

Accessibility

Is A Key Difference In Biotech-CDMO Relationships

Featured Biotechs:

Levcept Limited
Corvus Pharmaceuticals
Surrozen
Pionyr Immunotherapeutics, Inc.

Lonza's small biotech series highlights the critical components that innovative Biotechs need to enjoy successful relationships with CDMOs. Here, the journeys of four diverse biotechs show the value of **Accessibility**.

Approachable From The Get-Go

For Pionyr — a San Francisco-based biotech with a pipeline of first-in-class clinical-stage cancer immunotherapies targeting the tumor microenvironment — the RFP and CDMO selection process took place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Alicia Levey and Kiren Khanduja of Pionyr recall, "Lonza was well organized and provided informative virtual tours. They were willing to do it as many times as we requested and also connected our team with key business and technical leaders from the sites relevant to us. This meant we were able to proceed seamlessly.

Strong Appetite

Simon Westbrook — who founded Levcept to advance his own novel analgesic for osteoarthritis — had a similar experience. "The team at Lonza was clearly interested in our complex IgG fusion chimera protein, even though it's not what their platforms are best known for. Lonza welcomed me with great enthusiasm about what could be achieved."

Interest Expanded With Favorable Terms

Craig Parker of Surrozen — a small biotech with two complex bispecific antibody candidates — recalls the relationship with Lonza rapidly growing. "Lonza was intrigued by our novel, complex molecules. This class of regenerative antibodies has broad potential to repair a range of tissues and organs, so Lonza quickly discussed a multiproduct deal, and agreed to apply the flexibility and favorable terms they proposed for our first program to both."

Equality For All

Ben Jones of Corvus Pharmaceuticals — a clinical-stage immunology-focused company developing drugs that target the most critical cellular elements of the immune system — appreciates that Lonza has been fair in access to its equipment and experts, “We are not a huge account for Lonza, but they treat us like an equal. There has been a shift in culture, with more flexibility around scheduling and a willingness to take more unique approaches that better fit smaller companies like Corvus.”

Simon Westbrook of Levicept said, “I thought that, as a single-asset biotech, we might get neglected, especially in difficult moments, but that has not been the case. Despite vaccine and therapeutic developers vying for GMP capacity in 2020 and 2021, we have always felt that Lonza listens and does its best for us.”

Equality For Every Relationship

Alicia Levey of Pionyr Immunotherapeutics sums it up, “As a large CDMO, people don’t expect Lonza to be approachable, but this has not been our experience. It is important to select a CDMO that understands the unique needs and perspectives of small companies, and one that is willing to listen and collaborate. We are confident in Lonza as a partner. And the team at Pionyr has enjoyed the process.”



Featured Contributors

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