







# L@b Brief | May 2025

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## **COMMENT**

# **Return to tender**



**FOUR YEARS ago, GAMBICA submitted members' feedback to a government consultation on public procurement. In February, the results arrived with the Procurement Act 2023, aimed at simplifying and improving how public sector bodies buy goods and services. The Act should be especially helpful for smaller businesses that have struggled to access public contracts.**

### **Key changes include:**

- **More flexible frameworks: Suppliers will have more regular opportunities to join commercial frameworks, avoiding long lockouts.**
- **Stronger prompt payment rules: More contracts now require 30-day payment terms.**
- **New central platform – ‘Find a Tender’: Stores supplier details to save time on repeated entries.**
- **Procurement Review Unit (PRU): A new body to handle supplier complaints about unfair or non-compliant procurement—potentially offering quicker resolutions than past appeals via the Cabinet Office.**

### **Easier Tender Discovery**

**A common member complaint is the volume and spread of public tenders. To address this, GAMBICA has overhauled its tender alert service, partnering with a specialist provider to track tenders related to lab equipment and consumables—across both public and private sectors.**

**This enhanced service is free to all GAMBICA members, and now includes a dedicated procurement specialist who filters tenders so you receive only relevant opportunities.**

### **Smarter Bid Writing with AI**

**Finding tenders is only the first step—writing winning bids is the next challenge. AI is increasingly used in bid writing (and possibly evaluation), offering speed but also raising accuracy and confidentiality risks.**

**To help members navigate this, GAMBICA is running shared-cost training courses with an expert bid writer. The sessions will cover how to use AI effectively, from idea generation to final draft, while highlighting risks like data privacy and the importance of authenticity.**

**If you are interested in the tender alert service or training courses, please get in touch at: [jacqueline.balian@gambica.org.uk](mailto:jacqueline.balian@gambica.org.uk)**

**Toodle pip!  
Jacqueline**

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## UK News

### Two successful lab shows in one month

May saw two major UK lab shows, both drawing strong attendance and positive feedback.



THE UK's newest lab exhibition debuted at London's Excel, organised by Terrapin, a company best known to GAMBICA members for its pharma industry events in Switzerland. London Lab Live was designed to build on the company's core specialisms of lab automation and digitalisation but in fact, didn't really broaden the scope of the event very much.

Attendance was impressive with seminar theatres mostly full. The programme focused on automation- and digital transformation. While some of the presentations leaned towards corporate promotion, they were generally well integrated and well received, fitting the sponsorship-driven model of the event.



Although there were only a modest number of exhibitors, most reported strong engagement, particularly on day one. The relatively small exhibition space may have been due to many potential exhibitors electing to walk the floor rather than commit to a first year event.

In collaboration with the Royal Society of Chemistry London Lab Live featured the following themes:

- Data management, standards and analytics
- AI machine and deep learning
- Automation and robotics
- Connectivity and collaboration
- Digital transformation
- Lab operations and efficiency
- Facilities & real-estate and
- Sustainability

Given the strength of the seminar programme and the solid turnout, this event shows good potential for growth. However, expanding beyond its automation niche may prove more challenging.

Meanwhile, the ChemUK exhibition held at the NEC continued its steady growth and this year featured five separate sectors;

- the chemicals supply show,
- the chemicals management show,
- process and chemical engineering show,

- formulated product manufacturer show, and
- chemical laboratory. Proportionately the chem lab section was smaller, but the consensus was that the exhibition was busier than last year and that particularly day one was very well-attended.

To my probably rather jaundiced eye, the conference programme looked a little stale but still attracted good numbers.

All the exhibitors I spoke to were pleased with the event with one commenting that it represents a better return on investment than Lab Innovations.

