

AgriBio, Centre for AgriBioscience



Australia and New Zealand

Education

AgriBio, Centre for AgriBioscience is one of Australia's premier biosciences facilities, and is a major international facility for plant, animal and microbial biosciences and biosecurity research.

A joint initiative of the Victorian Government and La Trobe University, AgriBio comprises some 30,000m² of research laboratories, glasshouses and office accommodation for more than 400 scientists, students and business and science support staff.

Project facts

Location

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Client

Victorian Government and La Trobe University joint venture

Value (NPV)

A\$288 million

Our role

Financial sponsor

Equity investor

Financial arranger

Asset manager

Builder

Grocon Constructors

Architect

Lyons Architects

Services

Honeywell

Financial close date

May 2009

Completion date

July 2012

Contract terms

Design, build, finance and maintain for 25 years

Awards

- Silver, Best Financial Structure – Social Infrastructure and Utilities, 2020 Partnerships Awards

Project website

www.agribio.com.au

The core laboratory and office building enables a high degree of flexibility to enable easy adaption to changing scientific focuses, and external facilities that include a large glasshouse and polyhouse complex.

The laboratory and office building spans physical containment levels two (PC2) and three (PC3) laboratories with adjacent office accommodation.



Design features

AgriBio has been awarded a 5 Star Green Star rating from the Australian Green Building Council.

The facility also accommodates energy efficient lighting and cooling, facilities for cyclists, incorporation of a tri-generation system to facilitate reduced carbon emissions and greater energy efficiency, water reclamation and storm water harvesting.

Beyond the working requirements of the facility, the need for collaboration between researchers was imperative. The Plenary Research design was heavily weighted towards facilitating collaboration, ensuring meeting rooms, and breakout spaces are strategically located in the building.

It also incorporates a light-filled atrium to provide the central hub of activity and ease of way finding.

Asset management innovations

Plenary's strategic asset management has seen it adopt partnership approach with the joint venture parties.

This includes planning to align the building's long-term functional requirements and needs for future research with its ability to optimise its efficiency and yield for many years to come.

In addition, to accommodate future expansion, Plenary provided an innovative commercial solution that delivered 2,600 m² of expansion capacity at no additional cost to the State.

Local economic impacts

AgriBio strengthens Victoria's international reputation for plant, animal and microbial biosciences, and biosecurity research and diagnostics. It supports and protects Victoria's A\$11.6 billion agricultural sector through research that improves productivity, fights disease and reduces environmental impact.

Research at AgriBio spans the spectrum from strategic to applied science, and includes:

- world-leading gene discovery and functional genomics in major plant and animal species;
- molecular breeding for disease resistance, drought tolerance, bioenergy and health;
- management strategies for weeds, plant and animal pests, and diseases of importance to Victoria;
- the development of sustainable systems for animal and plant production.