L@b Brief | May 2026

INSIDE *this* ISSUE

Comment: AstraZeneca's welcome return to the UK

THE ANNOUNCEMENT that AstraZeneca is resuming £300 million of previously frozen UK investment is welcome news for the UK life sciences sector. But for laboratory equipment and technology suppliers, the most interesting aspect is not just that the investment is happening, but what kind of laboratory it is creating, and what that signals about how pharmaceutical R&D procurement is evolving.

AstraZeneca has been building towards the lab of the future model for some time, but had paused its Cambridge investment amid frustration over NHS drug pricing negotiations, and scrapped a separate £450 million investment in its Merseyside vaccine manufacturing facility. Now scientists are being recruited to support 'a growing fleet of automated and semi-automated experimental equipment,' enabling automated experimental platforms 'designed to ensure smooth, efficient data generation and data flows across a digital lab ecosystem'. Senior roles focus

on ‘the orchestration of complex lab processes’ and ensuring data flows seamlessly across systems.

This describes a laboratory model fundamentally different from the traditional instrument-and-analyst setup. The emphasis is on integrated platforms, orchestrated workflows, seamless data transfer between systems, and minimal manual intervention.

This is not an AstraZeneca idiosyncrasy - it is an industry shift

Thermo Fisher Scientific's general manager of laboratory automation recently stated that ‘there has been, in almost every large pharma company, strategic investments towards the automated digital lab’.

A 2024 Capgemini Research Institute report based on 702 respondents from 235 pharmaceutical and biopharma labs found that 92% of pharma organisations cited the need to accelerate drug development cycle times as a top driver for next-generation lab investment. Large pharma organisations were projected to almost double their investment in lab transformation to nearly 7% of revenue by 2025, up from 4%. GSK is on a parallel course, with its R&D technology division actively leading multiple ‘Lab of the Future’ initiatives and strategies to digitalise lab data capture from point of generation.

The new model does not deprioritise instrumentation - if anything it requires more of them - but it has the potential to change what customers are buying. Standalone instruments with proprietary data formats and manual operating procedures may be a poor fit. What is valued is connectivity: instruments that integrate into automated workflows, generate structured and accessible data, and can be managed as part of a broader digital ecosystem.

AstraZeneca's return to UK investment is good news and the terms on which it has returned tell us something important about the direction pharmaceutical laboratory procurement is heading.

If you want to sell to labs being developed or refurbished, have a look at the new free membership benefit included with this newsletter. Our Tender Alert Service manager, Natalia Pan, has produced an excel sheet containing details of 20 current projects listing the spend and the client on each. I’m sure you will find it useful!

Toodle Pip!

Jacqueline

UK News

Speak at Lab Innovations 2026 - a major profile opportunity for GAMBICA members

LAB INNOVATIONS 2026 takes place at the NEC Birmingham on 4 and 5 November, and GAMBICA has secured seminar slots that give member companies the opportunity to speak

directly to an audience of laboratory decision-makers. You can register your interest now, and the sooner you do, the more promotional support your session will receive.

Nearly 5,000 attendees visited last year's event, and three quarters said their main reason for attending was to find new suppliers or network with existing ones.

What the seminar opportunity involves

GAMBICA is running educational seminar sessions as part of the Lab Innovations conference programme. The sessions are designed to inform rather than sell - which is precisely why they attract audiences. Delegates attend the conference to learn, and a well-pitched educational presentation puts your company's expertise in front of people who are actively looking for new solutions.

The 2026 conference programme spans multiple stages with CPD-accredited content on themes including AI and automation, sustainability, lab skills development, biotech innovation, and quality assurance. There is scope to pitch sessions across a broad range of topics relevant to your product area or sector expertise. Lab Innovations particularly welcomes case studies featuring client contributions.

The early mover advantage

The earlier a session outline is submitted, the more pre-show promotion it receives - both from Lab Innovations' own marketing channels and from GAMBICA and the promotional reach available to confirmed speakers is considerable.

To register your interest, email Jacqueline and Tony on lab@gambica.org.uk with a proposed topic title — just a title is enough to get started. We will then arrange a conversation to discuss the detail, structure and any supporting content.

Please do get in touch as soon as possible. The earlier sessions are confirmed, the more marketing support they attract. This is a straightforward way to put your company's expertise in front of several thousand lab professionals at the UK's biggest laboratory event of the year.

