

L@b Brief | June 2025

INSIDE *this* ISSUE

	Comment: US brain drain to our benefit?
	UK news: Engineering biology takes centre stage in Industrial Strategy funding... Register of UK university spin-outs published... Property sector fears life science bubble is set to burst... Use of Triton X-100 in IVDs... Digital network opens to GAMBICA members... HMRC changes VAT recovery rules for pension fund management...
	WWEM becomes ESS – would you like a speaking slot?
	Lab construction and upgrade projects: Vietnam, the Gambia, the US, Australia and the UK...
	Export news: Korean RoHS/WEEE regs now affect lab equipment...
	Company news: Automation partner chosen by Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine...
	Also inside... GAMBICA events and Industry events – full resume of exhibitions available to you in 2025

COMMENT

US brain drain to our benefit?



SCIENTISTS IN the United States fear the country is on the edge of a historic brain drain and that the global map of scientific leadership will be re-drawn as a result.

President Trump's deep cuts to federal research grants have created a hostile environment for many scientists, especially those working in public health, climate science, and research that touches on diversity or global equity.

Thousands of grants have been terminated since January, pushing early-career researchers to ask whether they can still pursue their work on American soil.

A *Nature* survey in March found that 75% of US scientists have considered leaving the country.

Research doesn't happen in a vacuum. It runs on ideas, talent, and yes, instruments. When funding collapses and researchers are forced to abandon their work or migrate to more supportive countries, lab equipment sits idle, orders shrink, and the entire supply chain suffers. The cancellation of 2,400 National Institute of Health grants in just the first half of 2025 isn't a bureaucratic hiccup. It's a dismantling of scientific infrastructure that took decades to build.

And while the US is pulling back, others are rolling out the red carpet. The EU's new *Choose Europe for Science* initiative offers €500 million in research grants to American scientists—an open invitation to relocate and continue their work without political interference. Canada, the Netherlands, and Germany are also aggressively courting displaced talent. And in the UK we have had some really significant announcements about funding for science (see UK News below).

For lab suppliers, this shift represents a major opportunity.

The global demand for scientific equipment isn't shrinking—it's migrating. Countries investing in their research base, from Western Europe to parts of Asia and even some African nations, will require more lab infrastructure, not less.

Of course US based suppliers will also be realigning their sales strategies and channels to emerging research hubs, not least the UK, but we have an advantage – the time to pursue it is now - before others muscle in!

**Toodle pip!
Jacqueline**

UK News

Engineering biology takes centre stage in Industrial Strategy funding

THE GOVERNMENT'S Industrial Strategy unveiled this month sets out a Digital and Technologies Sector Plan which includes over £1 billion in investments to bolster innovators driving future technologies, such as quantum computing and engineering biology.



A significant portion of the funding, amounting to £670 million, will propel advancements in quantum computing applications. £380 million will support engineering biology research, including medicines and sustainable food production. This initiative aims to bridge the gap between laboratory discoveries and commercial viability.

The National Quantum Computing Centre is set to receive a landmark 10-year funding settlement to ensure the long-term stability for quantum research in the UK.

In parallel, a new UK Semiconductor Centre backed by up to £19 million will facilitate collaboration among global firms, bolstering the UK's semiconductor sector and enhancing

its role in global supply chains. Additional investments include £54 million to attract top international talent.

The funding package, aligns closely with Chancellor Rachel Reeves' announcement of an £86 billion R&D package, designed to support sectors like life sciences, advanced manufacturing, and defence.

£86bn funding promises opportunities for lab equipment suppliers

LABORATORY EQUIPMENT suppliers across the UK could see increased demand thanks to a landmark government funding package aimed at strengthening Britain's position in global research and innovation.

An £86 billion investment plan, announced by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology and HM Treasury, will turbocharge key sectors including life sciences, advanced manufacturing, AI, and clean energy. Central to the plan is an annual R&D commitment of over £22.5 billion by 2029/30 — the largest in UK history.

Chancellor Rachel Reeves described the move as a core element of the government's 'Plan for Change' to drive economic renewal and deliver new jobs. She said, "Britain is the home of science and technology. We're investing in our renewal to create jobs and make working families better off."

For companies supplying laboratory and scientific equipment, this signals a significant opportunity. With funding directed at accelerating drug discovery, battery development, and AI research, the need for state-of-the-art lab infrastructure is expected to rise sharply — both in academic institutions and commercial R&D settings.

Part of the investment includes £500 million for regional innovation clusters, empowering local leaders to allocate funding in line with local strengths and industry needs. In Liverpool, this means accelerating life sciences research; in South Wales, a focus on semiconductor design; and in Northern Ireland, advanced defence technologies.

