

Korean govt to inject \$2.6B to develop biotech in 2019

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The funding aims to boost Korea's innovation capabilities in medicine



According to reports from the Korean Herald, the government of Korea will spend 2.93 trillion won (US\$2.61 billion) this year to develop new biotechnology, as part of efforts to become the leading industrial hub.

The 2019 biotech support budget, which received a 2.9 percent increase from a year earlier, aims to develop critical medical sectors, such as genomes and brain science, the Ministry of Science and ICT said, as quoted by the leading news agency.

The funding aims to boost Korea's innovation capabilities. Most of the budget will be allocated to support R&D and the development of the latest technologies centered on new drugs and promising medical instruments.

In recent years, local bio companies have become more competitive on the global stage on the back of robust R&D spending and policy support from the government, the ministry said. However, Korea still lags behind leaders in the development of new drugs, especially so-called blockbuster pills.

The ministry said the government will make utmost efforts to build up biotechnology that enhances people's quality of life and can help find remedies for such diseases as Alzheimer's, reported Korean Herald.

The ministry said the government will strengthen innovative technology and foster new industries through a regulatory sandbox system.

A regulatory sandbox is a term mostly used in the fintech industry and refers to a mechanism for developing regulations that keeps up with the fast pace of innovation.

Of the total budget set aside for 2019, 1.15 trillion won is allocated to the Ministry of Science and ICT, followed by 539.5 billion won to the Ministry of Education and 457.1 billion won to the Ministry of Health and Welfare.