

Industrial Biotech Workshop in Czech Republic

Summary of group discussions

- Innovation is the time between « it could be a product ... and ... it is a product »

R&D – discussion group

STRENGTHS

R&D - financing

- Improved R&D Budget
- Strong horizontal funding system

R&D – biotech sector

- Traditionnal biotech (food, beer, pharma, etc.)
- Pharma generics
- Biotech machinery

WEAKNESSES

- Fragmentation
- No focus on biotech in R&D budget
- Frequent changes, no continuity in project managers etc.
- Lack of strategy in the field of biotechnology
- Delay to obtain money from projects etc.
- Lack of white biotech
- Lack of SMEs
- Problem of transfert of technology to industry

OPPORTUNITIES

R&D - financing

- More focusing
- Quality of project must be checked, reinforced
- EU Funds for money and evaluation
- Pressure of green processes

R&D – biotech sector

- Biofuels
- Algae & waste
- Biomaterials (joins, boons substitutes)
- Food crisis

THREATS

R&D - financing

- Human ressources
- Lack of continuity (ministries etc.)
- Stagnation or decrease of the R&D budget for Biotech
- Exchange rate

R&D – biotech sector

- Food crisis

R&D – discussion group

Recommendations – CZ authorities

- Better evaluation of the « matching funds programme », better matching between research and industry, better assesement of the value & the output
- Train the grant managers, invest more funds into per-review
- Invest in evaluation
- More incentives for private funding
- Increase public awaraness of bio-products
- Public procurements
- Improve awaraness of company managers

Recommendations – EU authorities

- Fund also basic research
- Less bureaucracy
- NIH style of reviewing (improve the application process to funding)
- More flexibility in the timing of R&D projects
- Make FP7 website intelligible

Innovation – discussion group

STRENGTHS

- Good research
- Capacity of people
- Costs are low

WEAKNESSES

- Problem of transfert of technology to industry
- Lack in education of entrepreneurship
- Low costs → difficultly to attract skilled people
- Lack of examples, lack of good news, lack of success stories
- IP is too costly and takes too much time

OPPORTUNITIES

- Relaunching of proposal for a European patent

THREATS

- Political instability – lack of predictability
- No VCs
- No clusters

Innovation – discussion group

Recommendations – CZ authorities

- Built an open production plan
- Kind of « special fund » to overcome salary costs differences
- Promote success stories
- Building trust: predictability
- Promote Public Private partnership
- « getting people in mind that making profit is not a sin »

Recommendations – EU authorities

- Get excellence, reimburse time spent in responding to the calls (see national examples) for SMEs
- Having a follow-up, interest from EU in the future of projects
- IP harmonisation in 27 countries → strong EU patent is needed and patents protection
- Building trust: predictability
- Communication (and « what can biotech do for you »)
- Make State Aid measures known
- Create a creative funding that can be used by private bodies
- Make decision makers aware about the specificity of biotech process (5 and not 3 years)

Policy – discussion group

STRENGTHS

- Educated people
- Enough resources

WEAKNESSES

- Resources not properly distributed due to lack of managerial skills
- Death valley between research and market
- Two different languages between academia and industry

OPPORTUNITIES

- Two deep reforms of R&D system and university/education system

THREATS

- No comprehension by politicians/economist/lawyers etc. of the sector
- Business is felt as a kind of « evil » by Academia
- Use of EU structural funds - « sustainability » of projects for incubators (no long term planning)

Policy – discussion group

Recommendations – CZ authorities

- Managerial training
- Educate decision makers on biotech potential
- Cooperation between actors (different ministries, etc.)

Recommendations – EU authorities

- European seed funding programme