

Best Biotechnology R&D Company 2023 - Portugal

Founded in 2008, SICGEN Antibodies is a European company involved in the development, manufacture, and marketing of polyclonal antibodies for cell biology research. Based in Coimbra, Portugal, its antibodies have been successfully used in several life science research areas, and featured in leading scientific publications. It also produces custom polyclonal antibodies for leading national and international institutions such as universities, research institutes, and pharmaceutical manufacturers.

Portuguese scientist José Ramalho founded SICGEN Antibodies as an adjunct to NOVA University of Lisbon. The company is designed to develop, produce and market polyclonal antibodies for use in research. For example, use of the antibodies against fluorescent proteins such as GFP, mCherry, and tdTomato have already been featured in many life science research publication, such as Nature, Cell and Science. SICGEN Antibodies has a purpose-built lab space and animal house located in a small village in the district of Coimbra. Here it has ample capacity to produce hundreds of antibodies yearly, all raised in goats (*Capra hircus*).

The success SICGEN has experienced in its work has led to it increasing its product line to more than 300 antibodies, most of which are used for research purposes with a specific focus on Western Blotting (WB), Immunofluorescence (IF), and immunocytochemistry (IHC), although many are utilized for ELISA, immunoprecipitation and other biochemical techniques. SICGEN is driven to continue to produce new antibody-related products and services, both for application within industry and research fields. In addition, it currently produces custom polyclonal antibodies for leading national and international institutions, including universities, research institutes, pharmaceutical manufacturers and biotechnology distributors worldwide. It's predominant market focus is North America, Europe and the Far East.

SICGEN's ability to focus on niche areas, and gaps in the market, as well as its focus on supplying high-quality antibodies is what has led to its success. It also helped that its founders were themselves scientists, rooted in the world of academia, which enabled it to identify antibodies that were in demand, and anticipate which areas were likely to evolve next. Such a strategic focus allowed it to gain a competitive advantage in a crowded market, supported by its ability to utilise cutting-edge technologies in an effective way.

Research and development is a major priority for SICGEN, allowing it to explore new ideas and identify any gaps in the market it can fill either by improving its existing antibodies, or developing new ones. It is committed to becoming a global producer of polyclonal antibodies and antibody-related products, all provided inclusive of high-quality services and at competitive prices.

Recent advancements in antibody production and purification techniques, characterization methods, and antibody validation, has helped to make experiment results more reliable, and reproduceable. SICGEN, along with other organisations, has also been working to establish standards and guidelines for antibody valuation to encourage manufacturers to follow rigorous validation protocols. Advanced tech has introduced the use of recombinant antibody engineering techniques, and alternative affinity reagents such as nanobodies and aptamers. This has provided researchers with additional tools when studying antibodies. Such collaboration between industry, regulatory bodies, and researchers is crucial to continue advancing and meeting the needs of the scientific community.



Price can be a major stumbling block when it comes to scientific progress. That is why antibody specificity and reproducibility is important. Maintaining consistency in antibody production and quality control is also essential to minimise variability in research findings. SICGEN has explored ways of reducing the costs of antibody production without compromising quality. It's done this by streamlining the manufacturing process/improving scalability using large animals (goats). This consistency helps it build trust with researchers, and differentiate itself in the market. Its stringent quality control, testing, and documentation contributes vastly to the advance of scientific research and discovery.

SICGEN continues to develop, produce and market novel antibodies, working to fill several antibody markets gaps. It also has an intention to reach out to new customers in different market areas through increase of its distribution channels and the implementation of a free sample programme. It feels that by taking full advantage of cutting-edge technologies it is equipped to become a global producer of high-quality polyclonal antibodies, at the most competitive prices. It is clear why SICGEN Antibodies has been named Best Biotechnology R&D Company 2023 – Portugal. It's tremendous efforts in the field really are second-to-none.

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