



February 19th 2009

TrusTECH signs agreement with Basque Network

TrusTECH has signed a collaboration agreement with the Basque Country Technology Park Network, opening up opportunities for knowledge exchange and collaboration between the two science and innovation hubs.

The agreement was signed this morning (February 19th) at *TrusTECH*'s base in Manchester Royal Infirmary during a visit by delegates from the Technology Park Network, a grouping of three technology parks from the Basque Country.

Welcoming the signing of the collaboration agreement, Keith Chantler, Executive Director at *TrusTECH*, said it was an indication of *TrusTECH*'s determination to ensure Manchester remained at the cutting edge in health innovation, driving improvements in patient care and supporting the region's bio/health businesses.

"The NHS is looking at the Spanish healthcare system as a benchmark partner, examining elements of how their system works and if it would be beneficial to learn from some of their systems and processes," he explained.

"*TrusTECH* working with the Basque Country Technology Park Network is a further extension of what the NHS is doing, opening up a pathway for both organisations to share best practice, exchange ideas and knowledge as well as work together on appropriate projects."

Established in 2001, *TrusTECH* works with NHS Trusts in Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside to help the NHS capture and communicate innovative ideas as well as acting as a point of contact between the NHS and industry, successfully building commercial relationships between both sectors.

Mr Chantler explained that the Basque Technology Park Network are currently developing stronger relationships in the Bilbao healthcare field and are interested in how *TrusTECH* acts as an interface between clinicians and business, supporting innovation in the hospital system.

"Manchester is of interest to international groupings such as the Basque Network because we are already leading the way in healthcare innovation," he said.

"From *TrusTECH*'S point of view, the development of new international links and pathways for knowledge exchange help to ensure we remain at the forefront of innovative thinking in the healthcare system."

Manchester and the Basque Country Technology Park Network struck up a friendship around seven years when business leaders from the Basque Country, beginning to

develop ideas for a new strategic plan of the Network and candidature for the European division of IASP (International Association of Science Parks), began co-operation with Manchester Science Parks (**m_{sp}**).

It was through this continuing link with **m_{sp}** that *TrusTECH* came into contact with the Basque Country Technology Park Network and began to look at ways both organisations could work together for mutual benefit.

During their trip, the Technology Park Network took the opportunity to renew its friendship with **m_{sp}**, visiting the Science Park to see how it has developed in recent years and learn about **m_{sp}**'s role in the economy of the city region.

The Basque delegation also had a tour of the UMIC (University of Manchester Incubator Company) facilities on Grafton Street to learn about the successful operation of an incubator company.

Ends

Editors Notes

TrusTECH is a partnership between Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust, the Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust and the University of Central Lancashire. It receives its core funding from the Department of Health and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS). *TrusTECH* is an advisor to NHS Trusts, helping them to meet the obligations of the Department of Health policy on managing Intellectual Property arising from within the NHS.

The Basque Country Technology Park Network is an integrated network of four technology parks, namely Bilbao, Alava, San Sebastian and Mondragon. The parks are aimed at facilitating the flow of knowledge and technology between universities, research institutions, companies and markets. Bilbao Technology Park is the pioneer park in Spain (1985). They are involved in a sustainable growing process and are leading industrial and technology innovation in the Basque Country as well as opening co-operation with the health system.

The Basque delegation included Julian Sanchez, Chairman of the Basque Country Technology Park Network; Alfonso Arriola, Manager of Alava Technology Park; Joakin Telleria, Manager of San Sebastian Technology Park and Marian Ibarrondo, Innovation Manager, Bilbao Technology Park.

For more information on the visit or to arrange an interview with Mr Keith Chantler from *TrusTECH* please contact Shirley Kernan, Communications Executive, Manchester Science Parks (**m_{sp}**) on (0161) 232 4595 or via email on shirley.kernan@mspl.co.uk