



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

VICTORIAN DELEGATION WELCOME RECEPTION

Saturday 1 June 2024

It's a pleasure to join you all this evening at the beginning of the BIO International Convention 2024.

This cohort of 70 companies represents an important milestone for Victoria's Biotechnology industry.

You are part of Global Victoria's largest ever trade mission to BIO.

This is also the 22nd year that the Victorian Government has led a trade mission to BIO, demonstrating its commitment to developing and promoting the State's biotech capabilities.

These capabilities are already well known.

The commercial Medtech and pharmaceutical sector employs over 51,000 workers in Victoria, with another 20,000 medical researchers employed at universities, medical research institutes, and health services.

Victoria is also home to the world class Melbourne Biomedical Precinct in Parkville and the Monash National Employment and Innovation Cluster in Clayton.

The Melbourne Biomedical Precinct delivers outstanding patient care, cutting edge research and discoveries, and training for some of the country's brightest minds.

The Monash National Employment and Innovation Cluster is a collection of health, technology and business precincts, educational institutions, and commercial operations.

Backed by a highly skilled workforce, the Cluster is home to CSIRO, the Australian Synchrotron, and the Victorian Heart Hospital.

Of course, the strength of our biotechnology sector goes beyond the Precinct and the Cluster.

Biotech startups are becoming increasingly important players in the industry.

The winner of Best Newcomer in the 2022 Governor of Victoria Startup Awards was Currus Biologics.

A biotech startup, Currus Biologics is developing a unique form of CAR-T cell therapy that overcomes many of the challenges faced by its traditional methods.

These challenges include limited T cell fitness and survival as well as an inability of T cells to efficiently traffic to tumour sites and penetrate physical barriers.

Currus Biologics' proprietary BEAT technology enables CAR-T cell therapies to be used in cancer patients with solid tumour indications where this has previously not been possible.

I'm pleased that representatives of their business are part of this year's trade mission.

The success of this startup is just one example of the importance of industry support for emerging biotech businesses.

Breakthrough Victoria is continuing to support newcomer startups through the Biotech Incubator.

In partnership with CSL, The University of Melbourne and WEHI, the Incubator connects biotech startups with the necessary connections and infrastructure to establish themselves in the Victorian ecosystem.

Of course, we are not the first to introduce these kinds of organisations.

BioLabs offers a premier co-working space for life science American startups to develop their work in locations across the United States and select cities in Europe.

Over three days, each of you will have the opportunity to meet with representatives from across the biotech ecosystem, building important connections and promoting the work of your organisations.

The program of presentations will also expose you to alternative approaches, expanding your understanding of the ecosystem.

In the coming days of my international visit, I'll have the pleasure of meeting with industry experts from the biotech industry.

Leaders in San Diego include Illumina, Planet Innovation and the Salk Institute for Biological Studies.

I'll also be meeting with experts at the University of Minnesota, the Mayo Clinic, and Pfizer.

These are just some of the connections that will be made.

I look forward to promoting the work of Victorian organisations in these meetings.

Thank you for joining us this evening.

I look forward to speaking with more of you about your work and its role in BIO 2024.