**Photo taken at 10am on Day 2  
may not reflect the true level  
of activity.**



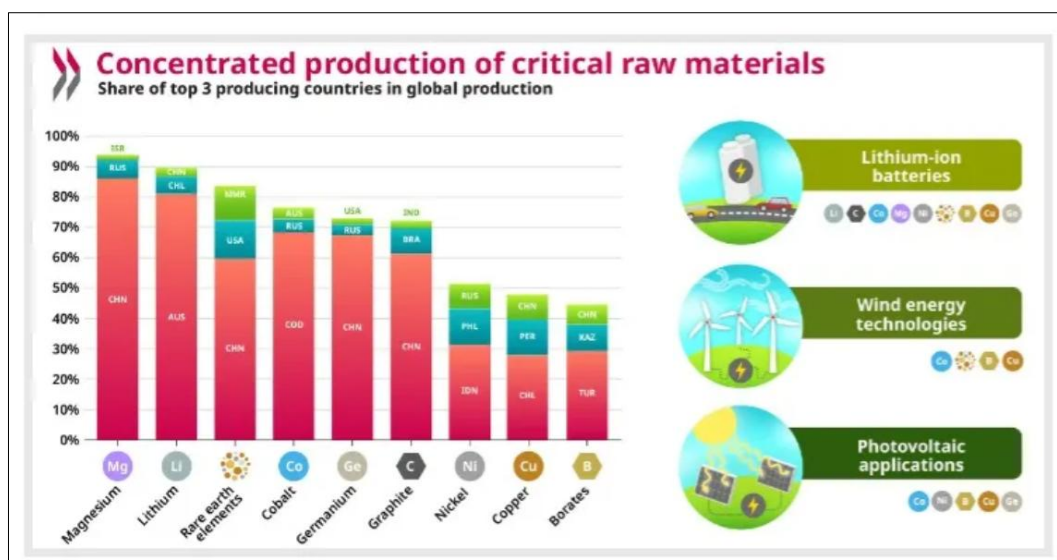
## Rare Earth export curbs halt battery supply to UK warns China Britian Business Council

THE CHINA Britain Business Council (CBBC) reports that China's export restrictions on rare earth metals have suddenly and completely halted battery exports to the UK, with at least one motor manufacturer warning of less than two weeks' supply remaining. The warning coincides with new OECD data showing a sharp rise in export restrictions on critical raw materials.

The OECD Inventory of Export Restrictions on Industrial Raw Materials tracks annual data on restrictions across 65 industrial commodities and 82 countries. The 2025 edition, covering trends through 2023, shows a more than five-fold increase in restrictions since 2009. The trend surged in 2023, with 500+ new mineral products subject to at least one export restriction—double the 2022 rate and nearly triple that of 2021.

"Increasing export restrictions on critical raw materials can drive up prices and disrupt supply chains, threatening global growth, renewables expansion, and digitalisation," said OECD Secretary-General Mathias Cormann.





In 2023, 94% of new export restrictions were imposed by just seven countries—China, Vietnam, Burundi, Russia, DRC, Zimbabwe, and Laos—highlighting the concentrated global control of key resources.

Minerals are essential to renewable energy, digitalisation, and defence. An electric car requires six times more mineral inputs than a conventional vehicle, and a wind plant needs nine times more than a gas-powered one. They are also critical to semiconductors, fibre optics, magnets, and advanced electronics.

Just three countries produce over two-thirds of global cobalt and nickel, and more than 90% of rare earths and lithium. China alone accounts for 70% of the world's supply of germanium, graphite, rare earths, and magnesium. Even where resources exist globally, mining and processing require long timelines and major investment.

The CBBC is surveying members on the business impact of halted battery and critical item exports. You can share your input [here](#) before 2 June.

For more on the OECD's work on export restrictions, click [here](#).

## Immigration skills charges up by a third

THE IMMIGRATION skills charge (ISC) is rising by 32%, according to a Government white paper. Introduced to encourage UK employers to invest in local talent, the ISC has raised over £1.5 billion since its launch.

Smaller firms and charities will now pay £480 for the first year of sponsoring a migrant worker, up from £364, and £240 for each following six months (previously £182). For medium and large companies, the charge rises to £1,320 for the first year and £660 every six months after.

This move is part of a wider effort to align immigration with domestic workforce planning and reduce dependency on overseas labour. A worker sponsored for five years and applying for permanent residence may now cost an employer up to £31,000—double the previous £15,000. If the worker has a spouse and three children, total charges could reach £82,000.

For further information click [here](#).

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## Employer confidence hits record low says CIPD

CONFIDENCE AMONG UK employers has fallen to a record low, according to the CIPD's latest Labour Market Outlook, based on a survey of 2,000 employers.

### Key findings:

- **61% plan to recruit in the next three months:** down from 64% last quarter and 67% in autumn 2024.
- **24% are planning redundancies:** unchanged from last quarter but up from 21% last autumn.
- **Pay rise intentions remain flat at 3%,** unchanged over the past year.
- **The net employment balance (NEB):** the difference between those expecting to hire and those expecting to cut staff – has dropped from +13 to +8, the lowest level since tracking began in 2014 (excluding the pandemic).

### Additionally:

- 41% of employers who made redundancies in the past year paid only the statutory minimum.
- 50% offered enhanced redundancy pay.

