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ASIA EDITION

A*STAR earmarks 5 hotspots to boost R&D pipeline

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Singapore:Ã?Â ETPL, the technology transfer arm of A*STAR, has earmarked five innovation clusters or hotspots aimed at strengthening Singapore's research and business ecosystem.Ã?Â Its goal is to drive a consistent pipeline of technologies for commercialization as well as build clusters of industries around these hotspots.

Spanning both the biomedical science and engineering sectors, the focus areas include, diagnostics, anti-microbials, and bio-imaging among others.Ã?Â These areas were selected based on market potential as well as the strength and leadership of A*STAR's research in those areas. Patent strength in technologies that support the hotspots was also a factor, along with the speed at which each hotspot is likely to mature, deliver results, and reach leadership position.

"Technology transfer isn't just about numbers and revenue," said ETPL CEO Mr Philip Lim. "ETPL's role includes creating new jobs, transforming industry and giving Singapore businesses a competitive edge. The world beyond 2012 will rely increasingly on ecosystems of partnership for success. Moving ahead, we will continue our focus on integrative industry engagement and look to becoming international in our outlook as well as commandeering industry leadership for all technology transfer services."Ã?Â

ETPL, which was set up in January 2002 to commercialize the outcomes of A*STAR's research institutes and to consolidate the research organisation's patent portfolio, today manages more than 3,500 active patents and applications, has granted more than 400 licences for A*STAR technologies, with expected revenues of more than $500 million, has spun off more than 40 start-ups, and serves diverse industries including biotechnology, ICT, manufacturing and shipping among others.

In 2011 alone, ETPL achieved 40 percent of its five-year targets for licences as well as realized imputed commercial value, defined as the revenue that the licensee is expected to generate from incorporating the technology. Its patent utilization rate tripled year-on-year and it saw double-digit growth in the number of A*STAR start-ups.

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