



Flagship expands into Asia-Pacific with new Singapore hub

The biotech company creator hopes its new office will help its portfolio companies grow and strike partnerships in the region.

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The Singapore skyline is seen at sunset on June 8, 2018 in Singapore. Chris McGrath via Getty Images

Biotechnology company creator Flagship Pioneering is expanding its global footprint, announcing Tuesday the establishment of a regional hub in Singapore.

The move follows Flagship opening an office in London earlier this year, and is meant to help the venture firm scale its companies and ink new partnerships in the region.

Singapore has been working to build up a biotech sector for decades. While that investment has helped boost the emergence of new startups, it hasn't yet led to a homegrown star.

Large pharmaceutical companies are moving in, though. Last year Merck expanded in Singapore with a new packaging facility to support its cancer drug Keytruda and HPV vaccine Gardasil. The company has been investing in the country since 1997, and the expansion was part of a five-year plan to invest up to \$500 million into its Singapore headquarters.

Flagship's new hub is another positive sign. The Moderna founder currently lists 43 startups in its portfolio of investments, including recently launched biotechs Empress Therapeutics, Metaphore Therapeutics and Ampersand Biomedicines. The venture firm also partnered with Pfizer in July as part of a recent "Pioneering Medicines" initiative.



Flagship Pioneering's André Andonian
Permission granted by Flagship Pioneering.

André Andonian, a 34-year veteran of the consultancy McKinsey & Co., will serve as Flagship's Asia-Pacific chair and senior adviser, responsible for leading the company's presence in the region.