

# LBICnews

From the London BioScience Innovation Centre



## LBIC announces expansion

LUCY GARNSWORTHY, LBIC

LBIC will open a new 37,000ft<sup>2</sup> state-of-the-art facility at the Apex building, adjacent to its existing facilities near King's Cross, London. The Apex is scheduled for completion in late 2023 and will form part of the new canal-side Tribeca development by Reef Group and Blackrock Alternatives.

Demand for lab space has increased 400% since 2016, according to MedCity's 2021 Demand Report. The new Apex facility will build on LBIC's current provision for life science companies, allowing existing clients to grow and new clients to come on

board, benefiting from the support of LBIC's expert operations team. As a wholly owned subsidiary of the Royal Veterinary College (RVC), LBIC facilitates collaboration opportunities with its world-leading researchers, as well as providing privileged access to specialist equipment and contract research services.

Tribeca will become an integral part of the Knowledge Quarter ecosystem in the thriving King's Cross area, already home to notable residents including Google, Facebook and the Francis Crick Institute.

Continued on page 3

### WELCOME

*Exciting times here at LBIC, with our much-anticipated expansion announcement, global recognition for our long-standing client Fabrican and funding success for Ori Biotech.*

*As we look to LBIC's future, we are exploring ways to widen our impact within our existing community and beyond. We have begun a series of client seminars and also recently hosted a biosafety training session from Bishop Simon, who feature on page 6 discussing clinical trials. In addition, we are working with groups to find ways to promote equity, diversity and inclusion – see page 4 for details on LIFT, who have had a recent success in placing an applicant with an LBIC client. Here's hoping for further exciting times in 2023.*



Lucy Garnsworthy, Editor

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## Centrifuge-Free Cell Washing

*Increase the accuracy, efficiency & reproducibility of your cell sample prep*



### Bio-Analysis Centre supports new client Everna

The Bio-Analysis Centre is an analytical services company based in LBIC, which specialises in High Performance Liquid Chromatography and Mass Spectrometry. They have recently added new offerings of Gel Permeation Chromatography and Evaporative Light Scattering Detection. They also have a Capillary Electrophoresis capability thanks to their sister company, deltaDOT.

The Bio-Analysis Centre has been helping Everna with their analytics by giving them access to B-AC's systems and expertise while Everna gets established and secure funding.

Charlie Groome, Everna's co-founder and CEO, recently said: "B-AC have supported Everna's analytical chemistry, developing the protocols enabling pharmacokinetic measurements of our products in human blood samples. We have found Cali and her team efficient, professional and a pleasure to work with."

If you have any analytical challenges, please get in touch with Dr Carolyn Hyde (cali@b-ac.co.uk) to discuss.

### About LBIC's Business Support Network

LBIC's Business Support Network (BSN) brings together a number of specialist service providers to provide LBIC clients with a full business support package. LBIC selects the Service Providers on the basis of their industry experience and their ability to provide relevant and timely support to life science companies at every stage of their journey.

LBIC welcomes these new clients to the Centre:

- Baseimmune
- Blue Idea
- Chordata
- Educo Life Sciences
- Evox Therapeutics
- Human Centric
- Liberum Health

### Intract Pharma appoints Dr Vipul Yadav as Chief Executive Officer

Intract Pharma, an innovative oral protein delivery company, has appointed Vipul Yadav as Chief Executive Officer of the company. Dr Yadav, who has been serving as the Director of Research for over five years, also joins Intract's Board of Directors. Previous CEO Dr Bill Lindsay, who co-founded and led Intract since incorporation in 2015, will remain with the company as Director of Business Development.

On the appointment, Dr Lindsay said: "It is with great satisfaction that I hand over management of Intract to Dr Yadav, who has been a major driving force in development of the company to date, in particular in pioneering our biotherapeutics development platform, Soteria."

Dr Yadav said: "I am excited to transition into this role at such a critical junction of the company's journey towards progressing its oral protein technology platform into clinical development with multiple pharma partners. I would like to thank the current management and board for entrusting me with this role and I look forward to working alongside the Intract board, management, and R&D staff to lead the company to the next phase of growth and realise the potential of our innovative technologies."

