

## BIOFUSION ANNOUNCES AIM FLOATATION

**On 2nd February a significant development in funding technology transfer within the University sector occurred with the launch on the Alternative Investment Market (AIM) of Biofusion plc, a company in which the University of Sheffield has a 49.3% stake.**



**From Left to Right: Richard Birtles (Company Secretary of SUEL and Biofusion), David Catton (Managing Director of SUEL and Non-Executive Director of Biofusion), Professor Bob Boucher (Vice-Chancellor of The University of Sheffield), Peter Lee (Chairman of the University Council and Director of SUEL) and Doug Liversidge (Chairman of SUEL and Biofusion)**

Valued at £28m Biofusion has signed a ten-year exclusive agreement with the University of Sheffield for the commercialisation of intellectual property (IP), owned by the University, in the area of medical life sciences. The University is one of the leading centres in the UK for this kind of research and is expected to spend over £500m on research and development over the life of the Biofusion agreement.

The agreement gives the University and its staff access to a new means of funding current and future companies and a management team with proven start-up and entrepreneurial experience. This partnership, between a leading UK university and professional management experienced in commercialisation, will mean the exploitation of sound business ideas leading to the generation of new medical companies based in South Yorkshire in line with the local government goal of establishing South Yorkshire as a bioscience centre of excellence.

In addition to commercialising this research pipeline, Biofusion has taken over the University's existing shareholdings in eight spin-out companies in areas such as stem cell research, novel wound treatments, vaccine adjuvants and cytokine analogues. These companies include Axordia, Asterion, Diurnal, BioActa, CellTran, Plasso Technology, SimCyp, Adjuvantix and an option to acquire the

University's shareholding in York Pharma which has recently acquired Molecular Skincare'

Biofusion's management team of David Baynes, Peter Grant and Stuart Gall have a proven track record of building successful technology related companies from start-up to public listing and have spent the past three years working closely with SUEL, the University of Sheffield and a number of the University's existing spin-out companies. The team at SUEL has played a key role in setting up this commercialisation agreement and Doug Liversidge, the University's senior industrial advisor and Chairman of SUEL, is also the Chairman of Biofusion; David Catton, Managing Director of SUEL is a non-executive director of Biofusion and Richard Birtles is the Company Secretary.

Biofusion's successful IPO marks an important day for the University of Sheffield and represents an exciting model for the commercialisation of university-based research, fitting well within current Government thinking on fostering innovation from within the University academic community.

**Should you require any further information about Biofusion please contact David Baynes on 0114 222 4433.**



## CONSTRUCTION PROFESSIONALS BENEFIT FROM SHEFFIELD HALLAM'S INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT EXPERTISE

**Professionals in the construction industry have been benefiting from the targeted development courses on offer at Sheffield Hallam's Centre for Infrastructure Management (CIM).**

The first two-day course, on the Inspection and Repair of Reinforced Concrete, was delivered in November 2004 and it proved to be very popular with attendees who used the time productively to develop their theoretical and practical knowledge of the subject.

Professor Paul Lambert (CIM), Mr. Ken Dykes, Chairman of the Sprayed Concrete Association and Mr. Mike Threadgold, Chairman of the Corrosion Prevention Association were among those who contributed to the delivery.

Head of the Centre for Infrastructure Management, Professor Pal Mangat, commented *"The event was very successful and delegates learned a lot. It is important that people attend these events so they keep up to date with new techniques and industry developments."*

The next professional development event is due to take place on 10th and 11th May 2005. Focusing on 'Railways and Highways Bridge Management', the event will combine

presentations and hands-on demonstrations to provide information on options for repair and strengthening different types of bridges, current guidelines for maintenance and repair, bridge management systems, fast track repairs, grouting techniques and health and safety.

If you would like further information on these courses, please visit the Centre for Infrastructure Management website at [www.shu.ac.uk/cim/cpd](http://www.shu.ac.uk/cim/cpd) or contact us on 0114 225 3339 or email [cim@shu.ac.uk](mailto:cim@shu.ac.uk).



**Professor Paul Lambert, Centre for Infrastructure Management, demonstrates the benefits of electrochemical remediation for reinforced concrete**



**Course delegates watch a hands-on demonstration of concrete repair**

## Knowledge exchange: delivering expertise into the heart of industry

**The first phase of the highly successful Knowledge Exchange programme drew to a close in December 2004 with a total of 38 completed projects under its belt.**

The HEFCE funded Knowledge Exchange programme is a joint initiative between Sheffield Hallam University and the University of Sheffield and it supports the placement of academics into the heart of industry and business people into the heart of the universities.

