

## **MSS and Health Ministry Seek Industry Input on Plans to Support Promising Pharmaceutical and Biotech Companies**

The Ministry of SMEs and Startups (MSS), headed by Acting Minister and First Vice Minister Roh Yong-Seok, and the Ministry of Health and Welfare, led by Minister Jeong Eun-Kyeong, met with pharmaceutical and biotech SMEs and startups at Lunit on September 17.

The meeting focused on a plan the two ministries are developing to help promising Korean pharmaceutical and biotech companies grow and compete internationally. The ministries outlined their proposals and sought feedback on the challenges companies face and the support they need in a rapidly changing global market.

Participants included First Vice Minister Roh, Second Vice Minister of Health and Welfare Lee Hyung-Hoon, and eight company representatives from drug development, digital health and medical devices, and biomaterials and production technologies.

### **Support at Each Stage of Development**

The ministries and company representatives discussed how government support could better meet businesses' needs, from developing technologies to bringing products to market and expanding overseas.

Drug development is a lengthy process, beginning with the discovery and development of drug candidates and progressing through preclinical studies, preparation and approval of investigational new drug (IND) applications, Phase 1-3 clinical trials, and marketing approval. Discussions focused on coordinating R&D funding, clinical development support, investment and commercialization assistance throughout this process.

Company representatives emphasized the need for research, testing and validation support during drug candidate development and preclinical studies. As companies enter clinical trials, they require substantially more funding, specialist staff and closer collaboration with hospitals and clinical research institutions.

Participants also called for better coordination between government programs to help companies secure marketing approval, conclude technology transfer agreements, attract further investment and enter overseas markets after clinical trials.

The ministries will use this feedback to identify companies with strong technologies and growth potential and tailor support to their needs at each stage of development.

The plan will connect R&D support with clinical trials and testing, commercialization, investment, loan guarantees and overseas expansion, helping companies access the assistance they need as they progress.

### **Combining Expertise and Resources**

The ministries agreed that effective support for pharmaceutical and biotech companies requires close coordination between their programs and areas of expertise.

In March, they announced a joint initiative to address the difficulties pharmaceutical and biotech ventures face at different stages of growth. The forthcoming plan will build on that work and deepen cooperation between the

ministries.

MSS will contribute its experience in identifying and supporting promising SMEs and startups, along with its programs for entrepreneurship, R&D, investment and commercialization. The Ministry of Health and Welfare will contribute its pharmaceutical and biotech expertise and the facilities and services it provides for clinical development and commercialization. Together, they aim to help companies move from technology development through clinical trials to commercialization and international expansion.

“Even with promising drug candidates and strong technologies, pharmaceutical and biotech companies need considerable time and funding to complete clinical trials and bring their products to market,” said First Vice Minister Roh.

“We will incorporate the feedback shared today into the plan. By combining MSS’s R&D, investment and commercialization support with the health ministry’s pharmaceutical and biotech expertise, we will help promising companies develop their technologies, progress through clinical trials, bring products to market and expand internationally.”

Second Vice Minister Lee said, “Pharmaceutical and biotech companies need coordinated support at every stage, from drug candidate development and preclinical and clinical studies to marketing approval and commercialization. We will listen to businesses and work closely with MSS to provide practical support that addresses the difficulties they encounter as they grow.”

The ministries will continue consulting companies and relevant organizations to ensure that the plan responds to industry needs and helps promising Korean pharmaceutical and biotech SMEs and startups grow into global businesses.

For more news and updates on Korea’s SME and startup policies, follow the Ministry’s official **LinkedIn** page:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/mss1357>