Dr Vipul Yadav joined Intract following completion of his PhD and since then has served as the Director of Research. During his tenure the company advanced into the oral biologic delivery space for treatment of gastrointestinal and systemic immuno-inflammatory diseases and established multiple pharma partnerships to advance the technology deeper into preclinical with early and late-stage biologic candidates.

Dr Yadav received his PhD from University College London, School of Pharmacy, working in the lab of Intract founder Prof Abdul Basit where he researched gastrointestinal stability and tissue uptake mechanisms involved in oral delivery of peptides and monoclonal antibodies.



Dr Vipul Yadav, CEO Intract Pharma

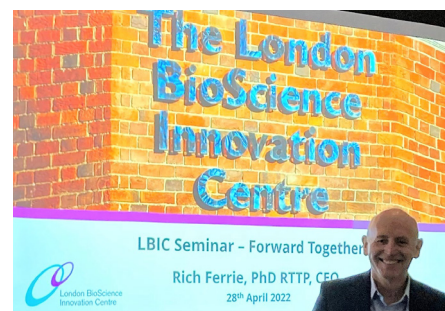
### LBIC launches exclusive client seminars

This year, LBIC launched a quarterly series of client-only seminars, to help clients increase their knowledge, network with peers and learn more about LBIC itself. Each seminar features talks from a Business Support Network provider, plus a client and members of the LBIC team, followed by informal drinks in the RVC bar.

The inaugural session was held with accountancy firm MHA Macintyre Hudson, whose speaker Chris Blundell gave a fascinating insight into employee retention schemes to attract and retain the best talent in a competitive environment. The second session, 'On good terms', featured Janita Good of legal specialists Fieldfisher explaining term sheets to help clients learn to navigate complex deals.

These seminars are open to virtual clients as well as those based on site, and provide an excellent opportunity to bring those two strands together. We hope to host more in-person events in 2023 for both clients and the wider life science community.

Turn to page 8 for details of the virtual client offer.



Benefitting from a key canal-side location, with bridge access to the vibrant Granary Square and Coal Drops Yard, Tribeca is set to contribute to and further enhance King's Cross' desirable retail, restaurant and public realm offering.

Dr Rich Ferrie, Chief Executive at London BioScience Innovation Centre, said: "We are delighted to be growing our footprint in the King's Cross Knowledge Quarter by bringing online this fantastic new facility that complements our existing successful offering and demonstrates our commitment to addressing the continuing need for high-quality grow-on space for innovative young bioscience companies in London.

"The LBIC team, supported by the RVC, has been at the forefront of providing best-in-class facilities at the heart of the capital for over two decades now and our partnership with Reef and Blackrock will be key to the next exciting phase of our growth."

Stewart Deering, Chief Executive at Reef Group, commented: "The space has been designed to encourage occupiers to collaborate and drive forward the fast-growing and dynamic life sciences sector. London BioScience Innovation Centre will be key to realising this ambition by drawing on its extensive customer base from across

the industry and ensuring the tenant mix at The Apex is complementary and world leaders in research and development."

Professor Stuart Reid, Principal of the RVC, commented "We are pleased to be

able to support the next stage of the growth and development of LBIC. We look forward to the enhanced impact that this expansion will deliver through additional research collaborations and industry links."



Construction underway at LBIC's state-of-the-art Apex facility

## Easier access to Chinese market through new BSN provider

LBIC is pleased to welcome Crayfish.io as its latest Business Support Network (BSN) provider. Crayfish will provide LBIC's clients with a special rate on its digitised business services, tailored consultancy and bespoke marketplace platform to help them expand their operations and penetrate markets within China and Asia.

Crayfish work with companies from initial market entry through to profitable growth, offering a portfolio of essential business and professional services, delivered by the

Crayfish team and vetted multilingual partners. The online platform ensures ease of use and swift progress, with access to a range of experts to meet specialist needs.

Crayfish.io founder and CEO Ting Zhang said: "We are delighted to be working with the London BioScience Innovation Centre as a Strategic Partner for China. London has been playing an important role for trade and investment with China, and we hope that Crayfish's range of business services can help LBIC's innovative biotech

companies at all stages of their expansion into China, and East and Southeast Asia.

