

CAREERS AND RECRUITMENT

Second-quarter biotech job picture

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In May, Merck (Kenilworth, NJ, USA) announced it would invest \$310 million over the next three years to expand two sites in Ireland—a biologics facility in Brinny, County Cork, and a vaccines and biologics plant in Carlow Town, County Carlow—with plans to add 330 jobs in total. The Carlow facility is a key production site for the cancer drug Keytruda (pembrolizumab), which was recently approved by the US Food and Drug Administration. Just last year, the drugmaker said it would add 110 jobs at its plant in Carlow and another 50 positions to its operations in Cork.

Last month saw the opening of Alexandria LaunchLabs in the Alexandria Center for Life Science in New York City, as part of a nearly \$1.2-billion joint effort by the city and state of New York to spur development in the life sciences. LaunchLabs is designed to provide up to 25 startups with office space, equipment, amenities and access to

investment capital. The first 13 life science companies in residence were announced, eight of which are focused on therapeutics and drug discovery: aratinga.bio, Chimeron Bio, Hookipa Biotech, ENB Therapeutics, Beagle Bioscience, Sevengenes, Gotham Therapeutics and Renovo Pharmaceuticals.

And Lexington, Massachusetts-based Agenus said it will shutter its site in Basel, Switzerland, and consolidate operations to Cambridge, UK, and Lexington, as well as focus on its manufacturing operations in Berkeley, California. The company will reduce head count by about 50 employees.

Advertised biotech and pharmaceutical sector jobs in the job databases tracked by *Nature Biotechnology* during the second quarter of 2017 are shown in **Tables 1** and **2**. Other downsizings within the life science industry are shown in **Table 3**.

Table 1 Who's hiring? Advertised openings at the 25 largest biotech companies

Company ^a	Number of employees	Number of advertised openings ^b		
		Monster	LinkedIn	Naturejobs
Shire	23,906	413	412	0
Monsanto	20,800	324	167	0
Amgen	19,200	575	262	0
bioMérieux	9,335	0	20	0
Gilead Sciences	9,000	21	154	0
Biocon	8,234	0	0	0
Biogen Idec	7,400	136	261	0
IDEXX Laboratories	7,365	263	158	0
Celgene	7,132	457	289	0
Novozymes	6,295	9	7	1
Opko Health	6,041	9	3	0
Illumina	5,500	127	177	0
Regeneron Pharmaceuticals	5,400	289	337	0
Endo Pharmaceuticals	4,894	197	31	0
Alexion Pharmaceuticals	3,121	56	122	0
AMRI	3,085	89	103	0
Actelion	2,624	16	21	0
Biotech	2,527	0	65	0
BioMarin Pharmaceutical	2,293	0	75	0
Myriad Genetics	2,206	42	60	0
Vertex Pharmaceuticals	2,150	129	126	0
Alkermes	1,750	112	105	0
CK Life Sciences	1,747	0	0	0
GenScript Biotech	1,592	0	2	0
Amphastar Pharmaceuticals	1,541	0	0	0
Total		2,824	2,957	1

^aAs defined in *Nature Biotechnology's* survey of public companies (35, 623–629, 2017). ^bAs searched on Monster.com, LinkedIn.com and Naturejobs.com, 12 July 2017. Jobs may overlap.

Table 2 Advertised job openings at the ten largest pharma companies

Company ^a	Number of employees	Number of advertised openings ^b		
		Monster	LinkedIn	Naturejobs
Novartis	133,413	1,000+	822	1
Johnson & Johnson	126,500	1,000+	986	1
Sanofi	113,496	13	1,585	12
GlaxoSmithKline	98,702	96	228	1
Roche	88,509	444	287	8
Pfizer	78,300	0	127	1
Abbott Laboratories	77,000	730	141	1
Merck & Co.	70,000	364	70	2
AstraZeneca	57,500	4	196	26
Teva Pharmaceutical	43,009	0	202	0
Total		3,651	4,644	53

^aData obtained from Statista. ^bAs searched on Monster.com, LinkedIn.com and Naturejobs.com, 12 July 2017. Jobs may overlap.

Table 3 Selected biotech and pharma downsizings

Company	Number of employees cut	Details
Acorda Therapeutics	119	Will reduce head count by 20% to about 478 with the majority of cuts coming from R&D and G&A, after a US District Court invalidated four of five patents protecting its multiple sclerosis drug Ampyra (dalfampridine) on grounds of obviousness. Acorda will appeal the decision.
The Medicines Company	60	Will reduce head count by about 15% after withdrawing Ionsys (fentanyl iontophoretic transdermal system) from the US market.
OncoMed Pharmaceuticals	60	Will reduce head count by 48% to 64 after discontinuing dosing of all demcizumab trials.
Regulus Therapeutics	32	Will reduce head count by about 30%, leading to annual savings of \$6 million.

G&A, general and administrative expense. Source: *BioCentury*

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