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## Nominate a future leader to GAMBICA's NextGen Council or Consultancy Group

GAMBICA's NextGen Council offers an excellent development opportunity for early-career professionals and future leaders in your organisation.

To join the Council, candidates must first participate in the NextGen Consultancy Group. Council members are typically selected from active participants in this group.

Nominations are now open for both the Consultancy Group and the Council.

Nomination forms are available [here](#).

Eligibility criteria:

- Nominees must be employees of a GAMBICA member company.
- At the time of joining the Council, nominees must be within the first 10 years of their career in a GAMBICA sector.
- All nominees must have their manager's approval before applying.

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## £1M to accelerate digital transformation in North West manufacturing

Dawn Taylor, Process Operator at grant recipient Foams 4 Sports



MADE SMARTER, the Government-backed digital adoption programme, has launched a new £1M funding round to support technology projects among SME manufacturers in the North West.

The initiative is offering match-funded grants of up to £20,000 to help SMEs adopt advanced technologies including robotics,

automation, the Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), and additive manufacturing.

The aim is to boost productivity, growth, resilience and sustainability. Businesses who register to the programme also gain access to a suite of support including fully funded technology advice, digital roadmap development, leadership and skills training, and student placement opportunities.

To learn more and register visit [madesmarter.uk](https://madesmarter.uk)

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## Business leaders appointed to oversee strategic NHS suppliers

FOUR BUSINESS leaders have been appointed as Health Crown Representatives to help manage partnerships with the NHS's 15 most strategic suppliers. They will support the National Strategic Supplier Relationship Management (SSRM) programme, led jointly by DHSC, NHS England, and the Cabinet Office.

Health Minister Karin Smyth said the representatives will act as key links between government and suppliers, helping manage challenges, risks, and opportunities.

The Health Crown Representatives are:

- **Deb Steane:** Former NHS microbiologist with 27 years at Johnson & Johnson in executive roles.
- **Keith Nurcombe:** Founder of Doctorlink and non-exec director across multiple NHS trusts and healthcare bodies.
- **Oliver Cofler:** Former supply chain director at Cadbury and Alliance Healthcare, now non-exec director at South Warwickshire NHS Trust.
- **Paul Richards:** Healthcare and tech leader; non-exec director at Torbay & South Devon NHS Trust and chair of One Devon's NHS digital board.

**Strategic suppliers:** The NHS will work closely with 15 suppliers to drive value and manage risk: Abbott, AstraZeneca, Circle Health Group, GSK, ISS, Johnson & Johnson, Olympus Keymed, Optum, Medtronic, Pfizer, Roche, Sandoz, Sodexo, Spire Healthcare, and Teva.

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## RESEARCH News

### Ground breaking underwater glue developed



AN UNDERWATER glue could soon be saving lives in the UK Armed Forces following successful trials in Portsmouth.

The glue, which mimics the way a mussel sticks to a rock, will enable military personnel to repair wetsuits, damaged dinghies and other equipment rapidly in extreme environments. It will also make it easier to repair bridges under the water line.

The glue was developed by the Ministry of Defence's Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl), working with biotech firm Zentraxa.

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## LABORATORY Construction Update

### Swedish lab company acquires space in UK

INIFY LABORATORIES, which provides cancer diagnostics within pathology, has established its initial UK organisation in a newly built property in a business park just south of Oxford, recruiting key personnel for subsidiary management, laboratory operations, and sales.

### New UK Biobank headquarters ‘tops out’



*Left: Topping out of UK Biobank with representatives from UK Biobank, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), Bruntwood Sci Tech and The University of Manchester*

A NEW purpose built, larger, faster and more efficient HQ for the UK Biobank, is being built at the Greenheys site on Manchester Science Park, part of a £127.6 million investment from UKRI.

UK Biobank will occupy three floors of the 131,000 square foot new building. When

complete, it will include laboratory space and a latest-generation robotic freezer that stores and retrieves UK Biobank’s 20 million biological samples four times faster than before, revolutionising the pace of scientific discovery.

UK Biobank is set to be located alongside fast-growth life science businesses working in diagnostics, genomics, biotech and precision medicine in the highly specialist purpose-built building.

The building will include specialist labs and features such as:

- increased vibration resistance
- piped gas distribution systems
- enhanced cooling and ventilation systems
- high security access
- 100GB superfast connectivity.