The programme builds on the Innovation Accelerator pilot scheme, which has already driven projects such as advanced diagnostic technologies in Greater Manchester. These regional hubs are expected to become long-term customers for laboratory systems, diagnostics platforms, and supporting technologies.

Peter Kyle, Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology, emphasised the scale and reach of the programme: "This is about empowering every region — from Swansea to Belfast — to deliver breakthroughs that improve lives, protect the planet, and grow our economy."

With every £1 invested in R&D generating up to £7 in return, the government views science and innovation not just as a strategic priority, but a powerful engine of economic growth. For laboratory suppliers, the message is clear: sustained investment in research will require the tools and technologies to match. This funding surge is set to reshape the landscape — and the order books — of the UK's lab equipment industry.

Register of UK university spin-outs published

A REGISTER of UK spin-outs provides the first complete 'official' list of all spin-out companies produced by UK universities. The register can be accessed [here](#).

Property sector fears life science bubble will pop

INDUSTRY MAGAZINE *Construction News* ran a conference in June dedicated to opportunities in the life sciences sector. Such is the nature of the rivalries in the construction sector that the event was notably short on real data, but several clear trends did emerge:

- The life science building sector has suffered a notable turndown from the highs of a couple of years ago,
- The property industry is concentrating on providing for spin outs rather than scale ups as money for life science start-ups to expand has become tighter,
- Office rents have risen to the level where they are now more attractive than laboratories.
- New laboratories are more likely to be sited in city centres than in out-of-town science parks, often in re-purposed buildings.

Although Price Waterhouse Cooper estimates that 111,500 square metres of life science developments became available in 2024, and forecasts that this will rise to 418,100 square metres by the end of this year; but this might well be the peak. In January 2025, AstraZeneca scrapped its Speke expansion plan, and in March, Life Science REIT, the only listed property investor focused on the life sciences sector, announced a strategic review, which 'may include a potential sale or managed wind down'.

Life sciences build costs are significantly higher than office space especially for the fully-fitted spaces needed by spin outs. Quality standards are also much stricter - with the need for adherence to cleanliness and regulatory compliance.

Head of development for innovation and life science at British Land, Gareth Roberts, expressed the view that after 2030, UK labs will be able to pick and choose their accommodation and will opt for high quality spaces in desirable locations. "I don't think that there's a bubble at the moment," he said, but he confirmed that occupancy has not reached the levels expected when capital was flooding into the sector in the years after the pandemic. Roberts believes suitable workspaces will be increasingly needed as science grows as a proportion of GDP. "There are three big trends that we think really drive the sector: the age and health of the population, the climate crisis and the rise of AI," he says. "Those three macro themes aren't going away, and we think that's going to lead to a structural shift in the composition of the UK economy."

Use of Triton X-100 in IVDs

A BRIEFING note has been issued for manufacturers and importers of in vitro diagnostic (IVD) medical devices by the Environment Agency, which enforces the REACH Regulations. If you place on the market IVD medical devices containing Triton X-100 you will need to make sure you are covered by a valid Authorisation in order to continue using the

substance. Applications for authorisation are submitted to the HSE. Further information on the UK REACH authorisation requirements, including when/how to apply for an authorisation application and exemptions, can be found [here](#).

Digital network opens to GAMBICA members

GAMBICA IS supporting a new network developed by the GAMBICA University and Industrial Collaboration sector (GUIC), offering an opportunity to engage with digitalisation and automation technologies. Capabilities and innovations in digital twin, cybersecurity and safety, edge/IoT and industrial metaverse technologies will be covered. By bringing together researchers, industry partners, technology specialists, and multiplier organisations, this 'National Test Bed' aims to address key industrial challenges and co-develop practical solutions.

For more information please contact the secretary of GAMBICA's GUIC, Payam Soulatiantork on p.soulatiantork@sheffield.ac.uk

HMRC changes VAT recovery rules for pension fund management

UK EMPLOYERS can now reclaim full VAT on investment management services for occupational pension schemes following a policy shift by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC). Revised guidance removes previous complexities that limited VAT recovery and required splitting costs between administrative and investment services. Under the new rules, all input VAT related to pension scheme investment management can be treated as attributable to the employer and therefore fully deductible—provided standard VAT recovery conditions are met.

In a further change, HMRC will also allow trustees to reclaim input tax on services supplied to employers, as long as they are VAT registered.

Further technical guidance is expected from HMRC by the autumn.

WWEM becomes ESS – would you like a speaking slot?



WHAT USED to be the Water, Waste and Environmental Management Expo is now to be part of a larger event, Environmental Services and Solutions Expo which will run at the NEC in Birmingham on 17 – 18th September this year.

