

Redx backs North of England biotech focus

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Redx Pharma is part of a delegation from the North of England that is heading home today from the world's largest biotech conference, vowing to work together again to promote the region.

The BIO International Convention (BIO) attracted over 15,000 biotechnology and pharma leaders. The event, held in San Francisco, covered a wide spectrum of life science and application areas including drug discovery.

The Northern Powerhouse delegation staged a week-long series of events to showcase the region to international businesses.

The line-up also included the Alderley Park bio campus; Manchester Science Partnerships; The Northern Health Science Alliance Ltd (NHSA); the Manchester Academic Health Science Centre; and research specialists Aptus Clinical.

Dr Hakim Yadi, chief executive of the NHSA, said that the collaborative spirit in the region is a powerful marketing asset in its own right: England is one of the most economically unbalanced countries in Europe and we do need to do something about it. The North of England has phenomenal amount of expertise in life sciences and in healthcare. I've been working in the North for the last three years and have never seen this level of commitment [anywhere else]. There is a collaborative spirit here. People are prepared to put aside their geographical differences for the greater good.

Norman Molyneux, chief executive of the Manchester-based corporate finance house Acceleris, which joined the delegation, said: The Northern Powerhouse has given belief back to the region. There is the capital here to finance growth. My organisation has arranged for £38 million to support public and private companies in the last year — and two of the five biotech IPOs in the last 12 months were Northern companies. The world is a big place and we understand that the UK has to market itself as a whole but the delegation has set about making sure the North is on the biotech agenda.

Neil Murray, chief executive of Redx Pharma Plc, said: A global gathering like BIO puts the challenge the region faces in context. The UK is too small geographically for us to become obsessed with North v. South — not least because the distances involved don't compare to the USA, for example. But more needs to be done to build the North's offering into the UK Plc story. There has been a deficit here and we have

set about addressing it directly. I believe many of the organisations involved in this week will be keen to continue to working together.



Left to right: Neil Murray (CEO, Redx Pharma), Steve Bates (CEO, BioIndustry Association) and Hakim Yadi (CEO, The Northern Health Science Alliance).

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Steve Bates, chief executive of the BioIndustry Association, said: BIO has been a perfect location to promote the UK's globally competitive fiscal, tax and life science environment. The UK is a great place to partner with, invest in, and work. It's good to see the north of England prominently promote its unique strengths this year to ensure it is firmly on the global life science map.

Chris Doherty, site director at Alderley Park, stressed the results the region can produce. In our industry it's ultimately about getting drugs to market and improving patient outcomes. The North has been very successful in this respect and some 20 drugs have gone to market from Alderley Park, a track record which compares

favourably with anywhere else in the UK and further afield. It's about making sure that legacy continues.

The delegation was backed by Bionow, the North of England industry group for life sciences, KPMG, and the marketing agency Influential.