### BioNTech invests up to £1 billion in the UK

BioNTech is to open new research and AI centres in London and Cambridge, investing up to £1bn—one of the UK life sciences sector’s largest-ever deals. The project is supported by up to £129m in government funding as part of the UK’s Plan for Change.

### Construction begins on Fabrica, Oxford

CONSTRUCTION BEGAN in May on the Botley Road scheme, designed for science and innovation companies, which is expected to complete in early 2027.



Fabrica marks the second phase of Oxford's Central Science District, following the completion of Mission Street and BGO's Inventa scheme in 2024. Both schemes replaced retail warehouses.



## Nottingham to get new propulsion lab

Photo: YMD Boon



THE UNIVERSITY of Nottingham is building a £5m lab for hydrogen and alternative-fuel propulsion testing at its Jubilee Campus. The facility—linked to the Power Electronics and Machines Centre—will support testing for aerospace, automotive and marine industries.

Opening in late 2025, the lab will include cryogenic environments, altitude simulation, and solar power, and aims for a BREEAM 'Very Good' rating.

## New cancer research centre for south London



*CGI of the Gensler/Arup designed development*

Property investor Aviva Capital Partners (ACP) and mixed-use developer Socius have submitted a planning application to London Borough of Sutton for a £1bn expansion of the existing London Cancer Hub.

The new development would be built on a 12-acre site alongside The Institute of Cancer Research and The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust's Sutton site.

ACP and Socius plan to deliver one million square feet of research and laboratory space to bring life sciences companies together with academic researchers and clinicians to drive innovation in cancer research. The new buildings will range from large-scale facilities for major pharmaceutical and life sciences companies through to smaller, flexible lab and incubator spaces for start-ups, with the capacity to accommodate wet labs, Good Manufacturing Practice facilities, specialist equipment as well as modern office and collaborative workspaces. The planning application is expected to be determined in 2025.

## Upgrade for US liquid metal test facility

THE US Department of Energy's Office of Nuclear Energy has announced a significant upgrade to Argonne National Laboratory's liquid metal test loop for sodium-cooled fast reactors - the largest such test facility in the USA.



The Mechanisms Engineering Test Loop (METL) facility is an intermediate-scale liquid metal experimental facility that provides purified reactor-grade sodium to various experimental test vessels to test components that are required to operate in a prototypical advanced reactor environment.

*(Image: Argonne National Laboratory)*

## Qatar begins construction of advanced animal and agricultural research laboratories

QATAR'S PUBLIC Works Authority has launched a multi-site research lab project spanning veterinary, agricultural, and biotechnology labs. Sites include:

- Renovated vet labs in Old Airport area
- A new 1,191m<sup>2</sup> agricultural research centre in Al Sheehaniya
- Three new QSTP labs for pesticides, biotech, and plant pathology

Engineer Asmaa Al-Musallmani, Deputy Head of Health Projects Section, confirmed that work is already underway and is expected to conclude by the second quarter of 2026.

Works will include enhancements to structural integrity, modernisation of laboratory units, and the addition of a fully equipped facility for conducting veterinary autopsies.

Project Engineer for the new agricultural research laboratory in Al Sheehaniya, Omar Abdulaziz Al Mahmoud, said it will feature specialised laboratories for sample reception and preparation, physical and chemical processing, spectroscopy, and soil extraction.



## Purpose built South Cambridge Science Centre aims to outperform converted buildings

A NEW purpose built Science Centre for Cambridge is being developed for life sciences and biotechnology occupiers by the Abstract Group which will support the full range of scientific and laboratory applications, offering market-leading vibration control and fume hood capabilities. A fully consented second phase of 44,650 sq ft is planned to follow.

Mark Glatman, Chief Executive of Abstract, said: "We have seen a lot of activity in Cambridge from building owners looking to refurbish and repurpose older property stock from offices to laboratory use to try and exploit changing market dynamics when demand for offices has been weak.

"Inevitably, this compromise approach cannot come anywhere close to the performance or indeed the lifespan of a well thought through, purpose-built science scheme designed to provide many years of flexibility such as SCSC. I am confident that there is no better specified science building than SCSC in Cambridge.... [and] our very low land price means we have created the best accommodation at a much lower rental than competing developments across the Cambridge market."

## Construction begins on £16m Faculty of Health building

*Image: Bond*



WORK HAS started work on a new Faculty of Health building at the University of Sheffield.

The facilities will be used to expand Sheffield Institute for Translational Neuroscience (SiTraN), which researches neurodegenerative diseases like Motor Neurone Disease, Parkinson's, dementia and Multiple Sclerosis.