Ebola outbreak focuses minds on test development

THE EBOLA outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda involves the

Bundibugyo strain of Ebola, a rare variant with no approved vaccine or specific treatment and at the time of writing, the World Health Organisation (WHO) had warned the outbreak could be substantially larger than current figures suggest, given the high positivity rate of initial samples.

Initial field laboratory samples tested negative because standard rapid diagnostics were only capable of detecting the more common Zaire strain of Ebola, delaying identification of the Bundibugyo variant. This has prompted urgent calls from public health researchers for multiplex diagnostic platforms capable of detecting multiple Ebola species.

The WHO has called for a strong supply pipeline of medical and laboratory commodities, including PPE, to be established as a priority response measure. UK suppliers of high-specification PPE, biosafety cabinets, and containment laboratory infrastructure should expect heightened procurement activity from NHS reference laboratories, the UK Health Security Agency, and international humanitarian response organisations.

Photo credit: WHO/L.Mackenzie

Help with leadership development from GAMBICA

Strong leadership is one of the most powerful drivers of business performance. GAMBICA is pleased to bring its members access to three distinct leadership and management development programmes - each designed to deliver genuine, practical value to your organisation, whatever your current priorities or constraints may be.

Whether you are investing in your own development, equipping a senior manager, or looking for a light-touch way to build leadership capability across your team, there is an option here for you.

The Three Programmes at a Glance

1. Tea Break Talks
Delivered by: Caroline Collings-Wood
Cost: Free of charge
Time commitment: One to two hours per month

Tea Break Talks are short, focused online sessions of up to 30 minutes, delivered monthly. Topics span leadership, culture, strategy, customer focus, operations and more - covering 24 subjects in total. Sessions are interactive and immediately applicable. Members vote on which topics matter most to them, ensuring relevance to your organisation.

This is an ideal starting point for busy leaders who want high-quality, expert input without a significant time or financial commitment.

To ensure these talks are tailored to attendee needs, we have arranged a meeting with Caroline on **18 May at 10:00am**, during which participants can discuss the preferred format and priority topics. Register to join this preliminary meeting

2. Help to Grow: Management
Delivered by: Coventry University Business School, in partnership with GAMBICA
Cost: £750 per person (Coventry University offers a bursary of £750, making the course free of charge to eligible participants)
Time commitment: 12 days over several months, online and in-person
The Help to Grow: Management programme is a government-funded course designed for senior decision-makers in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). It provides structured learning across strategy, innovation, finance, digital adoption, employee engagement and more - all designed to be completed alongside full-time work.
Each participant develops a personalised Growth Action Plan and receives 10 hours of one-to-one mentoring from an experienced business leader. GAMBICA is working with Coventry University to explore the possibility of running a fully online cohort exclusively for members - 15 committed participants are needed to make this happen.

3. Inspired Service Leader Programme
Delivered by: Inspired Leadership Solutions, in partnership with GAMBICA
Cost: £1,185 per person
Time commitment: One day per month over five months
The Inspired Service Leader Programme is a structured five-month programme for team leaders and managers. Delivered through a blend of virtual sessions and two full in-person days, it covers time management, self-leadership, inclusive leadership, confident communication, conflict resolution and team leadership. Participants also benefit from individual coaching and on-the-job assignments to embed learning in the real-world.

Why Invest in Leadership Development?

Organisations with strong leadership consistently outperform those without. Leadership development improves employee retention, drives operational efficiency, supports growth and builds the resilience to navigate uncertainty. These programmes have been carefully selected and negotiated to give GAMBICA members access to high-quality, cost-effective development that delivers real results.

Next Steps

To find out more about any of these programmes, or to register your interest, please contact us at: lab@gambica.org.uk

Full details of each programme, including downloadable summaries, are available on the GAMBICA website: https://www.gambica.org.uk/activities/leadership-training.html

Much bigger London Lab Live in 2026

GAMBICA MEMBERS who attended this year's London Lab Live were pleasantly surprised by how the event has grown with organisers confirming that there were twice as many exhibitors as last year, and a better spread of interest for general lab managers. The event took place on May 6th & 7th at Excel London and four GAMBICA member companies featured in a round table discussion on: *Turning Instrumental Challenges into Automation Excellence – A practical approach.* The session was designed to attract the many lab managers who attend London Live Labs to hear about automation, and to direct their attention to the importance of getting the right lab equipment to make automation easy and effective.

Participating Members included IS-Instruments Ltd, Novilytic LLC, Binary Vision and Hamilton Storage.

