

Sweden steps up life science funding

Written by Johan Nylander

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When it comes to investment in life science innovation and research, Sweden is stepping on the gas, with new multi-billion dollar investments.

Last month, the Swedish government unveiled a new research and innovation bill, which included an investment in life sciences of 11.5 billion kronor, spread across 2013-2016.

One of the beneficiaries will be Science for Life Laboratory (SciLifeLab Stockholm), which will get an extra 200 million kronor annually. The organisation was set up last year with the ambition of becoming the world's leading biosciences centre.

Spokeswoman Dr Mikaela Friedman said the additional money means that the organisation can now expand its activities.

"This investment is necessary to build an internationally competitive centre for large-scale biosciences and to be a resource for the whole of Sweden," she told The Swedish Wire.

"The additional funding will strengthen all of our platforms, including instrumentation and personnel, and allow the platforms to perform service on a national basis."

Friedman added that the new funding will also be used to support research projects, outreach activities and recruitment.

SciLifeLab Stockholm is a joint effort between four Swedish universities: Karolinska Institute, The Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), Stockholm University and Uppsala University, to build an infrastructure for world class research in the areas of health and the environment.

In 2013, the Stockholm and Uppsala centres will be combined to form one national resource for life science.

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Apart from environmental and medical research, SciLifeLab is expected to contribute to the development of new diagnostic methods for diseases and more individualised pharmaceutical treatments.

‘It is extremely gratifying that the government has chosen to invest in SciLifeLab,’ said Kerstin Lindblad-Toh, the director of SciLifeLab Uppsala. ‘Now we can continue to develop and expand our service platforms as well as the first-rate scientific environment that we are building.’

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