Facilities will include teaching and learning spaces, offices, and workspaces for visiting staff, students and researchers.

The project is expected to be handed over in September 2026.

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## GAMBICA Events

**GAMBICA ECONOMIC FORECAST | ONLINE | 3 JUNE 2025 | 09.30 - 12.00**

AS PART of our efforts to share knowledge within our community, GAMBICA has commissioned an economic forecast from Oxford Economics, focusing on the industries and global regions that our members supply into.

Book your place to attend the live webinar now, plus you'll also receive a digital copy of the report.

The price is £200 +VAT for members and £445 + VAT for non-members.



After you have registered for the report and webinar, each company will be able to reserve up to two further places on the live webinar and you will also be able to share the recording much wider within your company.

To reserve your place, click [here](#).

#### HOW TO SUCCEED AT ECOVADIS | ONLINE | 25 JUNE 2025 | 10.30 – 11.30



MEMBERS ARE telling GAMBICA that Thermofisher is now requiring its suppliers to gain EcoVadis certification. Getting the right level of certification does not seem to be easy, so we have arranged a webinar by a specialist consultant, based in the UK, whose expertise is in helping companies achieve the required pass level.

The webinar will cover:

- What is EcoVadis?
- How does EcoVadis rate companies?
- What are the benefits of an EcoVadis rating?
- Practical steps to gaining a good EcoVadis score.
- How EcoVerify can support you.

To reserve your place on the webinar, and to take advantage of the discount on EcoVerify services for GAMBICA members, click [here](#).

#### DELIVERING GROWTH AND PREPARING FOR DUE DILIGENCE | GAMBICA's LONDON OFFICE | 8 JULY 2025 | 14.00 - 16.00



THE NEXT Business Growth Community meeting will focus on minimising the efforts required of senior management at two key stages of a business journey; growth and acquisition.

First we will have Business Operations specialist Cerys Baigent, ex of Alphalabs who will take attendees through gaining a clear view of the essentials for growth, and

delivering them as efficiently as possible.

Cerys will work through three critical tasks:

- Understanding your stakeholders needs and desires;
- Setting the correct company KPIs; and
- Using ISO systems to deliver these KPIs efficiently.

Before setting up her own business Cerys managed compliance, operations and logistics for Alphalabs.

Secondly, we will have Tony Collins, ex of Priorclave who will provide insights from personal experience of the due diligence requirements of funders or acquirers of lab businesses. He will cover the type of information you will be expected to provide and how best to gather it.

This will be an in-person meeting at GAMBICA's London office.

To reserve your place, click [here](#).



**BID WRITING INCLUDING BEST USE OF AI – SHARED COST TRAINING | VENUE TBC | 16 SEPTEMBER 2025 | 09.30 - 17.30**

THIS SHARED cost training course is designed to help suppliers elevate the quality and effectiveness of their bid submissions in an increasingly competitive public procurement landscape.

Building on core bid writing principles, it will provide practical insights into crafting persuasive, well-structured, and compliant tenders. Delegates will explore strategies to improve win rates, including how to tailor responses to buyer priorities, avoid common pitfalls, and make best use of feedback.

In addition, the course examines how generative AI tools can be used ethically to support the bid writing process.

For a full course outline and prices (which will depend on the number of delegates) email [jacqueline.balian@gambica.org.uk](mailto:jacqueline.balian@gambica.org.uk) or click [here](#) to reserve your place.

**EXPORT TRAINING DISCOUNTED FOR GAMBICA MEMBERS | ONLINE | FROM 12 JUNE 2025**

EXPORT TRAINING is available to GAMBICA members from Chamber International at Chamber members' prices, it includes:

12 June 2025 - Doing Business with CCPTTP and Latam

18 June 2025 - HS Code Classification & The UK Global Tariff Workshop

20 June 2025 - Exporting and Customs

26 June 2025 - Understanding Exporting & Incoterms®

Further information is available [here](#). When booking, please quote discount code 'CICSP25' to get your 10% discount.

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## **INDUSTRY Events**

**LONDON BIOTECHNOLOGY SHOW | EXCEL | 18-19 JUNE 2025**

THIS RELATIVELY new show aims to bring together policymakers, industry leaders, innovators, and investors from the global biotech and life sciences ecosystem. The event will showcase advances in biotechnology, pharmaceutical research, digital health, biomedical engineering, and regenerative medicine. With a well-curated exhibition and content-rich conference, the event will also serve as a networking and knowledge-sharing opportunity for professionals and businesses in the sector.