The organisers have been in touch to ask GAMBICA to promote the event and have offered us the opportunity to run seminar sessions at the event,

similar to those we will be running at Lab Innovations.

If you would like to promote yourself via a seminar at the event, please get in touch as soon as possible, so that I can put together some sessions and have time to publicise them before the event.

LABORATORY Construction Update

Vietnam invests \$77M in manufacturing unit for National Vaccine Company

VNVC VACCINE and biological products factory in Long An province, in southern Vietnam, has begun construction on a 26,000 square metre factory building costing US\$77.17 million. Anticipated to be completed by 2027 the plant will have a capacity of up to 100 million vaccine doses per year.

The factory will have research and development facilities, animal laboratories, and production lines for vaccines and biological products. The project is designed to meet the highest international standards, including European Good Manufacturing Practice (EU GMP), US FDA GMP, and World Health Organisation (WHO) GMP. It will also comply with Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) and international animal welfare standards (AAALAC), as well as numerous requirements for environmental protection and emissions reduction.

Sydney Children's Medical Research Institute to expand its research capabilities



A \$272.4 million (Aus) project will grow Sydney's Children's Medical Research Institute (CMRI) laboratory footprint to expand their gene therapy and regenerative medicine programs. The Gene Technologies Building will house wet labs, dry workspaces, logistics, communal spaces, a discovery centre, and end-of-trip facilities among others.

The build is aligned with the NSW Government's new Health Research and Innovation Strategy, a 5-year blueprint that aims to establish the State as an innovation and investment powerhouse for health and medical research in Australia.

£920m animal health super-lab for Surrey



A NEW £920m animal diseases super-lab is to be added to the Weybridge biosecurity campus in Surrey. The hub forms the centrepiece of the government's £2.8bn Science Capability in Animal Health (SCAH) programme, a 12–15 year redevelopment of the 93ha Animal and Plant Health Agency site near the M25 at New Haw. Around 1,000 staff work at the site, which has been a base for animal health science for over a century. The National Biosecurity Centre is expected to open in 2033.

High containment lab for The Gambia

A NEW high-containment laboratory is under construction in The Gambia, for the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. The Containment Level 3 (CL3) laboratory will

expand the Unit's capability to conduct high-containment infectious disease research and support a broad range of public health initiatives.

University of Iowa to expand Advanced Technologies Laboratory

THE UNIVERSITY of Iowa plans to renovate and add a third wing to the Iowa Advanced Technologies Laboratory to modernize the 33-year-old building and make space for the UI's growing computer science program. If approved, the \$28 million project would include the construction of a third wing onto the lab and will upgrade the air handling system and create instructional and research spaces in currently unused open space.

Nelson Labs to double cleanroom capacity at US HQ

NELSON LABORATORIES, provider of microbiological and analytical testing services for the medical device and pharmaceutical sectors, has started a major cleanroom expansion project at its headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah, US.

The development will double the company's current ISO-classified cleanroom capacity in response to increasing demand for sterility assurance services and the evolving requirements of international regulatory frameworks. Construction is scheduled for completion in 2026.

New life sciences buildings for Cambridge campus



THE LATEST phase of the Wellcome Genome Campus in Hinxton, South Cambridgeshire has been approved by planners and construction is scheduled to commence later this year. It will provide two purpose-built life sciences buildings over 200,000 sq ft at the campus which aims to become a global centre for genomics, biodata, health data and data science.

Belgian pharma company to invest \$5bn on US factory



BELGIAN PHARMACEUTICAL company, UCB, plans to invest \$5bn in a US factory to avoid President Trump's tariffs on the EU. Jacques Marbehan, head of transformational programmes at UCB, said the factory would scale up UCB's contract-manufacturing network in the US and that it reflected its "deep commitment to the US".

In recent months, European companies such as Novartis and Roche have announced investments in the US.

Flexible laboratory building for Peterhouse Technology Park



A NEW 100,000 sq ft development of flexible lab and office space, has been completed as part of British Land's investment in the Cambridge science and innovation cluster adding over 100,000 sq ft of space.

Arm Holdings has been confirmed as a future tenant of the building which is named The Optic.

GAMBICA Events

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 is 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 or click [here](#) to reserve your place.

EXPORT TRAINING DISCOUNTED FOR GAMBICA MEMBERS | ONLINE | AUG-SEPT 2025

EXPORT TRAINING is available to GAMBICA members from Chamber International at Chamber members' prices. A range of courses for the next two months is listed below but GAMBICA members may be particularly interested in a new course called ***Accelerating export success: A practical training programme to help businesses trade smarter***

The Export Trade Accelerator programme, provides a comprehensive, practical training solution tailored for new and developing exporters.

