



Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez is home to one of Chile's oldest business schools.

long-established relationships with local companies. PhD students associated with VentureL@b and other partners of Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez are able to develop industry-relevant skills at the business school, which was recently ranked first

in Latin America by *América Economía*. Explaining all this in a café in central London on a visit to the United Kingdom, Gidekel appears visibly excited by the research he oversees. "This Antarctic plant might yield new sunscreens," he says, pointing

to photographs displayed on his laptop. "And these bacteria have the capacity to make phosphorus soluble in soil, even at very low temperatures." Forging links with international innovation hubs is a key priority for Gidekel and his colleagues. "We look at Cambridge and Oxford as places where innovation flows very well," says Ramón Molina, executive director of Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez's business school.

Brazil's blossoming

Brazil, Latin America's richest country, has made the most progress in improving links between public and non-profit research and industry in the region, aided to a large extent by its impressive economic growth over the past decade. Juliana Salles, the regional director for Microsoft Research in Latin America, says Brazil is on its way to achieving a critical mass of researchers, policy-makers and business owners — essential for

getting innovative projects up and running in the region. There are a number of technology transfer tips that the country can offer its neighbours in Latin America, such as allowing academics to work as private consultants for one day a week within their particular field of interest. The University of São Paulo has had this arrangement for over 10 years. Brazil has also built 25 science and technology parks, with a further 17 planned or under construction, and the country's main high-tech hub, centred on the University of Campinas (Unicamp) in São Paulo state, encourages frequent meetings between alumni who have founded spin-offs and recent graduates who are in the process of doing so.

In São Paulo, state research funding agency FAPESP has its own tried and tested method for creating relationships between industry and academia. In 1995 it began a programme whereby

it issues annual calls for research proposals in partnership with the private sector. FAPESP and each company taking part work together throughout the entire process: they form a joint committee to select proposals to fund; they contribute half of the costs of the research each; and they oversee the collaboration together. "FAPESP has found a way of multiplying its money this way," says agency head Carlos Henrique de Brito Cruz. The popularity of the programme has grown enormously over time, aided by the booming economy that has furnished Brazilian firms with extra cash. Companies taking part include aerospace specialist Embraer, cosmetics firm Natura, Petrobras (oil), Vale (mining), Whirlpool (home appliances) and Telefónica (telecommunications).

There are also signs that Brazil is beginning to crack the hardest chestnut in technology

transfer. "The biggest challenge in Brazil today is not so much getting industry and academia to come together, which we have shown we can do, but to get industry to do its own research," explains Brito. "If you manage that, collaborations between industry and academia will happen naturally." For example, in the past year Vale, based in Rio de Janeiro, has committed to building three campuses to house a US\$400-million technology institute.

Engineering change

Latin America's other economic powers — Argentina and Mexico — are working hard to catch-up with Brazil. Surveys carried out a decade ago found that just 5% of companies in Argentina and 6% of companies in Mexico were collaborating formally with universities and other public research institutions. Santiago Villa, director of the technology transfer office at

Argentina's national science council, CONICET, says that the culture has since shifted. He explains that both CONICET and Argentina's recently created ministry of science, technology and productive innovation, MINCYT, have intensified engagement with the private sector at both regional and national levels. In 2010 CONICET signed over 130 agreements with companies and more than 20 public-private partnership deals for applied high-tech projects.

A further significant development in Argentina is the commercial expansion of the Fundación Instituto Leloir (FIL), a non-profit biomedical research centre based in Buenos Aires. FIL has created a technology transfer office, INIS Biotech, and a bioincubator, the Center for Biotechnological Development (CeDeBio), which allows start-up companies to use its research facilities and

equipment. INIS Biotech also works with CONICET on technology transfer and helps coordinate public funding from MINCYT and national research funding agency ANPCYT. INIS Biotech president Fernando Pitossi reckons stem cell research is one to watch in the country. "There is a greater critical mass of groups working on stem cells today in Argentina," he says. "Not long ago there were 14 [groups], but now there are 45." Stem cell research in the region is also supported by a joint funding programme, PROBITEC, that was set up by Argentina and Brazil in 2009.

Mexico has also made significant strides in developing public-private research collaborations. An injection of cash into healthcare research by the country's wealthiest man, Carlos Slim, led to the creation of the Mexico City-based Carlos Slim Health Institute in 2007. Roberto

Science news from Brazil

Science in Brazil is on the rise, along with its economy and global prestige

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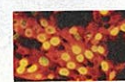
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Climate from a Brazilian viewpoint

Scientist from FAPESP's Research Program on Global Climate Change and other institutions are developing the Brazilian Model of the Global Climate System.



Time for epithelial stem cells

Scientists reproduce oral mucous membrane tissue from epithelial stem cells in a selected research project at FAPESP-King's College London.



Double agent

An article published in *Nature* with the participation of a Brazilian researcher reveals the double function of BID molecules in treating gastrointestinal illnesses.



Bacterial protection

A study published in *Science* magazine with Brazilian participation shows how plants exploit a specific combination of soil bacteria to protect themselves from pathogens.



Chemistry school will have four Nobel prize winners

The São Paulo Advanced School on Chemistry – Natural Products, Medicinal Chemistry and Organic Synthesis Integrated Solutions for Tomorrow's World will be held at the Universidade Estadual de Campinas.



FAPESP signs agreements with British universities

The United Kingdom's Government Chief Scientific Advisor, Sir John Beddington, visited the headquarters of the São Paulo Research Foundation.

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The Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas CONICET (www.conicet.gov.ar) was founded in 1958 by the Argentine Nobel Laureate Dr. Bernardo Houssay. It is the main public institution devoted to the promotion of scientific and technological research in Argentina.

CONICET is integrated by more than 6,500 researchers and 8,000 doctoral students, most of them working together in cooperation with universities and other research institutes. All areas of science are represented. In addition, CONICET promotes the training of research scientists through doctoral and postdoctoral fellowships, being the institution that gives the biggest number of research grants at the national level.

For information on fellowships and research opportunities please visit www.conicet.gov.ar

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Connecting science, industry and society - Argentina's Biotechnological development



INIS Biotech

INIS Biotech is the Technology Transfer Arm of Fundación Instituto Leloir, one of the leading Research Institutions in Life Sciences in Argentina and Latin America

INIS Biotech is part of the knowledge society, fostering the use of research results to improve people's lives.

INIS Biotech promotes the creation of innovative biotechnology companies, intellectual property protection and licensing from inventions and knowledge generated at Fundación Instituto Leloir and other Research Institutions in Argentina

INIS Biotech is the catalyst that ensures that Biotech developments and inventions from Argentina's Science and Technology sector, reach the market in alliance with private and public partners.



CeDeBio

CeDeBio (Center for Biotechnology Development) is Fundación Leloir's 740 M2 Bioincubator, located in the geographical center of Buenos Aires

CeDeBio boosts the set up and incubation of local Biotech start-up companies by offering access to state-of-the-art equipment and infrastructure, networking, and specialized high technology platforms.

For more information and research opportunities contact us or visit our website.



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