"The Chinese pharmaceutical sector is second only to the US market and is forecasted to reach US\$300.9bn by 2025 at a 12.2% CAGR. Even for a start-up, it's important to think big and have a China strategy in place. We are looking forward to working with LBIC and the businesses at the Centre and together we hope to create some business success cases soon."

Learn more at [crayfish.io](https://crayfish.io)

# Fabrican 'breaks the internet' at Coperni's Paris Fashion Week show

A viral fashion moment was born during Paris Fashion Week in September, when Fabrican founder and CEO Dr Manel Torres sprayed a dress onto supermodel Bella Hadid as the finale of the Coperni runway show.

Hadid walked onto a platform wearing only underwear, then Dr Torres and his team sprayed a white dress directly onto her skin. Coperni's Head of Design tweaked the sprayed material to create the final design with a skirt slit and off-the-shoulder straps. Hadid then walked the runway and appeared in the final line-up with fellow models in other Coperni designs. Data analysis by the Launchmetrics platform valued the Media

Impact Value (MIV) of the viral moment at \$26.3 million, including \$20.9 million on social media in the 48 hours after the show.

The 'fabric in a can' ties in with concerns around sustainability in the fashion industry, since the material can be washed, reused, and finally, when the garment has come to the end of its use, dissolved for re-spraying. Coperni co-founder and creative director Arnaud Meyer said, "It's our duty as designers to try new things and show a possible future."

Dr Torres founded Fabrican in 2003 after developing the technology at the Royal College of Art and Imperial College, London. The technology has made its



Image courtesy of Coperni and Fabrican

greatest strides toward widespread application since Fabrican relocated to LBIC in 2014. Fabrican continues to explore ever-wider applications of the technology, including in food safety, technology, and healthcare.

## LIFT programme connects businesses with local talent

BY GEMMA BREWER, EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT OFFICER, LIFT

LIFT (Leading Inclusive Futures through Technology) is a three-year programme across Camden, Hackney, Islington and Tower Hamlets that aims to help residents into good local jobs in the knowledge economy including Life Sciences, and to support businesses and start-ups to thrive within these sectors.

LIFT works with businesses and residents across the four boroughs, giving you access to skilled and diverse local talent. We will help grow and develop your business by providing dedicated support with sourcing and pre-screening candidates, apprenticeships, bespoke promotion of entry level roles and tailored support to grow your own talent.

### The LIFT offer: how we can help Building a local talent pool

We can provide end-to-end recruitment support to match your business with a local candidate pool and offer expert support to help you grow your talent pool through entry level roles, apprenticeships, internships, and work experience.

Our recruitment support includes advertising vacancies across four London boroughs through our extensive networks, and pre-screening and shortlisting of candidates, and trained interview panellists.

### Connecting with your community

We can support you to connect with your local community through insight sessions and careers events, raising awareness of careers in Life Sciences through engagement with local schools, colleges, and community organisations.

### Apprenticeships

We can help you to create apprenticeships and recruit from a local talent pool. Apprenticeships are available at different levels, right up to degree and Master's level. They typically last from one to four years, and cover a wide range of skills from digital marketing to data analysis. We can help you at each stage of the journey with advice, practical support, funding to cover training costs, and advice around additional financial incentives.



Leading Inclusive Futures through Technology

Why take on an apprentice? Because apprenticeships can:

- Build a diverse, local workforce, with apprentices that bring a range of life experiences and creative solutions to your business.
- Develop a team with the skills that work best for your business.
- Increase staff satisfaction and retention.
- Develop your existing staff through mentoring and management of an apprentice and create a culture of learning within your organisation.

To find out more about recruitment, please reach out to Life Sciences Employer Engagement Officer  
[Gemma.Brewer@islington.gov.uk](mailto:Gemma.Brewer@islington.gov.uk)

Learn more about LIFT:  
<https://www.liffutures.london/>

# Ori Biotech raises over \$100 million in Series B funding

BY LUCY GARNSWORTHY, LBIC

Ori Biotech, a leader in cell and gene therapy (CGT) manufacturing technology, secured over US\$100 million (£75 million) in an oversubscribed Series B funding round that closed in January 2022. This amounted to 16.4% of the total UK Biotech Venture Capital investment in Q1 of 2022.