Bookings are now open for 2027 and GAMBICA members are entitled to a 15% discount on the price of their space at the event. To contact LLL, click here.

HMRC ramps up SME audit

OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS suggest that HMRC's enforcement activity is to increase significantly, and members who import or export goods should be aware that a customs audit is now a realistic prospect rather than a remote one - with generating income at the heart of HMRC's activities.

HMRC brought in £48 billion of compliance yield in 2024 to 2025, up from £41.8 billion the previous year, exceeding its own target. Its target for 2025 to 2026 is £50.4 billion.

To achieve this, the department is recruiting an additional 5,500 compliance caseworkers over five years, having already hired over 1,500 additional staff so far, with most new recruits expected to be in post by the end of 2026 to 2027.

HMRC is also deploying AI-driven risk tools to sharpen its targeting. While investigations into large and mid-sized UK businesses rose 31% to 11,894 in the year to March 2025, HMRC is also increasingly targeting small and medium-sized enterprises, particularly where customs

revenue has dropped, with audits focusing on misclassification, improper valuation and origin documentation.

What a customs audit involves

An HMRC customs audit typically involves a thorough review of import documentation, most usually for the last three years but potentially for up to six years. Auditors assess classification accuracy, valuation methodology, proof of origin and duty declarations.

Laboratory and scientific equipment suppliers face specific classification challenges. Instruments, reagents, consumables and components sit in complex commodity code categories, with the correct code determining duty rates, import VAT treatment, and eligibility for any relief or special procedures. Misclassification - even where unintentional - is one of the three main areas HMRC focuses on in customs audits, alongside incorrect valuation and inadequate proof of origin.

Companies that import components for product assembly, use customs warehousing or inward processing relief, or buy from multiple international suppliers are at particular risk of accumulating small errors across a large number of declarations over time.

Time to review your records?

Good record-keeping is central to customs compliance. This means retaining copies of invoices, supplier declarations where preference is claimed, duty payment records and submitted customs declaration data, as well as clear evidence of how you have ensured compliance across classification, valuation and origin.

Practical steps:

- Review the last three years of import and export declarations, focusing on commodity code consistency and valuation methodology.
- Check that your evidence of origin is in order for any goods on which you have claimed preferential duty rates.
- Ensure records relating to any special procedures (inward processing, customs warehousing, etc.) are complete and accurate.
- Use the government's free Customs Declaration Service (CDS) dashboard here to access all declaration data submitted in your business's name and identify any compliance risks proactively.

MHRA consults on overhaul of medical device regs

LABORATORY EQUIPMENT suppliers whose products qualify as medical devices or in vitro diagnostics (IVDs) may be affected by proposed changes to UK pre-market regulatory requirements. Those affected may wish to consider responding to a live Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) consultation before 19 June.

The MHRA published the long-awaited draft Medical Devices (Amendment) Regulations 2026 in May. The draft statutory instrument focuses on delivering closer international alignment, introducing international reliance routes, and strengthening requirements for custom-made devices, software as a medical device, and in vitro diagnostic devices.

Adoption of the draft regulations is anticipated in December 2026, with provisions entering into force in June 2027 and the international reliance pathway following in mid 2028.

What the proposed changes involve

The draft regulations introduce several significant measures.

International reliance

A framework for swifter GB market approval is proposed for devices already cleared by regulators in Australia, Canada or the USA. This would provide a certificate of international reliance that can be used to register with the MHRA and gain access to the GB market without requiring full UKCA marking or certification. Notably, there is no provision for the indefinite recognition of CE-marked medical devices under the draft regulations, though CE marks will continue to be accepted in GB until June 2028 or June 2030 depending on the specific device. It is anticipated that devices complying with EU MDR or EU IVDR will ultimately be permanently accepted on the GB market, following the outcome of a separate consultation.

IVD reclassification

The draft regulations propose shifting IVD classification from the existing list-based system to a risk-based framework aligning more closely with EU legislation and IMDRF principles. Under the proposed system, Class A IVDs would require UKCA self-declaration; Class B IVDs would require self-declaration plus QMS certification; Class C and D IVDs would require conformity assessment by an approved body, with Class D devices also subject to batch release testing and common specification requirements.

Traceability and documentation

Unique device identifiers (UDI) would become compulsory for lifecycle traceability, and mandatory implant cards would be required from healthcare organisations detailing implanted devices for patient transparency and adverse event management. Requirements for technical documentation retention would be strengthened, and manufacturers would be required to align marketing claims about their devices with their stated intended purpose.

