

Finnish Bioindustries Well Represented at

BIO 2008

■ **The Scandinavian presence at BIO 2008 was the largest ever, gathering almost seventy life science companies and organisations from Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Norway under the same roof. Finnish biotech research and industry attracted keen attention from the exhibition visitors.**

Riikka Paasikivi

Organised in San Diego, California, the BIO 2008 convention featured the largest gathering of biotech exhibitors in history, with more than 2,100 companies, over 208,000 sq. feet of exhibition space, and some 20,000 participants.

“BioFinland was well situated in the Scandinavian pavilion, and there was a lot of interest in Finnish biotech research and industry”, says **Hanna Halme** from The Turku Science Park.

“A joint pavilion is an excellent way to gain critical mass in an exhibition, where a total of 36 countries and regions had their pavilions. The Scandinavian pavilion was among the ten largest at BIO, in terms of size.”

A rich programme

The full convention programme included four full days with 175 breakout sessions, 21 educational tracks, more than 1,000 speakers, three keynote sessions, six super sessions and three CEO forum sessions.

“The convention presented such a variety of interesting sessions that it was difficult to choose which to attend,” says **Kati Takaluoma** from Culminatum Ltd Oy–Helsinki Region Centre of Expertise.

“This is an excellent event to update one’s knowledge on what is going on in the bioworld today. The sessions organised by The Biomarkers Consortium were very interesting, and I enjoyed listening to Dr. **Greg Venter’s** visions on synthetic genomics at one of the keynote luncheons.”

Efficient networking

BIO conventions create opportunities for building partnerships, and creating investment and licensing deals worldwide. More than 6,000 business leaders met at BIO 2008 and participated in the Business Forum. More than 14,500 one-on-one partnering meetings were held—a new

record—and a total of 1,500 companies attended the forum.

“The BIO International convention is one of the best events for meeting potential partners. You can both meet with existing customers in order to expand your collaborations and also make new contacts,” says **Arto Toivonen**, Business Development Director, Orion Pharma.

“During the four days of the convention, it is possible to meet with representatives from about 30 pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, and in addition visit some of the companies around the San Diego area.”

“BIO is an excellent opportunity to meet potential partners and customers,” says **Juho Eväsoja**, CEO of Systems Biology Worldwide. “Besides the Business Forum, you can find future collaborators at the evening events and even on a convention bus.”

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The Finnish stands attracted lots of interested visitors at BIO 2008.

World Leader

BIO (Biotechnology Industry Organization) represents more than 1,200 biotechnology companies, academic institutions, state biotechnology centres and related organisations across the United States and in more than 30 other nations.

BIO members are involved in research and development of innovative health care, agricultural, industrial and environmental biotechnology products. BIO also produces the BIO International Convention, along with industry-leading investor and partnering meetings held



around the world.

The BIO International Convention is the world’s largest annual event for the biotechnology industry. The 2008 Convention was held between June 17 and 21 at the San Diego Convention Center in San Diego, California. The Convention

brought together 20,108 leaders from industry, government, academia and other disciplines.

Next year’s event will be held at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, Georgia on May 18–21, 2009.

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