

Biopeople – The Danish Innovation Cluster for Health and Life Sciences

The need for interaction across disciplines in the life and health sciences was the motivation and beginning of the Biopeople innovation cluster in Denmark.

Introduction

Biopeople represents the successful fusion of two experienced Danish bio clusters, one for biomedical, pharmaceutical and health issues, and one for system biology and bioinformatics. Combining more than 5 years of experience in networking and matchmaking across public private borders, the bio clusters were confronted with a growing demand for close interaction with neighbouring clusters and technologies. A larger critical mass and a bigger action field would benefit members and administration, as well as the life sciences sector as a whole in Denmark. Merged successfully in 2009 and growing ever since, Biopeople works today within the pharma, biotech, medtech and food sectors in Denmark and abroad. Its members cover the academic structure in Denmark, research organisations, hospitals, small and medium sized business as well as multinationals. Biopeople is co-funded by the Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation.

“A recent study¹ conducted for the Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation shows that participation in an innovation cluster increases a company's probability to engage in new innovation projects by more than 4,5 times.”

Purposes and potential

This newly formed health and life sciences innovation cluster focuses on interdisciplinary knowledge sharing, public private partnerships, strategic development and training issues for researchers and companies in medtech, pharma, biotech and food & health. The cluster plays an important role in fostering innovation flows and maintaining a knowledge based economy in Denmark. Indeed, technologies, health science

and pharmacy are naturally part of an interaction across disciplines and across borders, an interaction that creates multi-synergies and leads to new technologies and science.

Jens Kristian Gøtrik,
Managing Director at
Medicoindustrien



“Researcher's innovations in a network must not overlap, but create synergies. To succeed in this increased value through synergies, each of us must find his or her own role in relation to others and for this, knowledge sharing and transparency is a prerequisite.”

Success stories Medicines Research Academy

MRA was established in 2009 and represents an industry oriented medicines research education cooperation among 11 faculties at Lund University, Technical University of Denmark, the University of Copenhagen and Uppsala University. The MRA is a research-based academy focusing on education and training in disciplines related to the life cycle of medicines (medicine and biomedicine research and development). The academy offers students a common diploma based on selected courses at the four universities, combined with industrial research experience. On top of the international knowledge sharing among industrial and academic partners, the initiative is a public private partnership, where education and training will take place in collaboration with the pharmaceutical, biotech and medico industries as well as the regulatory agencies. Moreover, the activities of the MRA stimulate internationalisation and student mobility.

Flemming Steen Jørgensen, Professor at the University of Copenhagen Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, and Chairman of MRA



Biopeople
– the facts behind innovation across boundaries

Members	Companies, R&D institutes, hospitals, universities
Sectors	Life sciences (medtech, biotech, pharma and food)
Activities	Public private partnerships, matchmaking and knowledge sharing for interdisciplinary innovation
Geography	Denmark, Europe, worldwide
Team	7 experienced and motivated men and women from the life sciences and business development sectors in Denmark and abroad



“MRA is an excellent opportunity for students to get industry insight and international experience. It will give them an experience valuable for life.”

FASILIS – facility sharing

FASILIS, short for Facility Sharing in Life Sciences, is a European project for innovation clusters, supported by the Interreg 4B North-West Europe program, creating better access for SMEs to public and private research facilities across North-West-Europe. By linking European life sciences clusters, FASILIS gives SMEs access to a far wider range of research facilities than is currently available at a regional level,

broadening their competence network and their possibilities for finding the right solution for their innovation questions. To achieve this, the project has created an innovative transnational facility sharing infrastructure. This infrastructure works on three levels: regional contact points are a first point of contact for SMEs and facilities. Together they act as an international matchmaking network. They've organised 7 interregional matchmaking events, organised two Calls for Applications and supported SMEs and facilities along the way. The second level is a dynamic online catalogue of facilities and their competences at www.fasilis.eu that makes SMEs fully

aware of the available competences, expertise and facilities available in other regions. And finally, a voucher scheme supports concrete innovation projects and stimulates first steps towards durable long-term transnational cooperation between SMEs and facilities.