Work undertaken in the first phase of the programme included partner organisations such as Sony, Sport England and Railtrack. It has spanned all manner of industrial sectors including those in the food, tourism, creative, digital, bioscience and advanced manufacturing clusters.

The work undertaken by Sheffield Hallam academics has led to the delivery of a number of highly successful outputs including a new product development which has significant market potential, several continuing professional development courses and closer links between the University and key industrial partners.

Chris Hudson, Head of Physical Activity and Wellbeing in the Faculty of Health and Wellbeing at Sheffield Hallam, completed a

project which focused on establishing a unique partnership between Yorkshire Culture and Sport England to determine the intelligence requirements of the sporting sector. Chris found the project to be stimulating and enjoyable, *"The initial project necessitated my going out across the region and listening to requirements for a Sports Observatory. This was reciprocated by people wanting to know more about the University and what we do. The Knowledge Exchange proved to be a win-win situation for both partners with the clients being able to utilise the expertise we had available."*

Phase two of the programme, which is supported by funding from the HEIF2 programme, has already begun and consultants SQW have been commissioned to undertake a thorough evaluation of phase one. The findings of this evaluation are due to be returned in late February and a celebratory dinner to mark the end of phase one, and the achievements of those who took part, will be held in March.

Further information is available from Tim Strickland, Funding Development Manager at Sheffield Hallam University. Telephone 0114 225 3966 or email [t.strickland@shu.ac.uk](mailto:t.strickland@shu.ac.uk)

## Plaso Secures \$2.8 million Investment For Coating Technology

**Plaso Technology Ltd has secured \$2.8m (£1.5 million) second round funding from a Boston-based institutional investor which focuses on discoveries within UK academic institutions in the life sciences and physical sciences.**

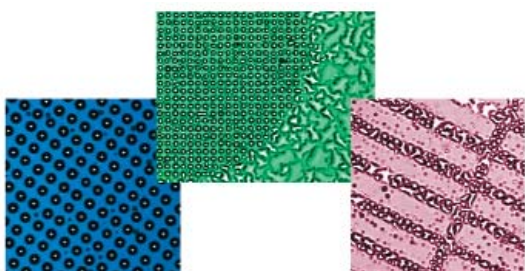
Plaso was formed in 2003 to exploit surface modification techniques initially developed at the University of Sheffield. Its expertise and understanding of surfaces in a biological context are built on fifteen years of research.

The company's core technology involves advanced surface engineering, and provides tailored coatings to consumables such as micro arrays, lab-on-a-chip, sensors and microtitre plates used in life sciences research and diagnostics. The unique properties of these coatings provide a marked increase in sensitivity and specificity for assays within these markets.

Plaso has successfully forged a number of commercial partnerships with equipment manufacturers in the life sciences and is also developing its own product portfolio aimed at the bio-instrumentation, bio-sensors, arrays and emerging diagnostics sectors.

The new funding will provide the company with working capital to enable it to accelerate its research programme and product development.

Commenting on the investment, Sameer Kothari, Plaso's Chief Executive Officer, said: *"This is an exciting moment in the company's history. There is a growing demand for advanced surfaces in diagnostics and life science research and we believe our technology will play an important role, especially in the miniaturisation of assays. This additional finance will help us to further develop our product portfolio and improve our offering to existing customers."*



Plaso's technology enables spatial chemistry deposition which is used in arrays and microfluidics

## York Pharma plc Acquisition of University of Sheffield Spin-out Molecular SkinCare Limited

**York Pharma plc, the AIM-listed strategic acquirer, developer and marketer of pharmaceutical products in the field of dermatology, announced the acquisition of Molecular SkinCare Limited on 1st February 2005. This Sheffield-based company is a pioneer and developer of novel dermatology products for the prevention and management of skin diseases.**

The acquisition expands York Pharma's product portfolio into the key dermatology therapeutic markets of eczema and psoriasis, with York Pharma gaining laboratory, complementary development and clinical dermatology expertise. Molecular SkinCare contributed its cash funds of circa £2m to those of York Pharma's, giving the enlarged company a combined cash reserve of approximately £5m.

Commenting on the acquisition, Terry Sadler, Chief Executive of York Pharma, said: *"This is a business transforming transaction, which both parties recognised as a perfect fit. The quality of the combined portfolio and enlarged team creates a business that will make a significant impact on the dermatology market in the coming years, both scientifically and commercially. This will be to the benefit of all our Shareholders."*

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## Blastech Ltd – 2005 Progress Report

Blastech Ltd, a University of Sheffield spin out company from the Department of Civil and Structural Engineering's blast and impact testing laboratory at Harpur Hill, Buxton has commenced 2005 by winning a major contract the testing of steel panels against projectile impact.

