

World leaders in biotech to hear from Northern Powerhouse

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Redx Pharma is joining a delegation from the North of England heading to the world's largest biotech conference in San Francisco this week – the first time the region's life science sector has worked together to promote its offer on the global stage.

The BIO International Convention (BIO) starts today and attracts over 15,000 biotechnology and pharma leaders. This event covers a wide spectrum of life science and application areas including drug discovery, bio-manufacturing, genomics, biofuels, nanotechnology and cell therapy.

The Northern Powerhouse life science delegation will promote the North of England as an attractive and competitive centre for international businesses to set up operations here for research, development and manufacturing.

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The line-up is led by Alderley Park, one of the five major assets within Manchester Science Partnerships – a portfolio that also includes a sci-tech Central Campus in Manchester. The delegation also features Redx Pharma Plc; The Northern Health Science Alliance Ltd (NHSA); the Manchester Academic Health Science Centre (MAHSC); and research specialists Aptus Clinical.

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

Neil Murray, CEO of Redx Pharma Plc, said: The UK has a compelling offer to biotech, with one of the strongest and most productive life science sectors in the world and a tax regime that is increasingly favourable for R&D-based businesses. The North of England is integral to that offer and produces world class science. The combination of the people and facilities here has already made the region very attractive to international companies. BIO, the largest event of its kind, is the right place for the North to tell its story. We are delighted to support and work alongside other companies and stakeholders in showcasing the region to a global audience.

Rowena Burns, chief executive of Manchester Science Partnerships (MSP), commented: It's always been the Manchester way to collaborate – we achieve more by working together. Biotech is one of those sectors where academia, industry, the NHS and other organisations and institutions collaborate quite naturally. In Manchester we already work in this way and support each other in pitching to global businesses. This approach permeates all sectors of our economy and sends a powerful and positive message to businesses thinking of locating here.

She added: This wider North of England initiative at BIO is very welcome. We share a responsibility to speak for the North and to explain the significant competitive advantages our region offers.

Dr Hakim Yadi, Chief Executive of the Northern Health Science Alliance, will be presenting the UK and Northern Powerhouse offering in life sciences at BIO on behalf of the UK Trade and Industry (UKTI). The Northern Health Science Alliance has delegated authority across the North's eight leading universities, research-intensive NHS Trusts and four Academic Health Science Networks – with Board level approval to enter into collaborative research partnerships.

Other events include a Northern Powerhouse media event with Scrip Intelligence, one of the major life science publishers, and a North of England evening drinks reception in the main exhibition centre.

Dr Hakim Yadi said: I am thrilled to be given the opportunity to promote the North's life science offering globally. The North has a great many centres of international excellence and a supportive eco system that allows life science businesses to flourish. We'll be demonstrating why the UK, and the North in particular, is leading the way in Life Sciences, supporting businesses and encouraging growth.

Geoff Davison, CEO of Bionow, said: There's been talk in the past about companies in the North of England collaborating more and we are just delighted to see this project come to life. The Northern Powerhouse has given the region a new way to frame the narrative around the world class science that happens here and the competitive advantages of working from here. The delegation has some powerful incentives to share – there are many benefits to international companies locating or outsourcing in the North – and we are so pleased the delegation members readily signed up to what's a considerable investment of time and resource.