Delivered live online via Zoom over six half-day modules, the programme offers step-by-step guidance to help businesses build in-house expertise across key areas of export operations. Each module is delivered by experienced trade professionals, focuses on practical

application, compliance, and commercial efficiency. The course has helped businesses improve confidence, performance, and profitability in international trade without requiring strategic consultancy or export market planning.

Delegates from companies like [Asynt](#) and [NaughtOne](#) have already seen measurable results, strengthening in-house capabilities and streamlining export operations as a direct result of participating in the programme. Whether you're looking to improve compliance, reduce costs, or build a confident export team, the Export Trade Accelerator programme offers a practical, accessible route to sustainable international growth.

Explore upcoming dates and book your place at: chamber-international.com/export-trade-accelerator For more information contact Carla at carlaa@chamber-international.com

August courses	September courses
6 Aug: Shipping to the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Qatar	2 Sep: Methods of Payment & Letters of Credit
7 Aug: Importing and Customs	10 Sep to 22 Oct: Export Trade Accelerator (ETA) - International Trade Qualification
14 Aug: CDS for Exports	15 Sep: Incoterms® - The Basics
19 Aug: Importing from the EU	16 Sep: Lithium Batteries by Air, Sea & Road
21 Aug: Understanding Exporting	25 Sep: Shipping to and from Northern Ireland

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

INDUSTRY Events

SOLUTIONS IN SCIENCE | BRIGHTON | 15-17 JULY 2025 | Final call to register - save 25%

THE SOLUTIONS in Science (SinS 2025) conference and exhibition takes place at the Brighton Centre from 15 to 17 July 2025. The event will bring together leading experts from academia and industry to share cutting-edge research, applications and breakthroughs across a wide range of scientific disciplines. You can view the conference programme [here](#).

SinS 2025 offers both formal presentations and informal networking opportunities, with a strong focus on interdisciplinary collaboration and idea exchange. There is still time to register at a discounted rate. Use the code **SINS000126UGJ** to unlock an extended early bird price and **save 25%**. Places are limited, so early booking is recommended, to book your place, visit: [Solutions in Science 2025](#). Further registration discounts are available to members of RSC, BMSS, ChromSoc, JPAG, RSB, BSNM, IOP and IFST. Bursaries and travel grants may also be available. Don't miss this opportunity to connect, collaborate and exchange ideas with some of the brightest minds in science. To book your exhibition stand contact Chris Jarvis 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. 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 will in fact feature **the Community of Madrid**, through the **Fundación para el Conocimiento madri+d**. 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 Government 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 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

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

Korean RoHS Amendment rolls in lab equipment

THE KOREAN government has announced the amendment of the Korean RoHS Act to incorporate its version of the WEEE Regulations. The new Resource Circulation of Electrical and Electronic Equipment and Vehicles Act will also combination RoHS, WEEE and EPR.

In the past, 50 product types were covered by the law, most of which were consumer electronics. The new amendment now also covers laboratory equipment and concern has been raised that exemptions have not been included for spare parts and substances such as lead or cadmium for analytical elements.

The Korean government is being lobbied to align with EU RoHS Annex IV but it is not clear whether they will accept such proposals.

COMPANY News

Automation supplier appointed for Liverpool's £20m lab development



Prof Janet Hemingway

iiCON AND Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine have have appointed HighRes Biosolutions as their automation partner in the development of one of the UK's first Category Three, robotic AI laboratories.

iiCON (Infection Innovation Consortium) is led by Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM) with core partners LifeArc, Unilever, Evotec, Liverpool University Hospitals Foundation Trust, University of Liverpool, and Infex Therapeutics.

The new £20m robotic and AI-driven laboratory will house modern containment and research capabilities to tackle some of the world's most pressing infectious diseases.

Prof Janet Hemingway, iiCON founding director, said: "We're pleased to be making good progress on the design and development of this state-of-the-art facility which will super-charge infection R&D and industry innovation – saving lives by bringing forward new approaches and treatments for some of our most challenging diseases and conditions.

With cutting edge high containment category three labs and best-in-class robotic systems, the facility will enable iiCON to expand two critical R&D platforms – its pioneering Organoids Platform and its Bio-Actives Library. Research will focus on growing physiologically relevant human organoids from respiratory and lung tissues, studying infection dynamics, and accelerating the discovery of transformative antimicrobial therapies.

The Bio-Actives Library is designed to drive innovation and support companies of all sizes on the discovery journey. Working at the vanguard of life sciences technology, these approaches have potential to shape the next generation of transformative novel antimicrobial products and therapies.

The new high containment laboratories are expected to be operational within the next two years, supporting national and international partners at the forefront of infectious disease research.
