



Written by [Angeline Tan](#) on October 6, 2022

Pharmaceutical Giant MSD Invests in Singapore to Bolster Vaccine Development and Drug Supply Chain

SINGAPORE — U.S. pharmaceutical giant MSD (known as Merck & Co. in the United States and Canada) unveiled a new packaging facility and broke ground for a plant to produce new-generation inhaler medicine in Singapore on Wednesday, October 5.

As part of MSD's plan to invest millions of dollars in Singapore, the recent expansion at its multi-product manufacturing hub in Tuas would bring the company's total investment in the country to more than 3 billion Singapore dollars. These investments add to the U.S. \$2 billion invested by MSD in Singapore since the onset of its manufacturing operations in the tiny Southeast Asian country in 1997.



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At the launch and groundbreaking ceremony in Tuas, Singapore's minister for trade and industry, Gan Kim Yong, said MSD's investment will boost the number of local jobs to more than 100, bringing MSD's overall headcount in Singapore to more than 1,800.

Fernando Otero, associate vice president of MSD's manufacturing division in Singapore; Goh Wan Yee, senior vice president and head of healthcare at the Economic Development Board; and David Peacock, MSD's president for the Asia-Pacific region, also attended the event.

This recently launched packaging and sterile filling facility will back vaccine and medicine production in Singapore as well as MSD's cancer immunotherapy products, the company said. When it is ready in 2026, the new facility will produce next-generation inhaler devices for targeted medicine administration.

Robert Davis, global chief executive and president of MSD, said, "What it represents is MSD's commitment to our partnership with Singaporeans and partnership to bring important medicines to the patients here who rely on it."

Peacock remarked that the decision "has spurred a giant race in investment to find how we leverage on the mRNA platform ... and that spills into Singapore as well.... I believe Singapore is incredibly well placed for new investments."

Additionally, Peacock credited what he perceived to be Singapore's resilience and adaptability in influencing MSD: "It comes down to the investments that have been made over time by Singapore in terms of the educational system, and how they approach tax policy, international trade and protection of intellectual property. In a way, I think Singapore has made all the right decisions over time to ensure that it's a place that attracts inward investment." He also noted that much academic and laboratory research is taking place in the biotech sphere in Singapore, and his and other companies are hoping to



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utilize these initiatives.

“As a large multinational, ultimately we maintain our own internal development functions, but we also maintain enormous networks within both private sector, academic research as well as government sponsored labs,” he said.

As part of Singapore’s efforts to digitize its industries, MSD’s Singapore IT Hub at MYP Center in Battery Road hopes to tap into artificial intelligence and cloud and cybersecurity solutions to deal with challenges in healthcare, information, and technology.

[The company’s investment here](#) bears testimony to Singapore’s central role in the drugmaker’s global supply chain of its medicine and vaccines. Peacock added that both Keytruda and Gardasil 9 are major drugs in MSD’s cancer treatment and prevention portfolio.

Minister Gan said Singapore has positioned itself as one of MSD’s major manufacturing locations, producing seven of their top 10 products. Singapore is the only MSD site in Asia that makes immunotherapy products for cancer patients in Singapore and the Asia-Pacific region.

“Having a significant presence of a pharmaceutical giant like MSD in Singapore is a ringing endorsement of our biomedical ecosystem and advanced manufacturing capabilities,” he opined, adding that the biomedical sector forms more than three percent of Singapore’s gross domestic product and manufactures more than \$17 billion worth of products for global markets.

The minister also credited careful government planning and regulatory measures over the years in creating a globally competitive biomedical sector in Singapore, alluding to the republic’s history of government actions and interventions to shape the country’s economy.

Gan said MSD’s new investments will propel Singapore’s Manufacturing 2030 Vision to greater heights, increasing manufacturing by 50 percent in 10 years.

On a yearly basis, MSD’s new secondary packaging facility can manufacture more than 33 million vaccine units, and the plant will be MSD’s only manufacturing facility for new drugs for pulmonary arterial hypertension — a type of high blood pressure that impacts the arteries in the lungs and heart.

Gan further added that expanding local vaccine manufacturing capabilities will bolster Singapore’s ability to respond rapidly to future “health emergencies.”

“It will also fortify our region’s defense against similar supply chain disruptions that we had faced during the global race to inoculate our populations against Covid-19 variants,” he said.

Despite wide-ranging instances depicting the risks of Covid-19 shots, including the heightened risk of myocarditis, the Singapore authorities have largely dismissed vaccine hesitancy sentiments among segments of its population and linked such attitudes to “conspiracy theories.” Stringent government-imposed vaccine mandates have prompted many residents, willing or unwilling, to take the shots, for fear of having their livelihoods and jobs taken away. Consequently, Singapore is one of the most vaccinated countries in the world, with around 92% of its population already doubly inoculated at the very least.

Climate alarmists and globalists will also be pleased to know that the new technology introduced by MSD would boost the company’s environmental goals and pave the way for a digitization of MSD’s information technology infrastructure and facilities in Singapore. Such new developments come amid Singapore’s efforts to adhere to the environmentalist agenda set by globalist organizations like the United Nations (UN) and Agenda 2030. Nationwide, the Singapore Green Plan 2030 has already begun



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to address climate change, encouraging residents and businesses to curtail their activities in various ways to tackle what green advocates perceive as a growing climate crisis.

Earlier this year, Hilleman Laboratories, a joint venture between MSD and British charitable foundation Wellcome Trust, launched a 30,000-square-foot manufacturing facility at Singapore's Depot Road. Together with an existing research and development (R&D) facility at Singapore's Biopolis, this will establish an \$80 million vaccine and biologics development and manufacturing hub, the first of its kind in Singapore. Drugmakers such as Thermo Fisher, Sanofi, and BioNTech have also announced new vaccine-making facilities in Singapore.



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