

Marketplace

In silico research center.

The first German center for modeling and simulation in the life sciences (BIOMS)



recently opened in Heidelberg. Modeling and computer simulation will be used for in vivo and in vitro as well as in silico research on complex biological systems. Funding for the center will be used to promote young scientists' involvement in research.

Research facility closing.

Incyte (www.incyte.com) is closing its Palo Alto, CA, research facilities and headquarters. As a result, Incyte expects to eliminate approximately \$50 million in annual operating expenses and reduce its workforce by 57%, or 257 employees. The company will continue to operate its subsidiary in Beverly, MA. The closure "reflects the difficult realities of the genomic information marketplace and our belief that Incyte's most promising, value-creating activities are taking place in drug discovery and development," says Incyte CEO Paul Friedman.

Contract services facility closed.

BioReliance Corporation (www.bioreliance.com) has closed its Worcester, MA, facility. BioReliance acquired the facility, which employed 44 people, in 2003 with its acquisition of Q-One Biotech. BioReliance is itself being acquired by Invitrogen.

Deals

Cancer drug developer acquisition.

Genzyme (www.genzyme.com) will acquire ILEX Oncology, Inc. (www.ilexonc.com), a biopharmaceutical company focused on oncology drug discovery and research. Under the terms of the agreement, ILEX shareholders will receive \$26 per share or a total of \$1 billion in equity value. "This transaction is a very good strategic fit for Genzyme that provides us with a solid franchise in the important field of oncology," says Henri A. Termeer, Genzyme's chairman and CEO. Genzyme has also become the lead bidder to acquire IMPATH's (www.impath.com) cancer-testing business for \$215 million in cash.

Acquisition to enhance cancer research.

Merck (www.merck.com) has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire Aton Pharma, Inc. (www.atonpharma.com). Aton's next-generation histone deacetylase inhibitors have potential applications in cancer, neurodegenerative diseases, and other ailments. Merck will acquire 100% of the equity in Aton, making Aton a subsidiary of Merck. Aton was co-founded in 2001 by Ronald Breslow, a professor at Columbia University, and Paul A. Marks of Columbia University and the Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center.

Life sciences manufacturers acquired.

Fisher Scientific International, Inc. (www.fisherscientific.com), has acquired Oxoid (www.oxoid.com), a manufacturer of microbiological culture media and other diagnostic products, for \$300 million. Fisher is also acquiring Dharmacon (www.dharmacon.com), a manufacturer of synthetic siRNA and custom RNA oligos technology, for \$80 million. "Our intention is to expand our presence in the life sciences market and build on existing capabilities within our cell-culture and bioresearch businesses," says Paul M. Montrone, chairman and CEO of Fisher.



R&D collaboration.

Vertex Pharmaceuticals (www.vrtx.com) and Novartis Pharma, Inc. (www.novartis.com) have amended their collaboration. Under the new agreement, Vertex will continue to be responsible for drug discovery, and Novartis will be responsible for preclinical and full clinical development. The agreement ultimately provides for earlier compound transfer of drug candidates discovered by Vertex to Novartis. Novartis may pay Vertex \$35 million in license fees and milestones for each accepted preclinical drug candidate, including \$10 million upon the acceptance of each drug development candidate.

People

Genomics chairman.

J. Craig Venter, president of the J. Craig Venter Science Foundation, will become chairman of U.S. Genomics' Scientific Advisory Board (www.usgenomics.com). U.S. Genomics develops technologies for the direct analysis of single unamplified molecules.

Biotech appointment.

Acambis plc (www.acambis.com), a manufacturer of smallpox vaccine for the U.S. government, has appointed company president Gordon

Cameron as CEO. Cameron joined Acambis in 1996 as chief financial officer.

Executive loan. Eli Lilly (www.lilly.com) has loaned executive Charles E. Schalliol to BioCrossroads (www.biocrossroads.com), where he



was recently named president and CEO. BioCrossroads is a collaborative effort of Lilly, Indiana

University (www.indiana.edu), Purdue University (www.purdue.edu), the Central Indiana Corporate Partnership ([\[www.indygov.org\]\(http://www.indygov.org\)\), and the City of Indianapolis \(\[www.indygov.org\]\(http://www.indygov.org\)\) to capitalize on the expertise of the collaborators by attracting new business opportunities, intellectual property, and capital to the life sciences industry.](http://www.cincorp.</p>
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Board appointee. Avantium Technologies BV (www.avantium.com) has appointed René van Rappard as CEO. Before his appointment, van Rappard held a number of management positions at companies including Akzo Nobel, Union Carbide, and British Petroleum. ■