

## ***(bio)Pharma Ireland make their case in Brussels***



Pictured from left, Bob Flynn, Enterprise Ireland, Sharon Davin, APC, Chris Decubber, EFFRA, Sergio Cebellos, Enterprise Ireland, Loredana Ghinea, SPIRE with Aisling Arthur, Spokes Project Manager, SSPC

Engagement in EU Horizon 2020 programmes is of strategic importance to the Irish (bio)Pharma sector however there is currently a gap to bridge between discovery and manufacture to support scientific and engineering programmes. The SSPC, in an effort to push the (bio)Pharmaceutical *manufacturing* research priorities within the current EU Horizon 2020 programme, initiated a national collaborative working group with representation from industry, government and academia.

(bio)Pharma Ireland was formed in 2015 as an SSPC initiative to highlight the collective research priorities and industrial capabilities of the Irish (bio)Pharmaceutical sector within the European community; encourage research collaborations and opportunities; and ultimately contribute to the development of European policy.

The working group, coordinated and chaired by the SSPC, has representation from pharmaceutical industry: Pharma Chemical Ireland (PCI), government agencies: Science Foundation Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and the IDA; and academic research organisations: the Synthesis and Solid State Pharmaceutical Centre (SSPC), National Institute for Bioprocessing Research and Training (NIBRT) and the Pharmaceutical Manufacturing and Technology Centre (PMTC).

As a first step in realising the objectives of the group, the SSPC organised a delegation from (bio)Pharma Ireland to travel to Brussels on July 6<sup>th</sup> to attend a specially convened EU workshop.

Consultations between the EU Commission and select Public Private Partnership groups and Technology Platforms often influence future funding priorities within the EU work programmes. The Brussels meeting afforded an excellent opportunity to engage with representatives from key influential European groups, to present the significance of next generation of global (bio)pharmaceutical manufacturing techniques and therapies and to position Ireland as a leading location for therapeutics innovation.

It was a notable achievement that such a high-level grouping assembled for a half day private session to discuss potential opportunities for increasing research collaborations within the (bio)Pharma sector.

<b>EU Attendees</b>	<b>Position</b>
Dr. Soren Bowadt	EC DG Research and Innovation, Industrial Technologies
Mr. Sean O'Reagain	EC Deputy Head of Unit for Manufacturing and Biotechnologies
Dr. Martin Winter	Innovation Manager Cefic
Ms. Loredana Ghinea	Executive Director, SPIRE
Mr. Riccardo Mezzasalma	Manger, Healthcare Biotechnology, EuropaBio
Mr. Patrick Kennedy	Communications Advisor, EFFRA
Mr. Chris Decubber	Technical Director, EFFRA

There was significant attendance from the (bio)Pharma Ireland industry and academic community. SSPC Director, Professor Kieran Hodnett delivered a collective presentation on behalf of the group which was very well received. Representatives from the EU groups also delivered short presentations on their respective areas followed by an informal round table discussion session and concluding with an enjoyable networking lunch.

In support of (bio)Pharma Ireland's overall objectives, the SSPC has also embarked on a policy driven initiative on behalf of the group with [ISC](#) in Brussels which will begin with preparation of a White Paper (to be completed by October). A kick-off meeting was held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July to commence preparation of the White Paper which will be a key instrument with which to advance engagement with the key EU policy and decision-makers.

The workshop was a great success and the first step on a significant journey together and one which should prove fruitful over the coming years. We wish to record our appreciation to Dr Sergio Fernandez-Ceballos, Enterprise Ireland, and their Brussels office team for hosting the meeting and supporting SSPC in the organisation of this initiative.