There is confidence within the company that recent changes within the UK defence sector have resulted in increased opportunities for a number of other varied and challenging projects on commercial high-quality small-scale blast and impact testing.

Blastech Ltd has consolidated on its existing links with organisations such as DSTL and QinetiQ Ltd to offer this commercial testing service alongside the more traditional academic studies.

Throughout 2004 successful contracts have been completed on blast loading of fibre-reinforced plastic panels, a University patented gas explosion suppression system and blast and projectile impingement on protective clothing.

2005 looks set to be a strong year for this developing company.

The above companies have been spun-out by Sheffield University Enterprise Ltd (SUEL) which is the University of Sheffield's wholly owned Technology Transfer Company dealing with intellectual property and commercial exploitation.

For further information about SUEL either contact David Catton, Managing Director on 0114 222 1008 or visit the website [www.suel.co.uk](http://www.suel.co.uk) and contact one of the Business Exploitation Managers

## Preparing for Sheffield's Future...

**As Sheffield First Partnership consult on the 'Cultural Strategy', their newest plan in helping take the city forward to becoming a successful, distinctive city of European significance, steps are being taken to develop the next Sheffield City Strategy.**

Sheffield is moving closer to its ambitious 2010 vision, signified not least by recently published government statistics that show Sheffield to be the second fastest growing city economy in England, ahead of London and only just behind Leeds.

The Cultural Strategy will set the direction and agenda for Sheffield's goal of having an excellent cultural and sporting offer; one of the key features of a modern successful city. This plan will both involve enhancing and adding to our range of cultural and sporting events and attractions, and improve connections with and support for Sheffield's strong creative infrastructure and diverse cultural offering.

Sheffield already has a vibrant and mixed population. Students, whether British or from other countries, and others who have set up home here all contribute to our cultural mix. Their rich diversity adds to our city's character and offering as a distinctive European city of culture.

Sheffield has a great academic offering and our two leading universities are also responsible for bringing great innovation and creativity to the city particularly in science, cultural studies and new cutting edge businesses.

Yet Sheffield is now also attracting students interested in our facilities and reputation as the new film studies capital competing against London and Bournemouth. Our underground talents, particularly in the world of film, are beginning to seep into the mainstream and be nationally acknowledged, such production company WARP Films. Their movie *Dead Man's Shoes*, recently walked away with a record eight nominations for the 2004 British Independent Film Awards.

Building the city as a cultural driver will involve partnership working across the diverse cultural and sporting sectors along with all the ambassadors for the city who can promote Sheffield and change its image externally. If we can achieve our aims, we will have a stronger city economy as well as a population that can benefit from the quality of life that come from a wide-ranging cultural offer.

To read and comment on our Cultural Strategy visit [www.sheffieldfirst.net](http://www.sheffieldfirst.net)  
The consultation will close on 11 March 2005.

## £850,000 FUNDING TO BOOST GROWTH AND EMPLOYMENT AT SHEFFIELD INVESTMENT SOLUTIONS COMPANY

**An expanding South Yorkshire company whose technology and expertise helps water companies keep charges to a minimum through informed investment decisions has completed further major financing from South Yorkshire Investment Fund (SYIF).**

SEAMS Ltd, the Sheffield-based consultancy and information technology organisation, which is a spin-out from the University of Sheffield, has received £800,000 from SYIF's Capital and Development Fund through a mixture of equity and loan stock along with £50,000 from the Small Business Fund. This follows an initial £50,000 loan earlier this year which helped SEAMS upgrade its computer systems.

The company provides highly advanced software and consultancy services to water utilities to support their key investment decisions. The technology is used to optimise investments made in infrastructure. Effectively SEAMS assists in keeping domestic water rates to a minimum.

The investment will enable SEAMS to market its technology, called WiLCO, in other utility sectors such as gas:

electricity; oil; transportation and emergency services. The company also plans to create 30 new jobs over the next 18 months, doubling its current workforce.

SEAMS managing director, Dr Pete Skipworth, said:

*"This investment will enable SEAMS to build a global reputation as a technology leader in infrastructure asset management - bringing high quality, knowledge-based jobs into the South Yorkshire community. The company is delighted to be in partnership with SYIF, an investment fund for the region."*

Clive Downward, investment manager, said: *"SEAMS is an exciting company with excellent prospects to build on its success in the water utility sector and expand its services into other areas. We are delighted to support the company in their plans following on from the investment provided by the Small Business Fund."*

For further information contact Ian Green or Chris Holland on 0845 4503210; e-mail [ian@greecomms.com](mailto:ian@greecomms.com) or [chris@greecomms.com](mailto:chris@greecomms.com) or Alison Reid on 01709 386381 or visit the website at [www.syif.com](http://www.syif.com).



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