The result has been a multitude of new international collaborations between Biopeople's many pharmaceutical, biotech & medtech companies and universities in Denmark together with new players across northwest Europe. Of 69 projects brokered and funded in FASILIS, 24 involved Biopeople members (small and medium sized companies or research groups), delivering a unique

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opportunity to participate in international development collaborations.

By the way, the FASILIS project has also been awarded as one of the best cluster activities among its peers at the Northern-German-Polish Cluster Conference in May 2011.

**Jens Ole Pedersen, CEO,
DNA Technologies**

“FASILIS vouchers have been excellent for testing out new technologies as well as new relationships with foreign partners before committing too much. At DNA Technologies, we have successfully increased our international collaborations via a concrete and finite FASILIS project that has since become a durable and long-lasting one.”



Science Dating Events

Biopeople has developed a matchmaking event format particularly suitable for delivering cross disciplinary public-private partnerships. We called it Science Dating. At a science dating event participants from industry and universities book short one-to-one meetings to reveal mutual research interests. Through our events hundreds of researchers have met companies to brainstorm R&D collaborations across sectors and country frontiers. A study by the Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation, showed that (Biopeople) science dating events delivered over 20 industrial PhD studentships in the biomedical sciences.

**Anders O. Bjarklev,
Chairman of the Board
at Biopeople and
Provost at the Technical
University of Denmark**



“We must realise that development and innovation are encouraged by interdisciplinary interaction and knowledge.”

Become one of Biopeople's success stories!

You and your company are welcome to join Biopeople - the national Innovation Cluster for Life Science in Denmark.

Biopeople gives you access to initiatives, events and projects both within and beyond your sector that will help you to:

- Get the knowledge you need for new innovation projects

- Find new partners in innovation projects
- Discover relevant projects and funding
- Expand your international network

Become member of Biopeople at www.biopeople.dk/index.php?id=334 and enter a network that already includes the Danish universities, hospitals, research institutes and industry leaders, such as Novo Nordisk, Chr. Hansen, Novozymes & Coloplast. Company membership in Biopeople is free-of-charge, but an “in-kind” contribution of active participation in relevant courses, events and projects is expected.

**Per Spindler, Director
of Biopeople**

“Biopeople is part of the permanent Danish infrastructure for innovation and a first class partner for innovation projects in life science.”



Upcoming activities

For registration at our upcoming events or for more information, rendez-vous at www.biopeople.dk or contact our secretary Jette Claville at JECL@biopeople.ku.dk

Food and health program in innovative ingredients

This is the Innovative Ingredients program, promoting innovation, technologies & health claims for functional ingredients. Its overall goals are to promote Denmark as a world class ingredients nation, establish knowledge platforms of international quality that will strengthen existing research-based SMEs as well as encourage new ones, build R&D bridges between academia and industry within foods and health sectors and disseminate knowledge about the many bioactive compounds in foods and their direct & indirect effects on the health of people and animals. Biopeople and the other program participants will initiate cross-disciplinary events through conferences, training sessions, matchmaking events, public private project support and innovation vouchers.

Medtech Bootcamp

Biopeople is one of the partners for the next Medtech Bootcamp. Medtech Bootcamp is a startup accelerator program. Put simply, accelerators help

startups achieve commercial success faster. Accelerators, as opposed to classic incubators, are not focused on office space and limited support services. By providing free office space – and even cash – to each team, accelerators remove barriers for entrepreneurs. The acceleration occurs primarily through exposure to dozens of mentors who are top serial entrepreneurs themselves during an intense period of working toward a common goal, the Investor Day, in an open, shared working space with other high caliber teams. It is a powerful, transformational opportunity for your startup.

The Camp will from 1 October 2011 select 10 teams joining for 3 months of acceleration from February to May 2012 until Investor Day. The selected teams will get their initial costs funded up to €12,000 per team (€4,000 per team member) in micro capital, reimbursable by an 8% equity in the start-ups.