Ori have been at LBIC since 2019, when they had five staff on site in one 500ft<sup>2</sup> lab. They now occupy around 2,500ft<sup>2</sup> of lab and office space and employ 10 people in the lab and growing. The company also has a base in New Jersey, USA.

We interviewed Jason C. Foster, CEO of Ori, to learn more about the next steps for the company.

## **Q: Congratulations on this terrific news! What does this funding mean for Ori?**

Thank you! The \$100 million in funding allows us to move from a R&D focused company to a commercially focused organisation supporting therapy developers, CDMOs and academic researchers in very new and impactful ways. It also supports launch of our Lightspeed Early Access Program (LEAP), which allows select partners to gain pre-launch access to the Ori platform in 2022. The Ori platform fully automates CGT manufacturing to increase throughput and reproducibility, while improving quality and decreasing costs through the combination of proprietary hardware, software, data and analytical tools.

## **Q: Has location had an impact on Ori's success? How does the company handle being based on both sides of the Atlantic?**

Being on both sides of the Atlantic is a strategic advantage for Ori. We have access to major talent pools across North America and Europe, as well as investors and industry leaders in these two key markets of the CGT/biopharma industry. Also, being at LBIC in Kings Cross, which is an emerging biotech hub, allows us access to UCL and

quick travel to Cambridge where our engineering team sits. These geographic advantages are reflected in the way we build our platform – we capitalise on the diverse thinking in our team, talk to customers across geographies and product focuses to ensure our innovation is fit for purpose, and continue to exchange insights with industry thought leaders by being in close proximity to the relevant hubs in London, Philadelphia, New York and Boston.

## **Q: What significance could CGT have for patients?**

CGTs are a new generation of revolutionary medicine that offers curing potential for cancer and rare diseases. This transformative opportunity brings hope to millions of patients who have been suffering and failed on existing treatments. The earlier CGT becomes accessible in the treatment pathway, the less patients and their families will have to endure, and the more lives can be saved. The unfortunate reality we are facing today is that current CGT manufacturing technology does not allow scalability, resulting in extremely high costs and therefore preventing very sick patients from accessing these potentially curative therapies. Ori is on an urgent mission to change this.

## **Q: What importance do people have for Ori as a company?**

Our people are what makes Ori special – they drive our goals, our innovations, and our decision-making process. First and foremost, our team is aligned behind our



Ori team Jan 2022

mission to enable widespread patient access to life-saving cell and gene therapies. Our team is composed of scientists, technologists, engineers, business and commercialisation experts, all united in this shared, urgent mission. Everyone on our team makes an impact from day one – on the business and on the culture. At Ori, we have been building a culture of creativity, trust and ownership, with the support of a truly collaborative, open environment. This is also the approach we hope to bring to the broad CGT industry, where the Ori platform can enable organisations across the supply chain to benefit from each other's solutions, bringing CGT closer to patients.

## **Q: Tell us more about the new platform**

Ori's proprietary, full stack manufacturing platform closes, automates and standardises CGT manufacturing, allowing therapeutics developers to develop and bring their products to market at commercial scale. The promise of the innovative Ori platform is to fully automate CGT manufacturing to increase throughput, improve quality and decrease costs by combining proprietary hardware, software, data and analytics.

## **Q: What is your future vision for Ori?**

We see the Ori platform making CGTs accessible to millions of patients, by helping manufacture personalised, targeted CGT on an industrial scale.

[oribiotech.com](http://oribiotech.com)



Ori team April 2022

# Three steps to boost your GMM drug clinical trial recruitment

BY DR SHURENE BISHOP SIMON

**The pharmaceutical industry has seen a significant increase recently in the design and trial of drugs based on genetically modified microorganisms (GMM). This trend is likely to continue as new genetic engineering technologies become available, meaning more clinical trials and demand for patient recruitment.**

**The greater the pool of suitable participants recruited, the greater the inflow and quality of data to test a product's efficacy. This is particularly important when developing treatments for rare medical conditions.**

It is no secret that hospitals and convalescent settings are the best place to recruit patients, but how to optimise recruitment into GMM drug trials? Here are three essential steps to success.