IVDs are defined as reagents, calibrators, apparatus, equipment or systems used in vitro to examine specimens such as blood, tissue and urine for a clinical purpose. IVDs include specimen receptacles and products specifically designed for use in IVD examination, but not products which are for general laboratory use. Accessories - such as bar code scanners or reagents with a diagnostic intended purpose - may also be regulated as IVDs in their own right.

To respond to the consultation, click here.

Up to £1 million funding available from August for biomedical research equipment

THE MEDICAL Research Council (MRC) has pre-announced its next MRC Equip funding round, which will provide grants of between £200,000 and £1 million for mid-range capital equipment for biomedical research.

The scheme funds up to 100% of the full economic cost, meaning purchasing institutions face no mandatory co-funding requirement, though they may choose to contribute above the grant level. Equipment must be a single piece of capital equipment or a single technology platform - which can include multi-component systems - with a primary purpose of biomedical research.

Importantly for suppliers, the scheme explicitly covers installation costs and service maintenance contracts of up to five years where these form part of the manufacturer's offer and are included in the equipment quotation. Applicants are required to obtain quotes from multiple suppliers where possible, and the MRC expects discounted institutional pricing rather than list prices to form the basis of costings.

The grant does not fund standard laboratory consumables or routine equipment such as centrifuges, refrigerators or incubators but is relevant to analytical, imaging, genomic, or specialist research instrumentation.

The funding opportunity opens on 13 August 2026 and closes on 5 November 2026. Awards will have a start date of 1 June 2027, with all spending to be completed by 31 December 2027.

A limit of two applications per research organisation applies, and each organisation will manage its own internal prioritisation process, so decisions about which equipment to apply for are typically made well in advance of the official opening date. You may wish to begin conversations now.

Full details are available here.

LABORATORY construction news and opportunities -

including a separate excel sheet detailing lab construction and refurbishment projects in the UK and Ireland.

Precision laboratory nears completion in California

A MAJOR new research building at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) in Pasadena is approaching completion.

The Dr Allen and Charlotte Ginsburg Centre for Quantum Precision Measurement will support interdisciplinary research programmes in quantum sensing, quantum information and gravitational-wave detection, and will house the Kip Thorne Laboratories for basic research on controlled quantum systems and advanced measurement devices.

Beyond the specialist quantum equipment, the building will require the full range of general laboratory infrastructure: fume extraction, controlled environment systems, clean bench equipment, vibration-isolated workbenches, HEPA filtration enclosures to maintain absolute cleanliness, temperature and humidity around sensitive instrumentation, liquid nitrogen supply and storage, precision power conditioning, and data acquisition and control systems.

Who to contact:

Charles Pankow Builders Ltd 199 S. Los Robles Avenue, Suite 300, Pasadena, CA 91101 Tel: +1 (626) 304-1190 Web: pankow.com/contact-us

Caltech's Planning, Design & Construction department is the institutional client: fpdc.caltech.edu

Amazon Web Services confirms major new quantum research centre in Pasadena

AMAZON WEB Services (AWS) has confirmed plans for a large-scale quantum computing research and development facility in Pasadena, California.

The facility at 2964 Bradley Street sits within the city's technology and life sciences corridor, and was purchased by Amazon in December 2025 for around $78 million. AWS has confirmed the site will be dedicated strictly to R&D, expanding on its existing Caltech partnership to further its research into fault-tolerant quantum hardware and superconducting qubits. The facility is currently in the early planning stages.

At more than six times the size of the existing Caltech campus facility, the building can be expected to require extensive laboratory infrastructure.

Who to contact:

No architect or contractor has yet been publicly named. Suppliers can monitor Pasadena city planning applications for contractor appointment, and can register interest directly with AWS in the interim.

