

Advisory Board

European Life Science Journal



Professor Mart Saarma, Director of Institute of Biotechnology, University of Helsinki. Prof. Saarma is also chairman of the Board of Directors of the Finnish Genome Centre, member of the Estonian PM's Council for Science and Technology, chairman of the Scientific Advisory Board of the Heidelberg Neuroscience Center.



Christian Ekström, Trade Commissioner, Embassy of Canada in Sweden. In his current capacity as Trade Commissioner he provides leadership to Canadian Embassies' life sciences specialists on the Canadian market strategy for six key European markets.



Melanie Crofts, Business Relationship Manager, High Technologies, East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA). Part of the International Investment Team for EMDA, Melanie is responsible for attracting foreign investment into England's East Midlands.



Dr Ken Larkin, Business Development Manager, London BioScience Innovation Centre (LBIC). Ken graduated from the University of Warwick with a degree in Biological Sciences. He went on to obtain a Ph.D. in eukaryotic genetics at the Institute of Food Research, Norwich Research Park. Prior to joining the London BioScience Innovation Centre, Ken worked for eight years at the East Midlands Development Agency (emda).



Niklas Lindberg, Country Manager, TFS Sweden. Niklas is also actively involved in the Swedish Association of Research Quality Assurance (SARQA), the Drug Information Association (DIA) and SwedenBio's Clinical Working Group.



Jouko Uusitalo, CEO, Novamass Ltd. MSc in Structural Elucidation Chemistry. Before founding Novamass, Jouko was a researcher in Prof. Olavi Pelkonen's drug metabolism group at the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology in the University of Oulu. Keenly interested in commercialisation of academic research he's active in the Advisory Board of BioForum Oulu, Steering groups of Oulu Inspires innovation strategy and National HealthBIO cluster, among other groups.



Dany LaRoche, Director, London Office, Invest Quebec. He has been posted in London by Invest Quebec since 2004 for setting up and heading the new office in charge of business development in the Nordic Countries, the UK and Ireland.



Professor Taina Pihlajaniemi, Scientific Director, Biocenter Oulu, University of Oulu since 1996. MD in 1982 and PhD in 1987 from the University of Oulu. Professor of Medical Biochemistry, University of Oulu since 1990. In 2006-2007, she was the first Scientific Director of Biocenter Finland (newly-founded umbrella organisation of the six Finnish bio institutes).



Werner Christie, MD, is a former Minister of Health of Norway, and former chair of the Biotechnology Advisory Board of Norway. Werner is a Medical Doctor with education in Social Science as well. In May 2004, he was appointed Science and Technology Counsellor for the Royal Norwegian Embassy, Beijing.



Martin Spangenberg, Underwriting Manager, Chubb Insurance Company of Europe SA, a subsidiary of Chubb Group of Insurance, headquartered in New Jersey. Since 1995, Chubb has had a unique team focused exclusively on the life science industry. Martin has more than 20 years of experience from the insurance industry, mainly in the casualty area, including building complex global insurance programmes for the Swedish industry.



Magnus Flyrin, Life Science Practice Leader, Nordic Region for JLT Risk Solutions AB, Sweden. Magnus have more than 20 years of experience from the insurance industry related to international reinsurance and structuring of complex and customised liability insurance programmes.

Insurance broker Magnus Flyrin

Among Magnus Flyrin's clients one finds some very promising companies in the recently acknowledged Oslo Cancer Cluster, ranked top 30th cancer research cluster in the world.

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER. With the backlashes of the TGN-1412 study, Vioxx and others, few insurance providers today have the appetite for and the capacity to provide coverage for pharmaceuticals, medical devices and clinical trials. This makes the life science industry a tough and complicated insurance market. According to JLT Risk Solutions AB there are only a few insurers in Sweden and a handful outside Sweden willing to provide customised coverage and limits needed.

“To use a specialist broker guarantees quality and best terms in today's insurance market”

“At JLT, we specialise in insurance for the life science industry and place clinical trials and product liability insurance worldwide. It's crucial to understand our client's business in detail, to be able to provide the insurance carrier with the correct risk profile - may it be low risk or high risk. Entering

into an insurance contract based on incorrect information and having a claim will be disastrous for everybody involved. It's easy to buy insurance but to buy the accurate insurance, that's where we add value. The use of a specialist broker guarantees quality and best terms in today's insurance market. Do not assume you have the accurate coverage, you need to be sure!” says Magnus Flyrin, Life Science Practice Leader, JLT Risk Solutions AB.

Born and raised in Stockholm, Magnus Flyrin studied economics at Upplands Bro high school. In 1987 Magnus started his insurance career at Stockholm Reinsurance Co Ltd. In May 1999, Magnus went to Chubb Insurance to become the liability underwriter within Life Science, IT and Telecom in Sweden. After the dotcom death in the beginning of this century, he specialised in Life Science. “Chubb is one of the few insurance providers that educate their own specialists within this field. I went on a number of trainings and specialist courses in the UK and in the US,” he says.