## 1) Set expectations

In my experience, when hospital stakeholders are not informed of all the necessary steps at an early stage in discussions, drug companies have been unable to increase recruitment. Not all relevant stakeholders will be versed in the

regulatory and biosafety requirements of clinical trials.

Surprises in the process have resulted in hospitals pulling out of trials. Clinicians care about their patients and want to go the extra mile to help them, so give them specific information about what is going to happen from the start. An easy-to-read document will help convince prospective trial sites and give clinicians confidence. This approach will go a long way to convincing your prospective trial sites to take part in your study and to have confidence in you.

## 2) Hire an expert biosafety consultant

Reassure the hospital team that an expert is at hand to help them seamlessly navigate the trial process. Getting on board with your trial will impact on their limited time, so you need their buy-in. Ask them to visualise themselves in the back seat of your Bentley (other cars are available), with an expert biosafety consultant in the driver's seat. The 'driver' takes the stress out of the process by managing the stages, paperwork, and critical liaisons, allowing the hospital staff to simply enjoy the ride.

## 3) Flatten the speed bumps

Empower the biosafety consultant to chart the way. Too often, success is hindered by having to rely on third-party consent for every action. Progress slows if every biosafety-related piece of work goes through the contract research organisation or pharmaceutical company for approval. This can affect the host's decision to stay on board. To avoid this, arrange a scope of work with your biosafety consultant that is reasonably unrestrictive, whilst producing the desired effect. The consultant will liaise with regulators, inspect premises, ensure compliance and co-ordinate a local committee as required.

These steps will improve your chances of increasing clinical trial recruitment, because you have approached the tasks at hand from the clinical site's workforce's perspective.

If you want to increase trial recruitment, Dr Shurene Bishop Simon is an expert biosafety consultant with extensive experience in facilitating GMM clinical trials.

Website: [bishopsimon.co.uk](http://bishopsimon.co.uk)

Email: [info@bishopsimon.co.uk](mailto:info@bishopsimon.co.uk)

*All legislations and guidance are current at the time of writing (November 2022). Please ensure that you always consult the most recent legislation and guidance. © Dr Shurene Bishop Simon. November 2022. All rights reserved.*



*Dengue Clinical trials by Sanofi Pasteur*

# RVC recognised as world leader in QS rankings and REF2021 results

**The Royal Veterinary College (RVC) recently celebrated maintaining its position as the world's top veterinary school in the QS World University Subject Rankings 2022. Further to this, 88% of its research was rated world-leading or internationally excellent in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 results published in May 2022.**

The QS rankings provide authoritative comparative analysis on 14.7 million unique papers, taken by students at 1,543 universities in 161 locations around the world. A range of criteria are applied, including Academic Reputation, Research Impact, number of Citations and Employer Reputation. The RVC has been top of the subject table for three of the past four years, recognising its outstanding teaching programmes, which complement the institution's veterinary remit, strengthened by an intensive research portfolio as assessed by the REF.

The REF2021 results highlight the RVC's holistic and transdisciplinary approach to research, with researchers, teachers, clinicians and pathologists working collaboratively to ensure 'real world' impact and advances in clinical practice. The impact case studies submitted by the RVC covered a broad range of research areas, including those which: advance clinical practice; protect public health by enhancing food safety; inform policy on the control of disease afflicting some of the poorest people in the world; and tackle antimicrobial resistance through innovations in drug delivery. Many of these are underpinned by the RVC's One Health approach to research, the importance of which has been highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The RVC's impact case studies included:

- **Regenerative medicine:** The RVC's leading expertise in stem cell technology has led to improved treatments for equine tendon injuries and other conditions in companion animals. The musculoskeletal team continue to explore the potential for stem cell treatments of diseases of humans and animals. The new Centre for Vaccinology and Regenerative Medicine, part of a multimillion-pound redevelopment plan for the RVC's Hawkshead campus, will aim to further boost impact in veterinary regenerative medicine in orthopaedic diseases as well as cardiac and eye diseases.
- **Heart disease:** Degenerative mitral valve disease (DMVD) affects around one in 30 dogs and can lead to congestive heart failure. The RVC began long-term studies of at-risk animals in 2004, gathering data on drug treatments and early diagnostics. Through the RVC's VetCompass network in the UK and international collaborations, researchers were able to undertake large-scale trials connecting veterinary practices across the world. The 'EPIC' trial was the largest prospective, blinded, placebo-controlled, randomised study to be conducted in veterinary cardiology, involving 360 dogs recruited by 36 investigators across 11 countries in four continents. The study demonstrated efficacy of treatment with pimobendane, now sold as Vetmedin®.
- **Long-term disease:** The RVC has expertise in a range of long-term conditions, including diabetes, cardiac conditions, diseases especially affecting older cats, and musculoskeletal conditions including arthritis. Developments include novel

laboratory tests for earlier diagnosis of Chronic Kidney Disease, new drugs and new formulations of pet food to improve disease management.

- **Schistosomiasis:** This neglected tropical zoonotic disease caused by a parasitic worm causes severe chronic illness and even death. Transmitted from infected freshwater, its transmission between humans and other species is of critical concern in managing global responses. The RVC's team is working with a range of stakeholders including the World Health Organization (WHO) to achieve the newly revised global goal of 'Elimination of Schistosomiasis as a Public Health Problem' and ultimately 'Interruption of Transmission in Selected Regions' by 2030. Recent activities include developing a new livestock-specific lateral flow test that will provide a critical tool for decision-makers and veterinary health services at international, national and community levels.

For more details, visit:

<https://www.rvc.ac.uk/research/our-impact>

To discuss potential collaborations, please contact [lbic@rvc.ac.uk](mailto:lbic@rvc.ac.uk)



# Virtual tenancy offers flexible London base

£600  
for the first six months\*

For companies looking to establish a London base, it is easy to think that a physical office is required. However, many companies find it simpler to take on a 'virtual' tenancy at LBIC, giving access to meeting room space when needed for important face-to-face meetings, but without the commitment and setup required with dedicated office space.

LBIC's experienced team has developed the virtual package to suit the varied needs of life science companies of all sizes.

## Benefits of an LBIC Virtual tenancy

- A Central London address less than 10 minutes' walk from the international transport links of St Pancras International Station
- One-year complimentary Gold membership of One Nucleus, the international membership organisation for life science and healthcare companies
- Discounted client rates on meeting rooms, catering and video conferencing facilities
- A dedicated telephone line answered in the client's name and redirected as needed
- Mail collection and redirection
- Courier bookings at client rates
- Business Support Network to assist with doing business in the UK
- Access to RVC equipment and facilities, including the stunning Lightwell café
- Visible profile within LBIC and through our marketing and communications
- Option to cancel at any time, with just one month's notice period

## The set-up process is quick and straightforward

Contact us at [lbic@rvc.ac.uk](mailto:lbic@rvc.ac.uk) or call +44 (0) 20 7691 1122 today to enquire about becoming a Virtual client.

\* Additional charges may apply for certain services. A full list of charges can be supplied on request. Prospective clients will be subject to due diligence checks by LBIC management. Introductory rate is excluding VAT.

## Would you like to feature in our newsletter?

If you would like to contribute to a future issue of LBIC News, contact **Lucy Garnsworthy** on +44 (0) 20 7691 0982 or email [lbic@rvc.ac.uk](mailto:lbic@rvc.ac.uk)

## Contact us

LBIC has been supporting life sciences companies since 2001. Today we host more than 50 companies, ranging from entrepreneurial start-ups to more established UK companies and overseas subsidiaries from Europe, North America and Asia Pacific. The Centre is owned and operated by the prestigious Royal Veterinary College, one of the independent Colleges of the University of London.

The Centre is a 10-minute walk from St Pancras International for Eurostar services and The Francis Crick Institute.



### Management Team:

**Rich Ferrie**  
Chief Executive

**Janette Richardson**  
Director of Operations

**Lucy Garnsworthy**  
Communications Manager

**For further information, or to enquire about our services, contact:**

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