

**PRESS RELEASE****Montserrat Vendrell: “We must take advantage of the sector’s global pushing to drive already existing projects and promote new initiatives”**

**BIO-Europe Spring 2013 will again turn Barcelona into the European capital of biotechnology**

**More than 2,000 delegates and around 1,300 companies will participate in one of the reference conferences in Europe**

**Around 60% of the companies from all around Spain present in the conference are from Catalonia**

**Sònia Recasens emphasizes that this international conference helps to position the Barcelona brand**

**Barcelona, March 7, 2013.** On March 11 through 13, Barcelona will host [BIO-Europe Spring](#) (BES) a biotechnology conference of worldwide reference. BES, to be held at the International Convention Center (CCIB), has been organized by the [EBD Group](#), a leading partnering firm in the sector of life sciences. To bring this event to Barcelona, a Hosting Committee, headed by Biocat and the Barcelona City Council, has been set up that includes the Catalan Government, Invest in Spain, Asebio, CataloniaBIO, the Barcelona Chamber of Commerce, MNAC, and the Barcelona Maritime Museum.

In addition, the BES has been sponsored by Catalan firms representative of the BioRegion of Catalonia, including [Almirall](#), [Amgen](#), [Biokit](#), [Reig Jofré](#), [Ysios](#) and [Cuatrecasas, Gonçalves Pereira](#).

Celebrating BIO-Europe Spring for the second time in Barcelona —the first time was in 2010— will reinforce the strategic global position of this city and the BioRegion of Catalonia in the field of biotechnology and biomedicine. The meeting will give high visibility to Barcelona as a business leader in life sciences and innovation.

Sònia Recasens, Deputy Mayor for Economy, Business and Employment of the Barcelona City Council, emphasizes that “events like BES, with an international

projection, help to position the Barcelona brand, especially those added-value sectors that are key to the economic development of the city and foster the contacts between foreign companies and the local ones.”

For this reason, the Barcelona City Council “supports these strategic sectors that currently offer great opportunities for foreign investment, business development, and that contribute to create qualified jobs,” adds Sònia Recasens.

For **Montserrat Vendrell**, CEO of BioCat, “for the BioRegion of Catalonia, for our companies and for Biocat, as promoter of the cluster, the challenge is taking advantage of improved global indicators of the biotech sector to make already existing projects grow and to promote new entrepreneurial initiatives in Catalonia.”

Biocat CEO emphasizes the relevance of this conference: “it is a most valuable tool because it makes it possible, in an effective way, that, just in three days, entrepreneurs, multinational and SME executives, patent consultants, service providers, and investors can attend dozens of effective meetings that otherwise would take months of contacts and travel.

This is an opinion shared by EDB Group President, **Carola Schropp**, who values that, despite the difficult economic situation, this year more Spanish companies are participating in the conference than in 2010. “This is of great importance for the future of innovation in the BioRegion of Catalonia and also for the life science industry as a whole. In fact, the agreements reached in Barcelona will push this industry in the future,” stresses Schropp.

In addition, the conference will yield a profit for the city, with an estimated revenue of 2,200,000 euros, half of which coming from the direct investment of the event and the

rest due to the presence of more than 2,000 delegates and their impact on the local economy (hotels, restaurants, shopping, and extending the visit, among others)

### **Catalan companies are the majority at BES**

At BIO-Europe Spring 2013, more than 2,000 senior executives, investors, and nearly 1,300 companies and institutions involved in the life sciences, including major pharmaceuticals, biotech innovators and venture capital firms from more than 50 countries around the world will be present. Nearly sixty Catalan companies and organizations will participate in the event; they represent 60% of those in the sector in Spain.

Provisional figures for this year —registrations have been open until today— indicate that the attendance will exceed that of BIO-Europe Spring in 2010, which reached very positive results. On that occasion, the BES was attended by 1,738 delegates from 1,056 companies in 44 countries around the world. 9,016 partnering meetings were held, and there were a total of 62 exhibitors.

The indicators have continued making progress positively, and they were especially positive last year at the BES Amsterdam, with 1,304 participating companies, 26 of which were Catalan, they accounting for 50% of the Spanish delegation. This trend has been ratified by the recovery of the volume of investments in life science companies in mature markets such as the USA market, and with a steady increasing. In some cases, the increase has been dramatic in emerging markets, especially in China.

### **Business opportunity with *PartneringONE***

Most Catalan companies and institutions participating in BIO-Europe Spring 2013 will take advantage of the event to make high-level contacts, thanks to the [PartneringONE](#) software. This online tool, created by EBD Group, coordinates the agenda of meetings of the delegates at BES and makes it possible for them to establish new partnerships, to find new partners, and to do business with international companies.

Licensing projects, promoting their own franchises, introducing new proprietary drugs ready for clinical trials, finding partners, licensing technologies, announcing their own activity and offering services, as well as expanding into new markets are some of the aims of Catalan companies and organizations.