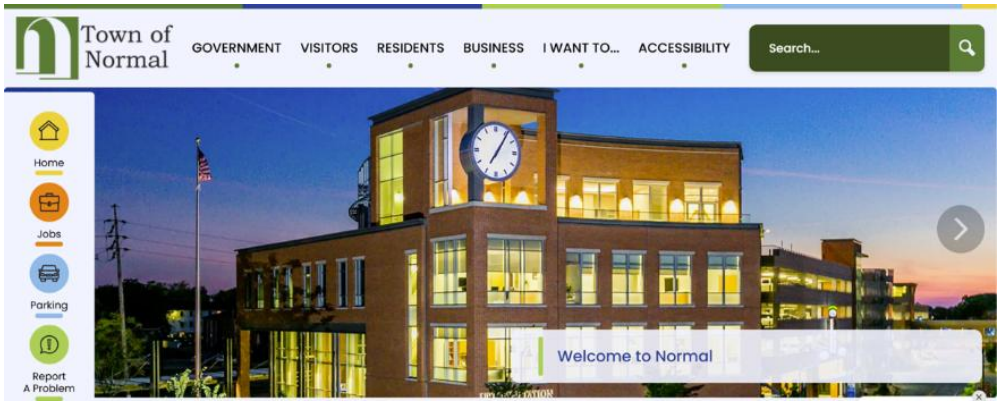
Amazon Web Services: aws.amazon.com (corporate enquiries via the main contact portal)

City of Pasadena planning applications: cityofpasadena.net/planning

Suppliers may also find it useful to make early contact with the existing AWS Centre for Quantum Computing on the Caltech campus, where scientific leadership for the new facility is likely to be based.

New science facilities for Illinois State University

ILLINOIS STATE University (ISU) in Normal, Illinois is to build two new laboratory facilities - a science laboratory building annex and a research and teaching greenhouse - costing a total of around $34.5 million.



Completion is due in the autumn of 2028.

The Science Laboratory Building Annex (SLB-A) is budgeted at $27.4 million and will include four teaching laboratories, six research laboratories, and six research offices. The existing

Science Laboratory Building is home to the Biological Sciences and Chemistry departments, and the annex will serve the same disciplines.

The Research and Teaching Greenhouse Facilities, budgeted at $7.1 million including demolition, will be a divided research and teaching greenhouse.

Who to contact:

No architect or contractor has yet been publicly named. Project solicitations are publicly advertised on the Illinois Public Higher Education Procurement Bulletin website. Suppliers wishing to register interest ahead of contractor appointment should monitor that bulletin and make early contact with ISU's Facilities Planning, Design and Construction department, which manages all capital projects on campus.

The Illinois Public Higher Education Procurement Bulletin, where architect and contractor appointments will be advertised, is accessible at: ipp.illinois.gov

Major new injectable drugs facility initiated in Germany

PHARMACEUTICAL CONTRACT manufacturer Vetter Pharma has begun construction on a large new production facility in Saarlouis, south-west Germany, allocating approximately €480 million for the first construction phase which will include three cleanrooms for aseptic production: two for filling pre-sterilised syringes and one for filling vials, alongside production-related laboratories and warehouses. A facility of this type and scale - GMP-compliant aseptic fill-finish manufacturing for injectable drugs - will usually require extensive specialist and general laboratory equipment.

Who to contact:

No contractor or engineering firm has been publicly named but Vetter's procurement and facilities teams are located at:

Vetter Pharma International GmbH Schützenstraße 87, 88212 Ravensburg, Germany Tel: +49 751 3700-0 Web: vetter-pharma.com/en/contact

Poland's laboratory shortage signals growing equipment market in Central Europe

A NEW report from property consultancy JLL, advisory firm CRIDO and the BioForum Association of Biotechnology Companies has identified a significant structural gap in Poland's laboratory infrastructure and points to a substantial pipeline of new laboratory builds and fit-outs in Central Europe.

Poland's life sciences sector is the largest in Central and Eastern Europe across pharmaceuticals, biotechnology and medical devices combined, but its commercial laboratory estate is struggling to keep pace. At the start of 2026, total commercial laboratory space in Poland amounted to approximately 52,300 sq m - and the report found it almost entirely occupied. Of biotechnology companies surveyed, 47% reported difficulty finding suitable laboratory space, and 55% said limited access was hindering their growth to a large or very large extent.

The development pipeline is beginning to respond. Construction has started on the second phase of the Lablogic Warsaw complex near Warsaw's Chopin Airport, delivering nearly 13,000 sq m of laboratory and warehouse space, with completion targeted for the fourth

quarter of 2026. Developer LemonTree has appointed Goldbeck as general contractor. The report identifies Warsaw, Kraków and Wrocław as the priority cities for new laboratory investment, with Kraków's Jagiellonian Centre of Innovation and Wrocław Technology Park already operating as the main life sciences cluster anchors.

Polish biotechnology companies are predominantly research-focused - national statistics office data shows that 66.5% of Polish biotech companies conduct only R&D with no in-house production.

