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French Technology Press Office Ref #: **Z081**
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RHONE-ALPES, FRANCE'S CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR LIFE SCIENCES

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Photo 1: Map highlighting France's Rhône-Alpes region

Rhône-Alpes Région

Photo 2: Rhône-Alpes logo



Photo 3: ERAI logo

Chicago, May xx, 2009 (word count: xxx)

The Rhône-Alpes region of France is a key player in the global life sciences sector. From May 18 to 21 it will accompany innovative French businesses in biotech and medical technology to 2009 BIO International Convention in Atlanta, the world's largest convention for the biotech industry. In March 2009, the region hosted Biovision, the World Life Sciences Forum. For its 6th edition, this platform for debate and exchange brought together more than 120 personalities including many Nobel laureates, entrepreneurs, elected representatives and others.

Rhône-Alpes, the 2nd largest region in France in economic terms with a GDP of €143 billion, is a truly European area. With its exceptional mix of SMEs and industrial giants, this ultra-high-tech region boasts a university environment and research centers of the utmost quality. It includes 14 research clusters, 15 competitiveness hubs actively engaged in R&D, and 10 Rhône-Alpes clusters that seek to improve the competitiveness of businesses. On the international stage, it works through the ERAI (Entreprise Rhône Alpes International) and its 24 international offices (United States, Canada, Spain, Poland, and elsewhere). For more information: www.rhonealpes.fr.

Rhône-Alpes has all the strengths for developing and marketing new therapeutic breakthroughs:

- 600 life sciences businesses and 30,000 employees
- 20 world leaders including Sanofi Pasteur, Merial, bioMérieux, Stryker, Becton Dickinson, Depuy, Genzyme
- dynamic and innovative SMEs such as Altrabio, Varioptic, Bioviron, ImmunID, ProteinXpert, Cytoo, Hélioscopie, AAA, Aspide Médical, Spineway, Fluoptics, Biom'Up
- 20% of French research capacity and 5% of European capacity in biotechnology; 650 academic research laboratories
- major international research centers: the International Cancer Research

Center (Centre International de la Recherche sur le Cancer), the European Molecular Biology Laboratory, the Laue Langevin Institute, the WHO.

- important research facilities including the Synchrotron, the P4 Laboratory, CERN (European Centre for Nuclear Research), the biomedical cyclotron (CERMEP), the future Charles Mérieux Campus, the Rhône-Alpes Génopole, the planned Rovaltain eco-toxicology and environmental toxicology pole, MINATEC, etc.
- one of the highest concentrations of hospitals and treatment centers in Europe: three university hospitals, 400 public and private treatment centers, 30,000 beds
- When constructing its life sciences sector, Rhône-Alpes applied a number of guiding principles: dialogue between the research sector and the economic world, cooperation between research structures, and convergence with other high-level technologies.

Through the relationship between biotechnologies and micro- and nanotechnologies, medical systems, so-called "green techs," traditional industries such as plastics converters, precision manufacturing or textiles, new therapeutic routes and innovative treatment techniques are conceived and developed.

In the scientific field, Rhône-Alpes has around a dozen research networks or clusters that work with one or many competitiveness clusters.

In terms of R&D, Rhône-Alpes has a number of competitiveness clusters, including two global clusters and a future Rhône-Alpes cluster dedicated to health technologies:

Lyonbiopole (www.lyonbiopole.org): A center of excellence in vaccinations and diagnosis, its objective is to understand infectious diseases affecting humans and animals worldwide, from diagnosis and prevention to treatment, integrating original administration systems. This "integrated" approach aims to create a "health shield" to ensure the protection of populations. An international competitiveness cluster that has been certified by the French government, Lyonbiopole has formed an alliance with a number of international clusters. As a result, the Lifescience Corridor France (Lyonbiopole, Alsace BioValley and Cancer-Bio-Santé) has signed three partnership agreements with international clusters: Kansai, Quebec and Massachusetts/Boston. 37 research programs with these countries are underway and six international partnerships have already been finalized. On the European front, Lyonbiopole has initiated its partnership with BioWin, the Belgian competitiveness cluster in terms of health, and an Alps BioCluster program with Switzerland, Austria, Germany and Italy.

The Center of Infectiology, the flagship project of the cluster with almost 2,000 square meters of laboratories, has just opened to:

- bring together major expertise in infectious diseases in a single structure that is unique in Europe
- host researchers from all horizons in a shared platform for an average duration of three years
- stimulate regional innovation, encourage dialogue between public and private research, facilitate access to technical platforms

An extension is planned for 2013. It will focus on the emergence and development of R&D projects, with priority given to Europe and the internationalization of projects in

addition to the support and development of SMEs.

Minalogic (www.minalogic.com): International competence center for intelligent miniaturized solutions.

Around these global clusters are the satellite clusters of Techtera, Viaméca, Plastipolis, Arve Industry (development of R&D in health at the crossroads of micro- and nanotechnologies, biotechnologies, technical textiles, high-precision manufacturing, plastics converters, mecatronics), with which the Rhône-Alpes Cluster for health technologies will join during 2009.

Rhône-Alpes has extensive expertise, structured networks and competitive players in five key areas of health: infectiology, cancerology (with CLARA, which brings together 113 research centers, 82 clinical services and some 50 companies, www.canceropole-clara.com), neurosciences, medical technologies (more than 250 businesses, 20,000 jobs, 400 health establishments, 17 public and private research centers) and nanobiotechnologies.

This organization has made it possible to create around 100 companies specialized in biotechnologies and medical technologies, such as Fluoptics – www.minatec.com, ERYtech Pharma - www.erytech.com, PX'Therapeutics - www.px-therapeutics.com, ImmunID Technologies - www.immunid.com, and the Alizé Pharma group www.alz-pharma.com.

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