



PBL NEWS

Spring 2004 : PBL News No.5

This Spring 2004 edition of PBL NEWS celebrates our 10th Anniversary

February 2004 marks the 10th anniversary since PBL was formed, and we thank all our customers both in public sector research and in the companies taking many exciting technologies forward into commercial use, for their valued support and business over the years. We look forward to working together over the next ten!

PBL wins funds for Technology Development

PBL is delighted to announce that it has been awarded £1.8m from the UK Government's Public Sector Research Exploitation (PSRE) initiative to enable us to fund selected laboratory projects to consolidate and strengthen promising new technology.

From this substantial award we will fund critical technical progress on ideas that have been developed with public funding, but that may have otherwise remained "on the shelf" because they were too immature for companies to take the risk of developing them. We will, for example, be able to fund the generation of critical data to demonstrate the usefulness, versatility and robustness of a technology, which not only will enhance the chances of successful uptake by industry but also will allow for stronger and

broader patent protection. We see this capacity to fund highly selective technology development activity as a critical piece of the technology transfer jigsaw.

PBL expects to use the new funding in particular on new technologies that have either emerged at or can be developed and strengthened further at the BBSRC plant and microbial research Institutes, but we welcome any proposals for technology that could benefit from this investment. Please contact us (ajsc@pbltechnology.com).

More information about obtaining Technology Development funding from PBL will appear on our website shortly.

PBL welcomes BBSRC as shareholder

In January 2004, BBSRC – the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council - became the first new shareholder since our formation in 1994. BBSRC is the UK's major public funder of biosciences, particularly plant and microbial science, and provides over £200m annually to UK's Universities and Research Institutes. "This is a significant corporate development for PBL" says Dr Jan Chojecki, PBL's Managing Director, "and we are delighted with this endorsement by BBSRC of our activity as it's principal facility for technology transfer in the plant and microbial sciences, and a key element of BBSRC's KT strategy". With the substantial capital investment made by BBSRC, we will be strengthening our services in particular to research institutions funded by BBSRC, such as Rothamsted Research, IGER and the Institute of Food Research. We continue with our abiding principle of operating on an independent and mutually-voluntary basis and thank all the research organizations that we have served and continue to serve, and these include :

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Innes Centre • Sainsbury Laboratory • Institute of Food Research, Norwich • Rothamsted Research • University of Cambridge • University of Manchester • University of Reading • University of East Anglia • Royal Holloway University of London • Keele University 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Surrey • University of Leeds • University of Sussex • University of Wales • University of Nottingham • University of Essex • University of Madrid • University of Malaga • University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala • Plant Research International B.V, Wageningen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Vienna • Institute of Genetics & Cytology, Minsk • University of South Carolina • North Carolina State University • Texas A&M University • University of Florida • Stanford University • University of Auckland • Universidad Nacional de Rosario, Argentina • Universidade Tiradentes, Brazil
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IP protection

Funds and manages patent filing and prosecution

Builds complementary technology packages

Markets technology to commercial users

Concludes and monitors technology licences

Manages and mentors the formation of new technology-based businesses

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PBL's Plant TEC Scheme goes from strength to strength

Last year PBL launched an innovative scheme for streamlining the access of emerging plant technologies to companies for early experimental evaluation. In the first year of the "Technology Evaluation Concept" or TEC, 13 brand new technologies were brought to the attention of the companies that subscribe to the scheme and over 30 evaluation licences have been taken out on these. New member companies have continued to join the scheme and all the companies who joined last year have renewed their subscriptions this year – attesting to the popularity of the scheme amongst our industrial customers. If you have technology that you would like us to offer via the TEC programme please contact us (ajsc@pbltechnology.com).

New licence for IFR's technology

In January we announced a licence agreement with Profos AG (www.profos.de) that grants exclusive rights in respect of patented technology developed at the Institute of Food Research, Norwich. The technology enables diagnosis of Listeria and certain other important pathogens, and may also lead to the development of new antimicrobial therapies. PBL was engaged in 2002 to assist with the commercialisation of the technology and the management of the associated patent family. The exclusive worldwide licence to Profos marks a first step towards commercialisation, and is a mark of the strengthening technology transfer service that PBL is affording IFR.

NEW STAFF AT PBL

PBL is pleased to introduce four new members of staff who each bring exciting blends of skills and experience to the team.

Dr Gordon Barker joins PBL from a Manchester based biotech start-up company where his responsibilities included sales & marketing, business development and technical support. He recently completed an MBA at Manchester Business School. With a PhD in yeast cell cycle genetics, he also brings 8 years post-doctoral research experience and a strong microbial and molecular biology background to the team.

Dr Lars von Borcke joins us from the technology licensing group at Syngenta, where he had both out-licensing and in-licensing responsibilities. Lars has a research background in plant molecular biology and plant carbohydrate metabolism, gained at Oxford University and Royal Holloway College, London. He also has worked in the food industry, at Hazelwood Foods, UK.

Dr Adam Hajjar is a microbiologist by training and spent seven years running R&D programmes, intellectual property management, technology-acquisition and product registration activities for a UK-based agbiotech company. Since 1998 he has been in technology transfer roles with various London-based Universities, Medical Schools, NHS Trusts and Research Institutes. He joins us from The School of Pharmacy, University of London, having set up and managed their Commercial Development Office.

Dr Terry O'Neill who will start in April has been IP manager at a London NHS Innovations Hub. He was IP and Planning Manager at Antenova in Cambridge following five years with Xenova, formerly Cantab Pharmaceuticals. He has a broad scientific and research background in applied microbiology, immunology and animal health.

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