Suppliers wishing to engage with the Polish market should note that the sector is dominated by SMEs and CROs (contract research organisations) rather than large multinationals, with most capital coming from internal funds. Building relationships with fit-out contractors and laboratory design specialists operating in the Polish market is likely to be the most practical route to engagement.

JLL's Poland page can be accessed here.

GAMBICA Events

GAMBICA ECONOMIC FORECAST | ONLINE | 9 JUNE 2026| 09.30 - 12.00

WITH GLOBAL markets unsettled by conflict in the Middle East and its effects on energy prices and supply chains, understanding the economic outlook is critical. Join us on 9th June for an exclusive GAMBICA webinar in which Oxford Economics will present their latest forecasts and analysis, specifically contextualised for our sector. Whether you are refining budgets, reviewing capital investment, or mapping out your growth strategy, this session will give you the actionable insights you need to plan with confidence. This isn't generic economics – it's tailored insight to help you future-proof your business.

The bespoke report runs to more than 30 pages of rigorous macroeconomic and sector-specific analysis, priced at £265 + VAT per member company and £595 + VAT for non-members. Purchasing the report automatically secures your place at the live webinar, where Oxford Economics analysts will present their findings and take questions from attendees.

Each company may also reserve up to two additional places on the webinar, and the session recording can be shared freely across your organisation, ensuring the insight reaches those who need it most. Click here to book your place.

SERVITISATION, STAFFING AND SKILLS FOR AFTER-SALES MANAGERS | LABCOLD OFFICES, BASINGSTOKE | 23 JUNE 2026| 10.00 - 12.30

GAMBICA'S GROUP for after sales managers is tackling three of your biggest issues in one go in the next meeting, which will be held in person in Basingstoke.

As attention focuses on after-sales as a primary source of income for UK companies, this meeting will offer advice from experts on:

- Latest thinking and a hands-on approach to finding great staff, and making your company first choice for them.

- Fast paced reminders on how to engage your teams to get the most from their customer inter-actions.
- Insights into development of servitisation options and how to engage your senior management team in using them to optimise after-sales contribution.

Great after-sales managers are needed now more than ever and this group will help you make your contribution evident to your company's c-suite.

Don't worry if you haven't been to an after-sales group meeting before, this session will set the agenda for future meetings. To reserve your place, click here.

AI, ANSWER ENGINES AND B2B MARKETING: HOW TO STAY VISIBLE | GAMBICA OFFICES, LONDON | 6 JULY 2026| 10.00 - 12.30

GAMBICA IS setting up a new group for the marketing managers and directors of member companies. This first meeting will discuss the topics you want covered at future meetings and will also provide a focused session on AI, answer engines and B2B marketing visibility. What will be covered:

- What is changing in search and discovery as AI-generated answers become more common
- Why traditional SEO and Google visibility still matter
- How B2B companies can improve their chances of being found, cited and trusted by answer engines
- What role websites, third-party mentions, LinkedIn, reviews, and PR play
- How marketers can experiment without overreacting or shifting budget too quickly

The session will be delivered by Gavin Llewellyn, a trainer on the Chartered Institute for Marketing's, *AI in marketing* programme.

The content will be suitable for GAMBICA members in the industrial and laboratory sectors and will focus on technical B2B context. This session is designed for senior marketers and will not require participants to discuss their own marketing activities.

The format will be:

- 90 minutes of presentation, examples and practical guidance, followed by
- 30 minutes of discussion to identify key topics for future meetings

There will be a small charge of £20 for marketing group events to cover speaker costs.

Please register to attend here.

EXPORT TRAINING DISOUNTED FOR GAMBICA MEMBERS| ONLINE | MAY – JUNE 26

EXPORT TRAINING is available to GAMBICA members from Chamber International at Chamber members' prices.

JUNE 2026 COURSES	
4 June 2026	**Shipping to and from the US**
18 June 2026	**Workshop for Import Administrators**
25 June 2026	**Importing and Customs**
29 June 2026	**Understanding Exporting & Incoterms®**

FURTHER INFORMATION is available here. When booking, quote discount code 'CICSP25' to get your 10% discount. TO BOOK your place click here.

INDUSTRY Events

DRUG DISCOVERY 2026, | LONDON, | 14/15 OCTOBER 2026

ELRIG'S DRUG Discovery is back at ExCel, London in 2026. Registration is not yet open but more on speakers and themes is available here.

