

Jodi McKay

Minister for Tourism
Minister for the Hunter
Minister for Science and Medical Research
Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer)



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NSW promoted as the science and research hub of the Asia-Pacific

NSW's world-class research and development sector is being showcased internationally this week at the 2009 Bio International Convention in Atlanta, Georgia.

NSW Minister for Science and Medical Research Jodi McKay will attend Bio 09 this week to foster more collaborative research and attract further investment in the State's science and medical sectors.

"NSW is home to 125 core biotech companies and 287 medical device companies, making us the nations leading life sciences state," Ms McKay said.

"Around 75 per cent of multinational pharmaceutical companies in Australia are based in NSW, resulting in more than \$1.8 billion in medical and pharmaceutical exports in 2007-08 alone.

"BIO is an opportunity to promote our State as the centre for biotechnology business and investment in the Asia-Pacific."

Ms McKay said it is crucial NSW takes its technology sector to the international marketplace to attract further investment and create new sales opportunities beyond the domestic Australian market.

"We want to work with the private sector to capitalise on the opportunities science presents us, to build knowledge in the community and to invest in a more prosperous future for NSW residents," Ms McKay said.

"There will be 13 NSW organisations attending Bio, 5 of which are exhibiting.

"This participation will help keep NSW in touch with international trends affecting biotechnology, which is critical to support our existing research sector and grow new business opportunities in this smart industry."

Ms McKay will be in the US between 15-24 May and will also visit meet with government and industry officials in Massachusetts to talk about building on education, research and innovation, energy and environmental issues and discuss funding opportunities with philanthropic bodies in New York.

Ms McKay will be accompanied by NSW Chief Scientist Professor Mary O'Kane during the US visit.

"NSW has many advantages as a location for biotech business and investment, such as a large bioscience sector, a highly skilled workforce, competitive costs, a low-risk business environment and world-class telecommunications.

"All this supports an outstanding and growing set of medical device and biotechnology companies," Professor O'Kane said.

Professor O’Kane said NSW also demonstrates excellence in environmental and veterinary biotechnology.

“This was exemplified last year when NSW worked effectively to slow the spread of equine influenza which threatened the major breeding activities of the national horseracing industry.

“The NSW Government’s Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute (EMAI) led the equine influenza response, applying the latest science in veterinary biotechnology to identify the disease from samples taken from horses across the State.

“The NSW Government is now investing more than \$40 million to upgrade EMAI to ensure we are prepared against any future outbreaks of animal and plant diseases,” Professor O’Kane said.

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