

SUCCESS STORIES

Wallonia is a land of opportunity for innovation and encourages synergies between knowledge centres, large and small industries and the public authorities.

1. GSK Biologicals: a worldwide leader with its roots in Wallonia

Every year, GSK Biologicals spends close to € 600 million both on infrastructure and on R&D in Wallonia. Vaccinations against polio (1956), rubella (1969), hepatitis B (1986) and hepatitis A (1992) or cervical cancer (2007) have been discovered and subsequently developed by it. Over a billion doses of vaccinations are distributed every year worldwide, which translates as 36 doses per second! The company is working on the next generations of vaccinations, in particular against cancer, AIDS and malaria, hand in hand with our universities and allocates half of its R&D budget to its partnerships.

2. Wallonia and Texas A&M University System join forces

Wallonia, via the AWEX, has set up a partnership with Texas A&M University System, one of the most prestigious major research organisations in the United States. Texas A&M covers 9 universities and 8 governmental agencies devoted to research. Texas A&M trains more than 105,000 students and its services benefit more than 15 million people every year. With around 26,000 members of staff, the system has research resources worth over \$ 73 million and actively develops a cooperative approach to the marketing of technologies and colocation of companies on the two sides of the Atlantic. Finally, thanks to Texas A&M, Wallonia also enjoys a privileged access to a vast network: China, Qatar, India, South Africa,...

3. Microsoft and Wallonia work together

A Microsoft Innovation Center (MIC) opened in Mons in 2009. The MIC lends a helping hand to the launch of up and coming software companies by providing them with operational, financial and technological support on the basis of pilot projects and by offering a test environment adapted to trials on innovative solutions and prototypes. The MIC also sets out to consolidate the professional training of ICT specialists dispensed by Wallonia's competence centres. Hewlett-Packard Belgium has already accepted to provide active support to the MIC's activities as a technological partner.

4. LASEA (Laser Engineering) is a spin-off of the University of Liege. Through an initial European project, it has developed innovative solutions for the luxury industry such as the marking of glass products for traceability purposes (anti-counterfeiting measure). A company has been created with the project partners in order to also market the solution in the car sector (marking of windscreens). LASEA has followed this up with a second European project that has allowed it to inject the necessary radical innovations into an application for the pharmaceutical industry (marking of vaccine ampoules) which calls for high processing speeds and a zero error rate.

5. CENAERO is a research centre created in 2002 by the aeronautical industries (brought together within the European Wind Energy Association (EWEA)) and the universities in order to take advantage of a high-level joint platform for the digital simulation calculations of the constraints encountered in the fields of aeronautical or aerodynamic engineering. On the strength of its experience and of the success of the simulation software that it has developed (Argo, Hea-P, Minamo, Morfeo), Cenaero is today applying its expertise to the fields of energy and sustainable development.

From a political point of view, scientific research in Wallonia and Brussels comes within **the remit of all the country's governmental authorities.**