LAB INNOVATIONS, | LONDON, | 4/5 NOVEMBER 2026

DON'T FORGET, if you want to book at the UK's largest lab exhibition, GAMBICA members are entitled to a 15% discount. **Register your interest for the event here.**

ANALYTICA CHINA, | SHANGHAI, | 16/18 NOVEMBER 2026

BOOKING DETAILS will be available later this year for the GAMBICA pavilion at this event. **For more information about the event click here**.

MEDICA, | DUSSELDORF, | 16/19 NOVEMBER 2026

BOOKING DETAILS will be available later this year for the GAMBICA pavilion at this event. **For more information contact Kirsty on Kirsty.roberts@gambica.org.uk**

CIM 2027, | LYON, | 16/18 MARCH 2027

THE INTERNATIONAL metrology congress in Lyon has opened its call for abstracts. You can submit your ideas here.

EXPORT News

India trade deals: a major opportunity for UK laboratory equipment exporters

TWO LANDMARK free trade agreements concluded in the past six months are set to transform market access for UK laboratory and scientific equipment suppliers exporting to India - one is signed and awaiting ratification, the other is agreed in principle and subject to EU ratification.

The UK-India deal

The UK-India Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), signed in July 2025, and described as 'the UK's most economically significant bilateral free trade

agreement since leaving the European Union' is expected to reduce tariffs on UK exports to India by up to £400 million per year when it comes into force, potentially rising to £900 million annually after ten years.

64% of UK tariff lines will have zero-tariff access to the Indian market from day one, rising to 85% of tariff lines within ten years. Machinery, electrical equipment, medical devices and engineering goods are among the sectors covered, with phased reductions applying to lines not immediately liberalised.

The deal is not yet in force. It requires endorsement from the British Parliament before implementation, and full implementation is unlikely before mid-to-late 2026. However, suppliers can now review product classifications against the agreement's tariff schedules.

The EU-India deal - context for UK suppliers

UK suppliers with EU subsidiaries, distribution partners, or manufacturing operations in Europe should be aware that the EU and India also concluded a landmark free trade agreement in January 2026. The scale is considerable: the EU will eliminate tariffs on over 90% of tariff lines, and India will eliminate or reduce tariffs on 86% of tariff lines, covering 93% of trade value.

For machinery - the category most relevant to laboratory equipment - India will liberalise half of machinery tariffs at entry into force, with the remainder phased over periods of up to ten years. Pre-deal Indian tariffs on machinery have been as high as 44%, meaning the eventual reduction is substantial, though it will be delivered gradually rather than immediately.

The EU-India deal is subject to ratification across EU member states and is not yet in force. Implementation is not expected before 2027 at the earliest, and may take longer given the complexity of EU ratification processes.

Please note: the precise tariff rates applicable to specific laboratory instrument commodity codes under the UK-India CETA are set out in the agreement's tariff schedules, which are detailed and product-specific. You can access them here. DBT's Export Support Service can assist with product-specific tariff queries and can be reached via this link.

New end-use controls come into force

The Sanctions (EU Exit) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2026 which came into force in May introduce new 'sanctions end-use controls' (SEUCs) - a licensing requirement that applies when the UK government considers there is a high risk of exports being diverted to a territory subject to UK trade sanctions. Monetary penalties may be even where the exporter did not know or have reasonable cause to suspect that they were in breach.

The regime is primarily aimed at circumvention of Russia sanctions through third countries, but it applies across all UK trade sanctions regimes. Laboratory equipment suppliers exporting to markets in Central Asia, the Middle East, or other regions with known diversion risks should review their due diligence processes and check whether any of their products appear on the UK government's Common High Priority Items List, which sets out goods considered at particular risk of diversion.

More information here.

Dual-use export controls extended to quantum and semiconductor equipment

SUPPLIERS OF specialist scientific and analytical equipment should be aware that the UK's dual-use export control list was significantly updated in December 2025, introducing new '500-series' controls that may affect products not previously subject to licensing.

New controls now apply to quantum technologies (including quantum computers, electronic components designed to work at cryogenic temperatures, parametric signal amplifiers, and cryogenic cooling systems) and semiconductor manufacturing and testing equipment. These controls broadly align the UK with parallel measures adopted by the EU in November 2025 and earlier US tightening on exports of the same technology categories.

Suppliers of cryogenic systems, precision measurement equipment, advanced materials characterisation tools, or specialist electronics should check whether their products now fall within the updated control list before exporting to non-allied destinations.