The organisers are offering participation opportunities for GAMBICA including the opportunity to host workshops which we will take up if members are interested. If you would like to attend or exhibit, could you let me know in the first instance? Email [jacqueline.balian@gambica.org.uk](mailto:jacqueline.balian@gambica.org.uk)

**SOLUTIONS IN SCIENCE | BRIGHTON | 8-10 JULY 2025**

FEEDBACK FROM visitors to the last SinS conference in June 2023 was positive. The next event has now been scheduled to take place in Brighton. The aim of SinS is to showcase complementary and diverse ranges of analytical instruments, technologies, applications and

present solutions to scientists from a range of industries and academic disciplines. To book your exhibition stand contact Chris Jarvis [chris@intlabbmate.com](mailto:chris@intlabbmate.com) 01727 855574.

#### **JASIS | JAPAN | 3-5 SEPTEMBER 2025**

JASIS IS a large, well-attended exhibition run by the Japanese lab trade associations. It is a hybrid show with an effective online presence. For more information click [here](#).

#### **UK SUPPLY CHAIN EVENT | RUTHERFORD APPLETON LAB | 10 SEPTEMBER 2025**

THE UK Industrial Liaison Office is hosting an event for UK companies interested in supplying both the International Facilities and STFC's National Laboratories at the Harwell Science and Innovation Campus in Oxfordshire on 10 September 2025. This is an opportunity to meet technical and procurement experts from the international facilities and national laboratories in one place. Spaces are filling up rapidly. Click [here](#) to find out more – including how to book your exhibition space.

#### **ANALYTICA USA | CLEVELAND, OHIO | 10-12 SEPTEMBER 2025**

SET UP to capitalise on the slow decline of Pittcon, this exhibition may suffer from a less than glamorous location – but it should be relatively cheap because of that. Click [here](#) for more information.

#### **ILMAC | BASEL, SWITZERLAND | 16-18 SEPTEMBER 2025**

THE INTERNATIONAL Laboratory, Measurement, and Automation Technology in Chemistry event has been held since 1959. For more information click [here](#).

#### **FARMAFORUM | MADRID TRADE FAIR | 17-18 SEPTEMBER 2025**

WHAT LOOKS like a fairly small forum for the pharmaceutical, biopharmaceutical and laboratory technology industry. For more information click [here](#).

#### **LIFE SCIENCES INNOVATION CONFERENCE | LONDON | 18 SEPTEMBER 2025**

THIS CONFERENCE aims to bring together 250+ attendees from the NHS, health research communities and prominent members of the life sciences sector to discuss the Government's plans to channel significant investment into the UK's health and life sciences sector over the next five years. For more information click [here](#).

#### **ANALYTICA LAB INDIA | HYDERABAD | 18-20 SEPTEMBER 2025**

ONE OF two lab trade fairs based in India, the Analytica show in Hyderabad is German run and designed to cater for both local and international markets. For more information click [here](#).

#### **ARABLAB | DUBAI | 23-25 SEPTEMBER 2025**

GAMBICA WILL be offering a pavilion at Arablab in 2025 so you can attend with minimal effort. For more information email Kirsty on [Kirsty.roberts@gambica.org.uk](mailto:Kirsty.roberts@gambica.org.uk)

**LABNL | JAARBEURS, UTRECHT, NETHERLANDS | 23-25 SEPTEMBER 2025**

PROFESSIONALLY RUN by the Federatie Van Technologiebranches this event covers industrial electronics, automation and lab tech. For more information click [here](#).

**POLLUTEC | LYON, FRANCE | 7-10 OCTOBER 2025**

FOCUSSED ON environmental and waste management, Pollutec is expected to attract 46,000 professionals over four days. For more information click [here](#).

**FUTURE LABS LIVE | PHILADELPHIA, USA | 15-16 OCTOBER 2025**

RUN ON the same lines as their European shows, Terrapin also offer this event in the US. For more information click [here](#).

## EXPORT News

### More evidence of slowing Chinese economy

RECENT ECONOMIC data from April highlights a notable deceleration in China's economic growth trajectory. According to the China Britain Business Council, China's economy expanded by 1.2% quarter-on-quarter, marking a slowdown from the 1.6% growth observed in the previous quarter.

Key indicators such as the Purchasing Managers' Indices (PMI), which track changes in business activity, indicated a widespread slowdown across both manufacturing and services sectors in April. The official manufacturing PMI notably dropped to its lowest level since December 2023.