In 2005, he became the Nordic Life Science manager at Chubb, where much of his

daily business was insuring clinical trials and product liability worldwide. Two years later he was headhunted to his current position as Life Science Practice Leader at the insurance broker JLT Risk Solutions AB, Sweden (part of the Jardine Lloyd Thompson Group plc).



Professor Mart Saarma

Professor Mart Saarma awarded the Lundbeck Foundation Nordic Research prize for his work in neurobiology.

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER On March 6th University of Helsinki Professor Mart Saarma received the Lundbeck Foundation Nordic Research prize 2009 in recognition of his outstanding research in the field of neurotrophic factors. The Foundation notes that his research has significantly increased the knowledge of the regulation of nerve growth factors and their receptors and their significance in cellular development.

“I'm of course very honoured by the award, which to me came as a total surprise. I naturally owe very much to my laboratory and colleagues. My research group will get DKK 1.4 million (EUR 188,000) to spend on research. And I must say that the timing is perfect, since we're currently in a phase of searching receptors for new neurotrophic factors and developing mutant mice,” he says.

Mart Saarma is regarded as one of the world's leading researchers in the field of nerve growth factors. His work on growth factor signalling and associated mechanisms is expected to have applications in the treatment of neurodegenerative disorders including Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases.

An Estonian citizen, born in Tartu, Professor Saarma started out as Research assistant and junior researcher at the Department



of Biochemistry, Tartu State University in 1971. And it was here that he got his PhD in molecular biology in 1975. Two years later he became Head of the Laboratory of Molecular Genetics at the Institute of Physics, Estonian Academy of Sciences, in Tartu.

From 1980 he was the Head of the Department of Molecular Genetics, Institute of Chemical Physics and Biophysics at the Estonian Academy of Sciences in Tallinn to 1990, when he went to Finland as Director, Professor of the Institute of Biotechnology at the University of Helsinki. Since January 2009, he's Academy Professor, Academy of

Finland and Institute of Biotechnology.

On May 18th, the Lundbeck Foundation hosts a symposium in their Auditorium at the Biotech Research and Innovation Centre (BRIC), Copenhagen in recognition of Mart Saarma's research. Lecturers at the event are: Prof. Anders Björklund, Lund University; Prof. Anders Nykjær, Aarhus University; Prof. Carlos F. Ibáñez, Karolinska Institutet; Prof. Don M. Gash, University of Kentucky and Prof. Jeff Kordower, Rush University Medical Center, Illinois. They will all talk under the overall theme of 'Neurotrophic Factors: From Biology to Clinical Studies'.

A happy and honoured Mart Saarma at the Lundbeck Foundation Nordic Research prize ceremony. Photo: Kaari Saarma.

Business development manager Ken Larkin

Dr Ken Larkin has recently taken on a new position as Business Development Manager at the London BioScience Innovation Centre (LBIC). After eight years at the East Midlands Development Agency he ought to know what it takes to make new innovative biotech companies grow and prosper.

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER As strange as it may seem, there was no life sciences based incubator space available for biotech start-ups in London prior to 2001, when Prof. Colin Howard at the Royal Veterinary College established The London BioScience Innovation Centre (LBIC).

"We remained the only bioincubator in London until 2006," says Ken Larkin, Business Development Manager at the London BioScience Innovation Centre (LBIC). Since January 2009 his key role has been to attract new businesses to the centre, and to identify alternative sources of income in these challenging times.

"Facing the economic downturn, we need to be even more innovative and creative in attracting new business, whilst providing existing clients with the right support," he adds.

LBIC is wholly owned by the Royal Veterinary College – Europe's largest veterinary school with leading expertise in basic, comparative and translation biomedical science. Since 2001 over 50 companies have been supported by LBIC, from entrepreneurial

"We remained the first and only bioincubator in London until 2006"

start-ups to more established companies and overseas subsidiaries.

"We for instance have French, US, Japanese and Finnish companies based in our incubator. Lately, we've seen an increase in inquiries from European companies looking to capitalise on the current exchange rate. Together with falling property prices London isn't seen as such an expensive location anymore compared to other European locations."

Artistic ambitions

Born in Rugby, Ken Larkin got his primary education in Bedfordshire and graduated from the University of Warwick with a degree in Biological Sciences. He went on to obtain a Ph.D. in eukaryotic genetics at the Institute of Food Research, Norwich Research Park. This was followed by post-doctoral research at the Institute of Genetics, University of Nottingham where he was part of a research team studying the genetic

and molecular basis of an inherited form of Muscular Dystrophy.

In 2001, Ken Larkin joined the East Midlands Development Agency (emda). He later took on responsibility for life sciences inward investment at a time when the East Midlands was investing heavily in key strategic projects such as BioCity Nottingham – one of Europe's largest bioscience incubators.

