

Media release – for immediate release

Recruitment within the Biomedical Sciences industry in Asia remains strong, despite global economic downturn

March 18 2009, Singapore

While the rest of the world may be experiencing headcount freezes, retrenchments, or wage cuts, careers in Asia's biomedical sciences industry continues to remain upbeat. Some sectors (including clinical research, biologics, diagnostic & monitoring technology, nutraceuticals, drug discovery and healthcare) are even facing significant numbers of talent shortage, resulting in salary increments, attractive packages and other incentives given by companies to attract the cream of the crop. These trends were highlighted by Ms Karen Tok, Managing Director ScienTec Consulting, at the 2009 Biomedical Asia event, where she was invited to speak on the topic of talent resourcing challenges within the clinical service industry in Asia.

"Asia is an emerging and dynamic market for the biomedical sciences. Together with increased affluence, growing populations and healthcare needs, and government support for the biomedical sciences, the industry continues to show positive growth. We are seeing more companies basing their clinical trial studies within the region, as they are looking to create more personalised medicines and need access to Asian populations. We are also seeing an increase in R&D and contract manufacturing outsourcing companies in Asia. Singapore is at the heart of these biomedical sciences developments. We have previously been listed as amongst the top 5 biomedical research location¹. As such, we expect to see more recruitment in the biomedical sciences and supporting industries here," said Ms Karen Tok.

ScienTec continues to see the strong demand for biomedical science talents in Asia, with the following positive statistics:

- For senior positions (specialists with more than 10 years experience), companies are willing to give salary increments of between 10-20%. This contrasts with wage cuts in other sectors. Eg. the airline industry (10%) and electronic manufacturing (10-20%).
- Increased demand for junior to mid level positions, demonstrating the maturation of Asia's life science industry. Last year, ScienTec launched its ScienTec Personnel division to handle junior to mid level recruitment. This now accounts for 60% of its placements.

¹ Fierce Biotech (2007)

- Biomedical sciences and Healthcare recruitment in Singapore remains strong, with 70% of ScienTec's senior level regional searches resulting in placement in Singapore, and 20% of ScienTec's junior to mid level regional searches resulting in placement in Singapore.
- ScienTec currently has some 100-150 life sciences positions to fill, of which 80% are based in Singapore.
- 60% of ScienTec's clients are still actively hiring

To handle this talent shortage, and attract more suitable and global talents, ScienTec will launch a new biomedical recruitment jobsite, linked to its corporate website (<http://www.scienteconsulting.com/>). Individuals can access the website and upload their CVs into ScienTec's database, which has been configured to capture specific skill sets and details on for the biomedical sciences industry experience. This jobsite will help to increase the number of regional and global candidates.

"While biomedical sciences companies in Asia are still recruiting, the global economic crisis has meant that organisations are being more strategic in their recruitment. For example, many now focus on resource optimization, trying to get individuals who can multi-task in different roles or get the best talent for their employment dollar," explained Ms Tok. "ScienTec has seen a drop in demand for very senior roles that were commanding top salaries. However, demand remains high for mid level specialist jobs, or those in sales and other critical operational posts. We hope that the launch of our new jobsite will help further boost our database, giving us a detailed breakdown of candidates' skill sets and experience. This will facilitate both companies and individuals in finding the right match."

As more companies are faced with this talent crunch, they are developing more innovative ways to attract staff.

"Last year, the company saw double digit growth, and we hope to be able to perform well again this year. We will continue to recruit new frontline staff, and are focusing on strengthening our customer service capabilities, in order to boost relations with our clients. Internally, we are also embarking upon an organisational development strategy, which looks into the career path mapping for all our employees. This will help to retain our staff, as well as promote organisational cohesiveness. I look forward to working with ScienTec Consulting in building up our team here," said Mr Seth Hertel, Managing Director of Sigma Aldrich

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About ScienTec Consulting

Set up in 2001, ScienTec Consulting Pte Ltd is a leading global executive and specialist search and HR consulting provider for the biomedical sciences and technology industry in Asia. Based in Singapore, ScienTec's unique value proposition lies in its in-depth understanding of the industry and specific human resource needs, access to a large network of international talent and delivery



of professional requirements across the organisational hierarchy. ScienTec works with biotechnology associations across Asia, while consulting with government organisations and foreign companies on talent issues and strategic human capital challenges related to biotechnology. ScienTec services include: Executive and Specialist Search, Employee Optimisation, Market Research, Recruitment Strategy Development, Job and Competency Profiling, Performance Management, Assessment and Development and Interim Management. The company's international client list includes GlaxoSmithKline, Novartis, Illumina, Applied Biosystems, Dx Assays, Elsevier, Sigma-Aldrich, Lilly Singapore Centre for Drug Discovery, Thomson Scientific, Becton Dickinson, Wyeth Pharmaceuticals and Nutritionals, PAREXEL APEX International and Quintiles.

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