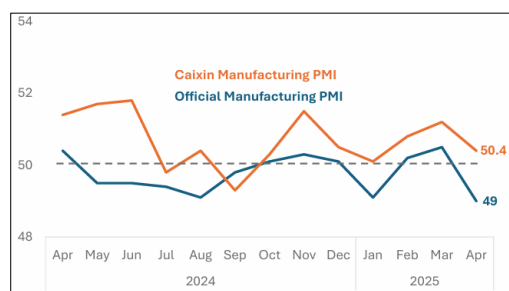
Specifically, the China Manufacturing PMI's 'New Export Orders' subindex plummeted to 47.5, the lowest since the pandemic era, reflecting reduced external demand exacerbated by tariffs. Similarly, the official manufacturing PMI's equivalent subindex recorded a contractionary reading of 44.7, further highlighting the impact of global trade tensions.

Within the manufacturing sector, indicators showed that factories responded to trade challenges by reducing purchases (Purchase Quantity: 46.3), scaling back production (Production: 49.8), and trimming workforce size (Employment: 47.9).

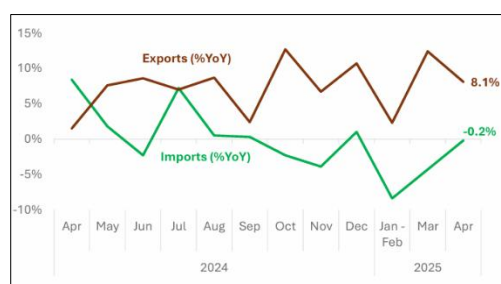
The slowdown in service sector activity mirrored cautious domestic sentiment influenced by trade uncertainties and ongoing challenges in the property market.

*Source: China Britain Business Council, National Bureau of Statistics*

**China Manufacturing PMI: Official v Caixin**



**China's imports and exports (% change YoY)**



# GAMBICA members invited to show their products in DBT directory aimed at Chinese market

## DBT Trade Directory Update – China

THE DEPARTMENT for Business and Trade (DBT) is updating its trade directory for the Chinese market and is making some promotional opportunities available to GAMBICA members free of charge. Companies only need to provide materials as requested and will be included in these channels, facing the China market. The materials are:

1. **UK Advanced Engineering Brochure** –used whenever DBT communicates with Chinese companies and promotes UK capabilities at trade events. The Brochure will be updated once a year, and they will add new companies into the Brochure this year. You can view the 2024 issue [here](#).
2. **UK-China Business Connect** is a free digital platform made available by DBT showcasing UK companies' businesses and products. It is used by Chinese buyers to browse and make inquiries. The digital platform is also promoted by DBT at different events. Potential clients can also search and find UK companies' profile page on the brochure via search engines, for example: [Rotork 罗托克 | 英中商务对接平台 \(DBT\)](#).

If you'd like to be included in the new version, just complete [this setup form](#) with a short introduction to your product and images (please note, please attach the images in e-mail instead of inserting them to the form to ensure Hi-Resolution).

The DBT China team can assist with translations and connect you with local service providers to support your growth in the Chinese market.

## Additional Support

Market entry specialist Sam Yuan is also available to provide commercial services for China. You can reach him at [jediyuan@yeah.net](mailto:jediyuan@yeah.net).

## DBT Budget Cuts

Please note that there are rumours of a 20% budget cut at DBT, which could result in staff reductions. The department's main focus is shifting to inward investment, but the China team remains committed to supporting you—particularly if you have subsidiaries in China.

**UK Members with Chinese Entities:** We've been asked to compile a list of UK members with operations in China. If this applies to you, please email me with:

- Name and address of your Chinese entity
- Number of employees in China

Thanks,  
**Jacqueline**

**See below for Company News....**



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## COMPANY News

# Engineering precision, powering progress: The Huber UK Story

WHEN IT comes to cutting-edge research, precision isn't just important—it's everything. That's where Huber UK steps in. A proud member of GAMBICA, this quietly formidable company has built a sterling reputation for delivering bespoke laboratory cooling systems that underpin critical scientific work.

### From academic labs to industrial giants

Huber UK began its journey with a focus on chemistry labs. But as academic funding challenges tightened across the sector, the company saw the writing on the wall—and pivoted smartly. Rather than altering its product line, Huber expanded its reach into new, high-tech territories.

Today, its clientele stretches far beyond academia, powering temperature-critical operations in automotive, aerospace, semiconductors, and battery development. This bold move has paid off. Since launching its direct market presence in 2015, Huber UK has grown its turnover in the UK and Ireland sevenfold.

