The Danish Pharma and BioTech Industry

- among the best and most innovative in the world

As the European leader in drug development, Denmark offers attractive business solutions for foreign biotech companies. This includes R&D collaborations with Danish universities and research organisations, establishing European headquarters or entering into a strategic partnership regarding fast development or approval of your product for the European market.

The Danish biotechnology cluster is a major world player, especially in areas such as enzymes, CNS research, diabetes care and cancer research. A long-standing agricultural tradition created a research industry in Denmark more than 150 years ago and since then, research methods have continuously developed in Denmark.

The biotech industry emerged in the 1970s as a new recombinant DNA technology was published. With the help of recombinant DNA (also referred to as genetic engineering) proteins can be produced, such as human insulin and other drugs in cells that are grown under controlled conditions.

Since then, biotechnology has created more than 200 new medicines and vaccines, including drugs to treat diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDS and autoimmune diseases. Biotechnology is also the cause of hundreds of diagnostic tests.

Medicon Valley

Medicon Valley is one of Europe’s top three clusters for biotech innovation alongside Cambridge in the United Kingdom and Basel in Switzerland, and it is home to the Danish biotech sector. Medicon Valley is a life science cluster, which spans the eastern part of Denmark including Copenhagen and the south-western part of Sweden. As one of Europe’s top three pharma and biotech clusters, Medicon Valley attracts a constant stream of partners, researchers and investors.
Pharma and BioTech in Denmark

Fast, safe and cost-effective drug discovery and drug development is a reality in Denmark due to a number of favorable framework conditions:

- Denmark holds a long tradition for collaborative R&D. The Danish collaboration model is characterized by a high degree of interdisciplinary involvement, the ability to think holistically, and successful joint projects across public and private sectors.

- The Danish national health system registers the entire population “from embryo to grave”, a system that means Denmark is home to more than 500 bio banks and extensive medical records.

- Denmark is one of the fastest countries to approve clinical trials. In short, Denmark is the place to perform drug discovery and development.

Reasons for placing biotech business activities in Denmark:

- Denmark is among the countries that host the most clinical trials per capita in the world.¹
- Denmark is a world leader in biotech innovation, surpassed only by the United States.²
- One of the most R&D-intensive countries in the world, and the best in Europe regarding researcher concentration.³
- Denmark’s entrepreneurial ecosystem is the best in the EU and fourth best in the world.⁴

The European Spallation Source (ESS)

ESS is one of the largest science and technology infrastructure projects being built today. The European Spallation Source is a pan-European project that will be built by at least 17 European countries, with Sweden and Denmark as the host nations. The ESS facility will be built in Lund, whilst the ESS Data Management and Software Centre will be located in Copenhagen.

The facility design and construction includes the most powerful linear proton accelerator ever built, a 4-tonne, helium-cooled tungsten target wheel, 22 state-of-the-art neutron instruments, a suite of laboratories, and a supercomputing data management and software development center.

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¹ clinicaltrials.gov
² Scientific American Worldview 2020
³ Bloomberg Innovation Index, 2019
⁴ Global Entrepreneurship Index 2019
First-class research and education within biotechnology

One of the main reasons for Denmark’s stronghold within biotechnology today is the presence of world-class universities, university hospitals, research centers and private companies of various sizes, all working at the forefront of biotech research, targeting medicine as well as environmentally friendly products and solutions. Not only is research at the forefront, the Danish educational system focuses on teaching students to work together in an interdisciplinary context, resulting in efficient teamwork and innovative research and products.

R&D collaboration

Another contributing factor for the Danish position within biotechnology is a very strong and unique interplay between the Danish universities and industry, both domestically and abroad. University students often work with the industry on their master thesis or PhD. In addition, it is not uncommon to see competitors joining forces to support or establish various university research centers. There is a strong culture of collaboration between universities, hospitals and companies all over Denmark.

Major Danish industry players include Novo Nordisk, Lundbeck, Leo Pharma, Alk Abelló, Genmab, Bavarian Nordic and a number of upcoming companies.

A long-standing agricultural tradition created a research industry in Denmark more than 150 years ago and since then, research methods have continuously developed in Denmark. Today, the Danish biotechnology cluster is a major world player, especially within:

**Cancer** – Denmark is one of the top medical countries in Europe when it comes to academic and commercial cancer research - comparable to Boston and Washington D.C.

**Metabolic diseases** – Denmark leads the way in metabolic disorder research, and is a pioneer in the prevention of obesity as well as in the treatment of all related illnesses.

**Inflammatory & Infectious diseases** – Denmark boasts strong basic research in inflammatory and infectious diseases in academic as well as industrial sectors.

**CNS & Neuroscience** – Denmark has a very strong Central Nerve System (CNS) and R&D focus, which includes both the academic institutions, as well as the industry.

**Areas of Research Expertise**

- Cancer
- Metabolic diseases
- Inflammatory & Infectious diseases
- CNS & Neuroscience

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A unique business framework

- Home to more than 180 dedicated biotech companies
- 48,000 people employed in the industry
- More than 5,000 dedicated R&D employees in the sector
- More than 300 biotech service providers
- 8 universities
- 11 science parks
- 4 major university hospitals

The European Spallation Source (ESS) foreseen for 2023
We Speak Business

Invest in Denmark provides your company with a tailor-made solution for locating your business in Denmark. We measure our success by how well we contribute to yours. So, if you are considering setting up business or expanding your activities in Denmark, make us your first stop.

Our specialized staff across the globe has the corporate background, industry insight and well-connected networks to advise you on every aspect of locating in Denmark. Not only when you set up, but also as your business grows. Our tailor-made solutions include connecting companies with key local contacts, arranging fact-finding tours and providing comprehensive benchmark analyses. We make sense of local legislation and advantages of locating in Denmark – all free of charge and in guaranteed full confidentiality.

We Look Forward to Hearing from You

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