The Export Control Joint Unit (ECJU) provides classification guidance here.

MEMBER News

Faster antibody analysis from GAMBICA newest member Novilytic

NOVILYTIC, THE newest member of GAMBICA, is transforming antibody analysis in biopharmaceutical labs with its innovative Proteometer® kits. This effort is supported by a passionate team focused on delivering faster, simpler protein quality analysis.

Modern medicines are increasingly reliant on antibodies, which are large proteins produced in bioreactors using living cells. Unlike chemical synthesis, these cells must be kept healthy and carefully controlled to support consistent growth and antibody production. Key measurements in this process include titre (the quantity of antibody produced), aggregates (clumped proteins that can affect quality and performance) and charge variants (an important quality attribute that can lead to an autoimmune response).

Traditional analysis workflows often require multiple instruments and consumables, and can take up to 24 hours, hindering timely decision-making.

Novilytic's patented Proteometer platform was invented by Chief Technical Officer Fred E. Regnier, PhD, a respected academic and emeritus Professor at Purdue University with a background in biochemistry. This technology uses a fluorescent affinity selector that binds to the Fc region of a human antibody and is designed to work with existing liquid chromatography systems equipped with a fluorescence detector. By removing the need for time-consuming sample preparation, analysis time can

be reduced from a day to less than 10 minutes for antibody titre and aggregate measurements.

The Proteometer product line includes:

• **Proteometer-L Kit**, Quantifies titre and aggregates directly from clarified harvest in just 10 minutes, making it ideal for monoclonal antibodies (mAbs), bispecifics and other Fc-containing proteins.

• **Proteometer-UFT Kit**, Provides titre results in under 90 seconds.

• **Proteometer-CV Kit**, Assesses charge variants in 25 minutes directly from clarified harvest, eliminating Protein A sample preparation and helping to streamline the workflow.

This innovative approach supports applications from research and development through to manufacturing, helping improve efficiency, reduce costs, and drive better-informed decision-making in bioprocessing.

The people powering Novilytic's growth

Novilytic is a nimble startup that is growing quickly. They are expanding their workforce following a recent round of funding, especially in Europe and the UK. CEO, Paul Dreier, a former chemist, product development/management expert and sales executive, leads the company's strategic direction. His background includes C-suite roles at large biotech organizations as well as startup success, resulting in four exits.

Many GAMBICA members may already know Novilytic's EMEA representative, Dr. Paul Heath, Senior Director, EMEA, who is the company's first team member based outside the US and supports distributors and users across the region.

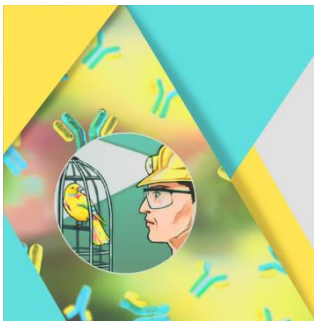
Initially drawn to research, Heath's desire for variety led him into commercial roles first in sales, then in sales management at Biotage, before most recently serving as Managing Director of Büchi UK Ltd

"Biologics is a new challenge for me as a chemist, the customers are enthusiastic and genuinely interested in new technology", Heath said. "That makes it exciting when you're out promoting a disruptive platform and building new relationships. Like any new venture, it can be stressful at times, but it is also very rewarding."

Outside of work, he enjoys keeping lifting weights, cooking, spending time with his family and an occasional glass of wine. During working hours his focus is predominantly on events and customer engagement, so GAMBICA members may well see him at upcoming events.

He has also developed some practical ways to make events work effectively.

“Conferences serve as a key pathway into upstream research organizations. We aim to establish technology in one laboratory, then support expansion into other laboratories within the same organization. Conferences work well for us to make that initial contact. So far this year we have attended Nextgen BioMed in London and BPI Europe in Vienna.”



“To drive traffic to our booth, we use a specialist meeting-setting company called BioLeads. They contact registered attendees and other key people from the industry and arrange for meetings at our booth. I think more than 80% of the people we met at BPI Europe, was thanks to BioLeads”.

Due to our success so far, we plan to continue focusing on events in Europe. We would also be interested in putting posters and papers together with other GAMBICA members looking to expand into biotech, so if that sounds of interest, please do get in touch.”

To learn more visit Novilytic.com or contact Paul Heath directly at, pheath@novilytic.com or 07803 130 608