

SLA welcomes Government data showing strong growth in Scottish life sciences employment

The Scottish Lifesciences Association has welcomed the publication by the Scottish Government of employment data which shows that the core of the life sciences sector in Scotland increased its employment levels by 18% over the period 2010 – 2011.

Scott Johnstone, Chief Executive of the SLA, said:-

“The latest statistics showing 18% growth in core employment in life sciences is great news. Bearing in mind that these statistics don’t capture all of the Scottish companies active in the life sciences sector, it’s clear evidence that the industry in Scotland is in good health. And it’s borne out by evidence we have from our members of continuing growth. For example we have a digital health company which has doubled employment from 25 to 50 over the past year, and opened a new office here in Edinburgh. Another one in the medical diagnostics field has trebled employment from 30 – 100 in a year. Yet another major member is in process of recruiting 100 extra graduates to meet the requirements of a big new contract. This is a growth sector.

“It’s also significant that the reported increase in life sciences employment accounts for stronger employment growth than any other key sector of the Scottish economy. We accept that these other sectors are bigger than life sciences in absolute terms, but we also know that much life sciences employment is not captured by these Government statistics. So we hope that this evidence of strong growth will encourage the Scottish Government to strengthen its support for life sciences as a key technology based sector, and one on which the Scotland of the future will increasingly depend for its prosperity.”

Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing Alex Neil commented:-

“This growth in jobs is welcome news for this key sector of Scotland’s economy. The life sciences sector in Scotland is performing well, despite the current economic challenges.

“The Scottish Government is committed to supporting the ongoing growth of this sector, because life sciences can deliver innovative healthcare solutions for patients and secure more high quality jobs and investment to Scotland.”

For more information, contact Scott Johnstone on 0131 225 4628 or 07731 985582 or sjohnstone@scottishlifesciencesassociation.org.uk

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Notes for Editors (see over)

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1. The Scottish Government maintains a database of economic statistics for the 6 private sector dominated growth sectors as defined in its Government Economic Strategy. These 6 sectors are food and drink, financial and business services, energy including renewables, sustainable tourism, creative industries and life sciences. The database is available here <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Business/Publications/GrowthSectors/Database>

2. On 17 January, the Scottish Government updated this database to show employment growth for these 6 key sectors over the period 2010 – 2011. The following is a summary of the data:-

Sector	Employment in	2010	2011	Change	% change
Food and Drink		117,500	117,700	+200	+0.2%
Financial and Business Services		206,900	207,500	+600	+0.3%
Energy (inc renewable energy)		65,300	64,800	-500	-0.8%
Sustainable Tourism		183,400	185,900	+2,500	+1.4%
Creative Industries		71,900	64,100	-7,800	-10.9%
Life Sciences		14,600	17,300	+2,600	+18.1%
All		659,700	657,200	-2,400	-0.4%

Source: Scottish Government

3. These Government statistics for life sciences companies use a “core” definition in counting UK life sciences jobs, based on Standard Industrial Classification codes. A broader count of life sciences employment in Scotland is maintained by Scottish Enterprise as part of its Life Sciences Source Book, and includes staff in companies such as lawyers, patent attorneys and accountants specialising in life sciences work - web link here <http://www.scottish-enterprise.com/your-sector/life-sciences/lifesciences-overview/lifesciences-key-facts.aspx>

4. The SE Source Book is the basis of an estimate for overall Scottish life sciences employment of around double the level shown by the “core” statistics for life sciences in the table above.

Scottish Lifesciences Association

<http://www.scottishlifesciencesassociation.org.uk>

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