First-quarter biotech job picture

Michael Francisco

The first quarter of 2018 saw mixed signals from the pharma and biotech sectors regarding employment numbers. In early January, Allergan announced that it would terminate over 1,000 employees and eliminate about 400 open positions as part of a plan to reduce costs to save up to \$400 million in 2018 operating expenses, as it prepares for potential generic competition to Restasis (cyclosporine), which generated \$1.5 billion last year for the Dublin-based drugmaker. The job cuts will come from commercial and other functions.

Also in January, Pfizer announced it will terminate its discovery and early-development neuroscience programs, consisting of pre-clinical and phase 1/2 programs primarily focused on Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease, resulting in 300 layoffs at its Cambridge and Andover, Massachusetts, and Groton, Connecticut sites. And in February, Achillion Pharmaceuticals said it would reduce headcount by about 20% to about 70 employees to save \$10 million.

Paris-based Sanofi announced 400 job cuts in its United States diabetes and cardiovascular sales organization, and its subsidiary Genzyme said it will let go of 130 workers at its Allston Landing biomanufacturing facility in Boston. The change is associated with the outsourcing of certain aspects of the production process and improvements in technology and operations, according to a company spokesperson.

Amicus Therapeutics of Cranbury, New Jersey plans to build a \$200-million biologics facility in the US for its Pompe disease program. The company said various locations outside the US had previously been under consideration.

Finally, Darmstadt, Germany-based Merck KGaA said it will invest \$40 million in two new manufacturing and distribution centers in Songdo, South Korea, and Mumbai, India, and the completion of its biosimilar-capable manufacturing center in Wuxi, China. All three centers expect to be completed over the next two years.

Advertised biotech and pharma sector jobs in the job databases tracked by *Nature Biotechnology* during the first quarter of 2018 are shown in **Tables 1 and 2**.

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	802	790	0
Monsanto	20,800	1,000+	203	0
Amgen	19,200	350	592	0
bioMérieux	9,335	0	32	0
Gilead Sciences	9,000	15	366	0
Biocon	8,234	0	0	2
Biogen	7,400	144	281	0
IDEXX Laboratories	7,365	137	196	0
Celgene	7,132	155	262	0
Novozymes	6,295	0	2	0
Opko Health	6,041	4	0	0
Illumina	5,500	61	265	0
Regeneron Pharmaceuticals	5,400	332	613	0
Endo Pharmaceuticals	4,894	93	32	0
Alexion Pharmaceuticals	3,121	102	207	0
AMRI	3,085	0	69	0
Actelion	2,624	2	17	0
Biotech	2,527	0	66	0
BioMarin Pharmaceutical	2,293	0	85	0
Myriad Genetics	2,206	123	140	0
Vertex Pharmaceuticals	2,150	156	152	0
Alkermes	1,750	494	464	0
CK Life Sciences	1,747	0	0	0
GenScript Biotech	1,592	0	2	0
Amphastar Pharmaceuticals	1,541	0	0	0
Total		3,970	4,836	2

^aAs defined in *Nature Biotechnology's* survey of public companies (35, 623–629; 2017). ^bAs searched on Monster.com, LinkedIn.com and Naturejobs.com, 11 April 2018. 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+	417	0
Johnson & Johnson	126,500	1,000+	955	0
Sanofi	113,496	19	597	1
GlaxoSmithKline	98,702	3	242	0
Roche	88,509	391	264	6
Pfizer	78,300	23	579	0
Abbott Laboratories	77,000	49	161	0
Merck & Co.	70,000	17	49	5
AstraZeneca	57,500	5	57	86
Teva Pharmaceutical	43,009	0	178	0
Total		2,507	3,499	98

^aData obtained from Statista. ^bAs searched on Monster.com, LinkedIn.com and Naturejobs.com, 11 April 2018. Jobs may overlap.

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