Among the pharmaceutical companies that are participating in the international conference is [Almirall](#), which is promoting franchise for a proprietary drug: acridinium bromide monotherapy for the treatment of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), which has been already approved in Europe and has reached Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Korea, but can still expand more. [Esteve](#) is presenting two research projects of their own in clinical Phase II—one for the treatment of neuropathic pain and the other for acute, chronic pain—with the aim of finding companies that can develop out-licensing until Phase III. [Gebro Pharma](#) intends to use the BES to license its portfolio of drugs, among which is Metoject, for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, Eptadone, the first industrialized methadone, and Gliolan, a marker for brain tumors. [GP Pharm](#) is presenting Lutrate, a formulation for prostate cancer, licensed in Europe and in the Spanish market since November 2012; they are also offering their expertise to third parts. [Ferrer Group](#) is announcing its program of developments of new proprietary drugs: modulators of orexin receptors—orexine is the hormone that promotes wakefulness. And finally, [Lacer](#) is seeking for strategic partnerships with other companies and to expand to the MENA (Middle East and North Africa region).

Regarding the presence of biotech companies, [Biokit](#), which produces serology reagents for the diagnosis of infectious diseases and for the detection of plasma proteins, is seeking to establish new collaborations. [RJ Biotech Services](#) is presenting its bioservices specialized activity, mainly in the production of injectable forms. Ability Pharmaceuticals [Ability Pharmaceuticals](#) is introducing ABTL0812, a new drug to treat lung and pancreas cancers, ready for clinical Phase I. Unlike chemotherapy, this product, for oral administration, has very low toxicity and few side effects. This company has received a substantial grant (1.2 million euros) from the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness that will cover the first study in humans. [Janus](#)

[Developments](#) is seeking partners for three projects in preclinical phase: one that will prevent neuronal damage due to hypoxia in newborn infants (JAN1179); another that lowers the risk of failure during transplantation of marginal liver (i.e. fat liver) (JAN0909), and another that diminishes the risk that may lead to sepsis and acute hospital infections (JIND006). [Bioingenium](#) wishes to establish partnerships at international level and offer specialized services in the development of bioprocesses for obtaining therapeutic proteins.

Finally, some companies that provide specialized services are also participating in the BES. [Cuatrecasas, Gonçalves Pereira](#) provides services related to business legal issues, and [Pellisé Abogados](#), specialized in intellectual property and providing legal services in contracting and protecting technological inventions. These services will become especially important from 1 January 2014, the date of entry into force of the new European unitary patent.

### **Innovator and reference cluster**

These companies are just a sample of the sixty Catalan companies involved in BES 2013. All of them are part of the cluster of the BioRegion of Catalonia, which concentrates 90% of the biopharmaceutical industry and medical technology in the Barcelona area. It has become an innovative biomedical hub of reference in southern Europe.

The BioRegion has 300 biotech, pharmaceutical and medical technology companies, as well as 10 universities offering degrees and doing research in biosciences, 15 hospitals with significant activity in research, and 20 science and technology parks. Considering also specialized suppliers and service companies in the sector, the number of firms goes up to 520. In addition, Catalonia has high-level infrastructures, such as the ALBA-CELLS Synchrotron, the Mare Nostrum supercomputer, at the Barcelona Supercomputing Center (BSC), and the National Center for Genome Analysis (CNAG).

Of all the biotech companies in Spain, 21% are located in Catalonia, ahead of Madrid (19%), Andalusia (12%), Valencia (11%) and the Basque Country (10%). Catalonia is one of the most dynamic European bioregions, and collaborates with several European clusters and U.S.A. organizations.

This press release will be accompanied by a press dossier containing detailed information on the program, and on the participating Catalan companies and their business objectives.

### **Biocat**

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Biocat is the organization that coordinates and promotes biotechnology, biomedicine and innovative medical technologies in the [BioRegion of Catalonia](#). Its mission is to push all those who work in this field and their initiatives, to set up an environment with a powerful research system, active knowledge transfer and business entrepreneurship that can become an economic driving force for the country and contribute to the welfare of society. More at: <http://www.biocat.cat/en>

### **The Barcelona City Council**

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The City Council of Barcelona, through its local development agency, Barcelona Activa, promotes the economic development of the city and its surrounding areas, acting as a driving force for business, entrepreneurship and employment. It also has a clear commitment to promoting the city internationally as well as its strategic sectors such as biotechnology and medical technology.

Further information at: [www.bcn.cat](http://www.bcn.cat)

### **EBD Group**

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EBD Group, together with the Biotechnology Industry Organization, is the company that organizes the BIO-Europe Spring, plus seven other international annual meetings. It is specialized in the organization of partnering one-to-one meetings among the key players in the field of life sciences and also provides customized consulting services.

Further information at: <http://www.ebdgroup.com>

### **FURTHER INFORMATION:**

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Access to the exhibition is free to the media. Registration is required.

[www.ebdgroup.com/bes/registrtion/press\\_reg.php](http://www.ebdgroup.com/bes/registrtion/press_reg.php)

**BES Program 2013:**

[www.ebdgroup.com/bes/program/index.php](http://www.ebdgroup.com/bes/program/index.php)