

KEY TRENDS IN THE ANZ BIOPHARMA INDUSTRY

**Exclusive
interview with the
thought-leaders**



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Positioning Australia & New Zealand as a biotechnology powerhouse

Australia and New Zealand are steadily emerging as a biopharma powerhouse from the Asia Pacific region. Their combined strength lies in world-class research institutions and life science businesses, a skilled workforce, and a supportive regulatory environment. They have made significant strides in biopharmaceutical innovation. Additionally, proactive government initiatives, including research grants and tax incentives, have attracted both local and international investments, fostering growth in the biopharma sector. New Zealand and Australia constitute a rapidly growing biotech hub - Australia having about 400 core biotechs, with about 43% focusing on human therapeutics and New Zealand has 53 biotechs and 28 research institutes also heavily weighted in human therapeutics.

Translating research into commercial products in ANZ region involves partnerships and collaborations between industry, government science agencies and the academic sectors. Manufacturing of products emerging from biotechnology is a complex pursuit and onshore manufacturing helps position Australia and New Zealand as an exporter for biotechnology products minimising the dependency and supply-chain disruptions.

In an attempt to capture the essence of the expanding ANZ Biotech industry, the 2nd edition of the Australia Biologics Festival 2024 brings together thought leaders to discuss current trends, opportunities, and to brainstorm ways to navigate through myriad challenges.

IMAPAC brings you, in conjunction with the upcoming 2nd Australia Biologics Festival Conference, interviews with leading biopharma industry experts. We sat down with

Ian Nisbet,
Chief Operating Officer,
Cartherics, Australia

Tertia Dex,
Chief Manufacturing &
Development Officer,
HaemaLogiX, Australia

Mike Gerometta,
Head of Process Development,
Analytical & Formulation Science,
Opthea, Australia

to discuss key trends, innovative developments in Australia biopharmaceutical industry this year.

Disclaimer:

This is solely the opinion of IMAPAC based on its research of information from company websites & relevant news as well as written interviews received from the interviewees featured in this ebook

ABOUT **IAN NISBET**



IAN NISBET,

Chief Operating Officer, Cartherics, Australia

**Presenting on: Driving Next Generation Cell
Therapies with CAR-T/NK Cell Manufacturing**

Ian has over 40 years of product development, business development and project management experience in the biotechnology sector, both in Australia and the United States. He has worked at an executive or board level with a range of companies, including CSL Ltd (17 years) and Millennium Pharmaceuticals Inc (7 years). He has been involved with the development of pharmaceutical products across a range of therapeutic areas (including oncology, inflammatory disease, diabetes, Alzheimer's Disease) and modalities (including small molecules, antibodies, cellular therapies and vaccines). He led the teams responsible for the development of two FDA-approved oncology drugs: VELCADE® (bortezomib) and SYNRIBO® (omacetaxine mepesuccinate). Ian is a co-founder of Cartherics Pty Ltd and serves as its Chief Operating Officer, where he oversees activities such as product development, intellectual property, quality management, project management and finance. He is Chair of VivaZome Pty Ltd, a company developing exosome therapeutics for the treatment of neuroinflammatory diseases. He also acts as Executive Director of Senz Oncology Pty Ltd, and as a director or advisor to several other biotechnology companies, including four US companies undertaking product development in Australia.

Ian received his BSc in microbiology and biochemistry from the University of Melbourne and his PhD in molecular biology from Monash University. He is a graduate of the Advanced Management Program from the Melbourne Business School at the University of Melbourne and is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Ian Nisbet's
The Interview

Question 1

Can you share a bit more about your organisation- its key business/ research focus areas -as in the products and some important clientele?

Ian's Response

Cartherics is developing cellular immunotherapy products for the treatment of cancer. It has a platform based on gene-editing of induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs) and differentiating them into functional immune cells such as natural killer (NK) and T cells. Cartherics works closely with reagent and equipment suppliers, particularly to help address scale-up and quality issues as it prepares to transfer its manufacturing process to its CMO, Cell Therapies Pty Ltd.

Question 2

What are the key markets that you are focussing on? Are you also looking at partnerships & collaborations?

Ian's Response

Cartherics is developing its products for international markets. It is keen to establish technology and product development partnerships in all major markets.

Ian Nisbet's **The Interview**

Question 3

How favourable do you think is Australia and New Zealand as an investment destination for biopharma? Any one key highlight on why should one invest in Australia.

Ian's Response

The greatest advantage of conducting biopharmaceutical development in Australia is cost-effectiveness – access to high quality skills and infrastructure at competitive rates compared to other developed countries, with additional and very significant leverage from the R&D tax incentive scheme.

Question 4

What are the 3 main challenges this industry faces and is currently trying to overcome?

Ian's Response

I'm not sure that an ANZ Biologics Manufacturing Hub is achievable.

Question 5

What are your thoughts on how regulations pertaining to biopharma can be evolved to allow the progress of the industry?

Ian's Response

Regulators are moving in the right direction with some of the recent initiatives in the development of cell and gene therapies. These products are very complex and need to be nurtured rather than burdened by the regulatory system.



Ian Nisbet's **The Interview**

Question 6

Are there any exciting technologies or developments that have caught your attention in the Year 2022/2023?

Ian's Response

Emergence of scalable, low cost, closed system bioreactor technologies for manufacturing of cellular products such as vertical wheel bioreactors, G-Rex.

Question 7

What developments should the industry look out for from your organization in 2024?

Ian's Response

Capital-raising, Establishment of clinical manufacturing at CMO.

Question 8

Name 2 things you are looking forward to at the Australia Biologics Festival 2024

Ian's Response

Success stories; Networking.

Question 9

What are some of the key takeaways the audience can expect from your presentation?

Ian's Response

Cartherics as an atypical Australian biotech company – a non-traditional approach to finance, facilities, product development.