DIA Euro Meeting 2012 in Copenhagen

Stakeholders and professionals of healthcare and life sciences innovation will gather from all over the world for the Drug Information Association (DIA) Annual Euro Meeting in the Bella Center, Copenhagen from the 26 to 28 of March 2012. You will experience a neutral, global forum for knowledge exchange that fosters innovation to raise the level of health and wellbeing worldwide. Chairpersons of the meeting are Dr. Jytte Lyngvig, CEO of The Danish Medicines Agency, and Dr. Per Spindler, Director of Biopeople. It is our vision that the EuroMeeting 2012 offers you a multidisciplinary, relevant and unforgettable learning experience and expands your personal and professional network. The suggested themes for the Euro Meeting 2012 include the professional disciplines of regulatory affairs, safety and efficacy for human medicines, diagnostics and devices. Much innovation will be fostered by interaction between disciplines and jointly between the stakeholders of healthcare innovation such as industry professionals, academia, regulatory competent authorities, patient representatives, and the general public. Stakeholders will discuss decision-making in the processes of bringing new innovative products to the market in a fast, ethical, outcome-



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Biopeople

Biopeople is the Danish innovation cluster for the life and health science sectors. We help industry and academia to co-create projects and develop innovation in products and services. Biopeople is part of the Danish infrastructure for innovation, established and co-funded by the Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation. We embrace universities, research organisations, hospitals, industry association as well as companies within pharma, biotech, medtech and food. Our aim is to stimulate innovation through networking and knowledge sharing activities that bring researchers and companies together across disciplines, sectors and public-private boundaries.

Biopeople membership is free of charge, but an "in-kind" contribution of participation in our events is required. Membership is open to all companies and institutes worldwide, working within the relevant sectors. For more information about Biopeople and membership, please visit our website at www.biopeople.dk

Innovation across disciplines

Biotech, medtech, pharma, food & health Matchmaking, knowledge sharing and public-private partnerships



focused and financially sound manner. Attention will be given to how "unmet medical needs" are being addressed and to best practices of managing Health Technology Assessment. Special focus will include contemporary issues in data transparency and e.g. publication of clinical trial data. We furthermore envisage that the Euro Meeting 2012 transcends borders and boosts international relations by drawing attention to contemporary issues outside Europe such as in the USA, Brazil, China, Japan and India; and focusing on contemporary issues in the interface between those countries and Europe.

SHARE

SHARE and Biopeople jointly promote synergy in Human and Animal Research. SHARE is a research education initiative in translational medicine developed by University of Copenhagen and the pharmaceutical industries Novo Nordisk A/S, LEO Pharma A/S and H. Lundbeck A/S. SHARE stands for Synergy in Human and Animal Research and facilitate translational PhD level education supported by industry with primary focus on animal models and the synergy between research in human and animal diseases. The key aim of the initiative is to train bridge-building researchers in translational medicine and

to establish research projects that cross the boundaries of the traditional scientific areas of the faculties, departments, companies as well as other formal structures, and thereby promote and facilitate translational research between species for the benefit of both human and animal health. SHARE provides up to twenty four 1/3rd cross-faculty PhD scholarships to be used between faculties of University of Copenhagen. Typically, one third will be financed by the principal supervising faculty, one third by another partner involved in the project (e.g. by the other participating faculty, or by industry) and one third by the industrial partner or other external funding. The Board of SHARE chaired by Dr. Per Spindler, Biopeople, has approved four full PhD-fellowships per year, and SHARE and Biopeople are inviting interested students, researchers and professionals to its 5th SHARE Symposium on Systems Biology and Pharmacology on 16 November 2011, at the University of Copenhagen, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences.

References

1. *The impacts of cluster policy in Denmark – an impact study on behavior and economical effects of innovation 2011*, Danish Agency for Science Technology and Innovation, 3 (2011).

Sophie Labrosse,

Science Liaison Officer at Biopeople, the innovation cluster for life sciences in Denmark.



The Biopeople team is responsible for successfully making the link between academia and business across life sciences and health-related disciplines in Denmark and abroad. Activities include organising matchmaking events, public-private partnerships, knowledge transfer, conferences, courses and training. See our event calendar at www.biopeople.dk
Email: sophie@biopeople.ku.dk