in the lifesciences hub and science park network in the region; it is an EEDA innovation hub. Enterprise hubs are physical or virtual environments which support the region's high growth and innovative businesses. They offer the opportunity for businesses to share knowledge and best practice, as well as access to specialist innovation support, training and services.

**The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)** is the UK funding agency for research in the life sciences. Sponsored by Government, BBSRC annually invests around £450M in a wide range of research that makes a significant contribution to the quality

of life in the UK and beyond and supports a number of important industrial stakeholders, including the agriculture, food, chemical, healthcare and pharmaceutical sectors.

BBSRC provides institute strategic research grants to the following: The Babraham Institute; Institute for Animal Health; Institute for Biological, Environmental and Rural Studies (Aberystwyth University); Institute of Food Research; John Innes Centre; The Genome Analysis Centre; The Roslin Institute (University of Edinburgh); Rothamsted Research. The Institutes conduct long-term, mission-oriented research using specialist facilities. They have strong interactions with industry, Government departments and other end-users of their research.