Pfizer Logo

New Funding For Fundamental Biomedical Research To Be Made Available

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Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) and Pfizer today announce a unique new partnership that aims to promote new biotherapeutic breakthroughs in Ireland, through an academic-industry collaboration.

Announcing this new partnership, Director General, Science Foundation Ireland and Chief Scientific Adviser to the Government of Ireland, Professor Mark Ferguson said: “Building strategic partnerships that fund excellent science of value to both industry and society is a key goal within SFI’s Agenda 2020 strategy. This innovative partnership with Pfizer, one of the world's premier research-based pharmaceutical companies, could help to deliver and promote important potential breakthroughs in the areas of immunology and rare diseases. It also creates a platform for building future collaborations between academia and industry in the area of biomedical research.”

A three year agreement will be available to qualified academic researchers from Irish universities with novel drug targeting ideas. The partnership will be inviting Universities to submit proposals in March. These research proposals will be assessed in accordance with certain specified criteria. Further information about the proposal process will be available in early March.

Successful applicants will have the opportunity to work with the Pfizer Global Biotherapeutics Technology (GBT) group, including Pfizer colleagues at the Pfizer Grange Castle site, in an effort to develop the next generation of potential protein therapies. This will enable the blending of the research expertise of academics with Pfizer’s drug discovery and development expertise and resources. It is hoped this collaboration will identify exciting new advances that may lead to the accelerated creation of potential new therapies for unmet medical needs.

Dr. Paul Duffy, Vice President, Pfizer, commented: “Pfizer's purpose is to innovate to bring therapies forward that significantly improve patients' lives. R&D is at the heart of fulfilling this purpose as we work to translate science into potential therapies that matter most. This translation of science into breakthrough therapies of tomorrow will be expedited by developing and fostering collaborations with academia, including academia in Ireland.”

Dr. William Finlay, Director of Global Biotherapeutics Technologies, Pfizer said: “Working with Science Foundation Ireland provides Pfizer with an exciting and unique opportunity to collaborate closely with the top biomedical academic researchers in Ireland. This novel program will combine cutting-edge biology with Pfizer’s world-class drug discovery and development capabilities, to radically accelerate the progress of innovative biotherapeutic concepts with the potential to make beneficial new medicines.”

SFI and Pfizer will hold information events at the venues below next week, the purpose of which are to provide an overview of the scheme to the research community. Advance registration for these events is not required.

CITY	VENUE	DATE	TIME
Galway	Galway Radisson Blu Hotel, Lough Atalia Road, Galway	Monday 17th February 2014	10am-12pm
Cork	The River Lee Hotel, Western Road, Cork	Tuesday 18th February 2014	10am-12pm
Dublin	O'Callaghan Davenport Hotel, 8/10 Merrion St. Lower, Dublin 2	Wednesday 19th February 2014	10am-12pm

ABOUT SCIENCE FOUNDATION IRELAND (SFI)

SFI funds oriented basic and applied research in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) which promotes and assists the development and competitiveness of industry, enterprise and employment in Ireland. The Foundation also promotes and supports the study of, education in and engagement with, STEM and promotes an awareness and understanding of the value of STEM to society and in particular to the growth of the economy. See www.sfi.ie.

Pfizer focuses R&D on core areas where we believe Pfizer is best positioned to bring unique, needed therapies to patients. These areas include chronic inflammatory and autoimmune diseases, vaccines, oncology, neuroscience and pain, cardiovascular and metabolic disease and rare diseases. Key to our approach is collaborating in new and dynamic ways with other innovators across the health landscape, including academic scientists, patient foundations, governments, other biopharmaceutical companies and treating physicians. Pfizer's pipeline currently comprises over 80 innovative therapies, including potentially first-in-class vaccines for two deadly hospital-acquired infections, new antibodies for lupus and high cholesterol and the next-generation of targeted therapies for cancer.

ABOUT PFIZER IN IRELAND

Pfizer employs approximately 3,200 people at six sites in Ireland across manufacturing, shared services, R&D, treasury and commercial operations. Pfizer has invested $7 billion in operations in Ireland since opening the first site in 1969 and has invested $330 million in the Grange Castle and Ringaskiddy sites in the last two years. Many of Pfizer's leading medicines are manufactured for global export from Irish sites. The Global Biotherapeutics Technology group at Grange Castle was established in 2006 and is part of a world-leading protein drug discovery unit within Pfizer Worldwide R&D.