"Diversification doesn't happen overnight," says Paddy Delaney, Managing Director. "You've got to dive deep into each industry—learn their quirks, tailor your tech, and build the right relationships. But once you're in, you're insulated. If one sector dips, others keep the momentum going."

Paddy isn't shy about the reality facing UK industry. "Let's be honest—we've been in an industrial recession for a while. People are jittery about a B2C downturn too. But the lab industry? We've already been adapting. We're in a solid position."



### A home in the Peaks—with room to grow

Huber UK's new home is as strategic as it is scenic. Nestled in a modern industrial park in the Peak District, the company's facility boasts sleek offices overlooking a fast-moving river—offering both inspiration and expansion space.

But this isn't just a pretty workplace. The site pulses with entrepreneurial energy, shared with artisan bakeries and a confectioner, and it's just minutes from Bakewell's town centre—a hit with both staff and visiting clients.



“We wanted a place that people enjoy coming to,” Paddy explains. “We aim to host at least one customer a week for live demos, product validation, or grant application testing. It’s faster and more cost-effective than loaning equipment.”

And with a hotel opening soon on the estate? “Perfect for hosting global board meetings right here in the UK.”

### **Tailored tech: The Huber UK advantage**

Forget off-the-shelf solutions. At Huber UK, the fine detail is king.

“Our USP is simple,” says Paddy. “We don’t just ship boxes—we solve problems. And that’s what customers value. That’s why we can command better margins than our rivals.”

While Huber UK operates under the larger Huber umbrella, it enjoys a rare level of autonomy. “As long as we uphold the brand, HQ lets us shape our approach. That freedom comes with responsibility—but it also drives innovation.”

### **Rapid prototyping and smart solutions**

When a client hits a temperature control roadblock, Huber UK doesn’t just troubleshoot—they engineer a fix.

From artificial heart valves to e-machine lubrication, the team gets hands-on—running simulations, conducting in-house tests, and even investing in Selective Laser Sintering (SLS) 3D printing to rapidly prototype custom parts.

Take this example: An automotive customer needed to use a probe-style cooler inside a sealed tube, but their **lids** weren’t compatible. Redesigning them conventionally would’ve



cost a fortune. Instead? Huber 3D printed custom lids—saving time, money, and the client relationship.

### Distributor networks and transparency



Huber UK blends direct sales with distributor partnerships, tailoring the channel to the customer's needs.

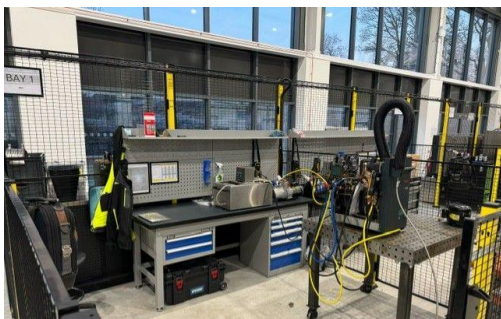
"Pharma clients often go through distributors for smaller setups," Paddy explains. "But larger systems—where detailed engineering discussions are needed—tend to be handled directly."

To stay aligned, Huber UK holds biweekly sync-ups with key distributors, ensuring a transparent, cohesive sales strategy.

### Green thinking — since 1978

Long before sustainability became a buzzword, Huber UK was already thinking green. In 1978, founder Peter Huber began developing systems using natural refrigerants—a vision decades ahead of its time.

Today, the Huber Minichiller remains a staple in academic labs for its water-saving, solvent-reducing benefits. But sustainability doesn't stop at product design.



"We're not just here to shift units," Paddy says. "We want every system to be fit for purpose—with a clear ROI." That's why Huber UK offers precise, data-driven payback calculations and publishes technical papers used across the global Huber network.

### Eyes on the horizon

Economic uncertainty? Trade tariffs? Huber UK isn't fazed.

"All our manufacturing is in Europe—not China," says Paddy. "We're delivering next-gen cooling systems capable of hitting -125°C using low-GWP refrigerants. We're built for what's next."

With a PhD in Organic Chemistry from the University of Sheffield and a rich career spanning lab leadership and European equipment supply, Paddy has steered the company through three major relocations—all in pursuit of growth.

Now firmly planted in a future-proof home, Huber UK is geared for continued success—innovating, adapting, and setting new standards for temperature control across the sectors that matter most.

You can learn more about Huber UK on their website [here](#)

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