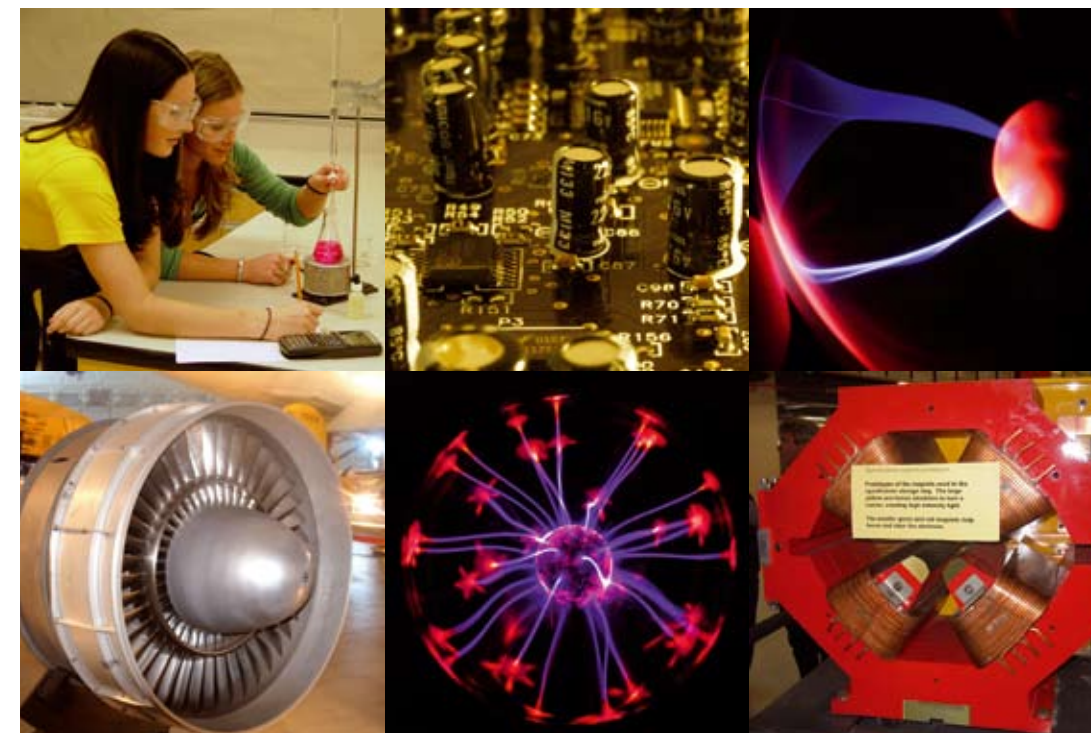
Wallonia is responsible for most of what is referred to as **applied research, technological development and innovation.**

The French speaking Community is in charge of so-called **fundamental research** within the Universities and the Scientific Research Fund (F.R.S. – FNRS).

Finally, the federal authority covers the activities of the federal scientific establishments, space research conducted within an international framework, nuclear research and the data exchange networks between scientific institutions.

At international level, **Wallonia-Brussels International (WBI)**, via its "Research-Innovation" platform, plays the role of facilitator in the coordination between bi and multilateral research and cooperation.

WBI devotes a significant proportion of its budgets to the mobility of researchers and the management of specific cooperation agreements and awards high-level scientific grants, both to host foreign researchers and to allow researchers from Wallonia-Brussels to continue with their training and research abroad.



Useful links

Wallonia-Brussels International www.wbi.be
Wallonia www.recherche-technologie.wallonie.be
French speaking Community <http://enseignement.be/infosup>
National Scientific Research Fund www2.frs-fnrs.be
Federal scientific policy www.belspo.be

Responsible editor: Ph. Suinen



Research and Innovation in Wallonia and Brussels



WALLONIA-BRUSSELS, A EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA !

The path towards a unified and attractive European Research Area (ERA) that guarantees the fifth freedom, the freedom of movement of researchers, knowledge and technologies, is all mapped out. Wallonia-Brussels subscribes fully to this development by putting particular emphasis on the importance of Research and Development as a priority for its future and for the socio-economic challenges ahead at the heart of Europe.

Belgium, in the south and north of the country, is acknowledged as the worldwide leader in the field of life sciences in relation to its size. Biology, molecular chemistry and the clinical research undertaken by our university hospitals create conditions that are highly conducive to the development of new pharmaceutical and biotechnological molecules linked to translational research (from the laboratory to medical practice).

Our excellence is also recognised in the space industry, as important research players but also in the development and evaluation of cutting-edge equipment for European and international rockets and satellites.

We are active participants in all of the instruments and themes of the European framework programme.

The development of spin-offs in fields as varied as biotechnologies, new materials, information technologies, multidisciplinary management systems linked to sustainable development, or human and social sciences, is generating tangible results in terms of patents, jobs and growth companies (IRIS, Eurogentec, IBA, ...).

The concept of the competitiveness cluster developed as part of the Wallonia's "Marshall Plan" is a successful example of the practical application of the indispensable link between research and innovation.

The future of Wallonia-Brussels in Europe will be built on the creativity, mobility and training of its researchers. Their work must be recognised and promoted, at home and abroad.

Philippe BUSQUIN

Former European Commissioner for Research (1999-2004)

