

Press release: UK life sciences sector brings record growth as new Life Sciences Council meets for first time

- new research shows UK life sciences sector is soaring with record turnover of over £70 billion and SMEs accounting for 82% of businesses and 24% of all UK life sciences employment
- in 2017, the UK received the highest level of life science foreign direct investment projects in Europe – the highest in 7 years
- the new Council follows on from the transformative [Life Sciences Sector Deal](#), part of the government's modern [Industrial Strategy](#), which drew substantial investment from 25 global companies

The inaugural meeting of the new UK Life Sciences Council takes place today (16 May 2018). Business Secretary Greg Clark and Health and Social Care Secretary Jeremy Hunt will chair the Council, which will also be attended by a range of industry experts, including Pascal Soriot from AstraZenca who will co-chair, J&J, MSD and ABPI. The main objective of the Council is to ensure the UK continues to be a global leader in life sciences.

This comes as new research published today shows the UK continues to have one of the most productive health and life sciences sectors in the world. Health and life sciences are worth over £70 billion to the economy and provide jobs for almost 241,000 people across the country. The group will focus on progress in delivering the modern Industrial Strategy's [Life Sciences Sector Deal](#), launched in 2017, which will support the sector to develop and launch the next generation of medicines, technologies and diagnostics and provide better care and treatments for millions of patients.

The fourth annual [Life Science Competitiveness Indicators report](#) also shows that the UK continues to attract significant private equity investment, with over £660 million invested in 67 UK projects in 2016. The UK also accounts for 12% of total life sciences academic citations and 18% of the most-cited publications, the 2nd highest share above China, Germany and Canada.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

I welcome the first meeting of the new Life Sciences Council today, which will drive research, development and innovation in this thriving sector far into the future. Further advancing the UK's global leadership in life sciences is a key part of our modern Industrial Strategy – our plan for high-quality jobs and growth across the whole country.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

From Edward Jenner developing the first successful small pox vaccine to Rosalind Franklin providing breakthrough research on the structure of DNA, UK life sciences have changed the world for the better.

We are extraordinarily well placed to play a leading role in this revolution in the life sciences. Our universities and research institutes rank among the best in the world, nurturing and attracting some of the most inventive people on earth.

Record turnover and foreign direct investment is a vote of confidence in the UK which we will build on as we work towards making Britain the best place in the world to develop and launch innovative medicines, technologies and diagnostics to help people live longer, healthier and happier lives.

Pascal Soriot, industry co-chair of the Council, said:

I am pleased to co-chair the new Life Sciences Council at an exciting but challenging time for the UK industry. With all the uncertainties of Brexit and patient access to medical innovations, the successful implementation of an ambitious industrial strategy is critical to ensure Britain remains a pioneer in life sciences and the sector continues to drive economic growth.

With 2 Secretaries of State and industry leaders representing medical devices, biotech as well as pharmaceuticals, the new Life Sciences Council brings together expertise across UK life sciences to provide the strategic direction needed to thrive in the competitive global environment.

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox, said:

The UK continues to be a highly attractive destination for inward investment and global talent. With more than 5,000 life sciences companies and a strong culture of scientific innovation, our offer to the world as a global partner for investment and trade is clear.

As the UK's international economic department, the Department for International Trade promotes investment and export opportunities. We invite healthcare and life sciences innovators to work with us, driving growth in every part of the country.

Health Minister Lord O'Shaughnessy said:

The UK has always been at the forefront of scientific innovation and research, developing ground-breaking treatments that can

transform patients' lives.

The world-leading 100,000 Genomes Project, and the NHS Genomic Medicine Service that launches this autumn, are fantastic examples of our ambition to pioneer the most advanced approaches to healthcare in this country.

As part of the Life Sciences Sector Deal, which brought together significant commitments and investments into the UK by 25 global organisations from across the sector, the government has worked closely with industry to deliver its strategic vision and in the last 6 months has launched major projects, including:

- allocating £30 million from a £100 million study to sequence the UK Biobank, providing a unique resource to identify new drug therapies and redefine the gold standard for genome sequencing
- announcing the world's first study to establish centres of excellence in digital pathology and medical imaging in the NHS, which when set up will, using the digital images generated, help develop artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms for more accurate diagnosis of diseases, potentially improving NHS efficiencies
- in the process of creating up to 5 Digital Innovation Hubs across the UK, which will support the development of algorithms and machine learning for real-world studies and clinical trials. Being delivered by Professor Andrew Morris, Director of Health Data Research UK (HDRUK), the Hubs will enhance the UK's global competitiveness in clinical trials and creating a unique business environment
- investing £65 million through the [Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund](#) to establish three advanced therapy treatment centres across the country, which will support medicine manufacturing and provide industry with access to cutting-edge technology to commercialise and develop innovations at scale

The modern Industrial Strategy sets out a long-term plan to boost the productivity and earning power of people throughout the UK. It sets out how we are building a Britain fit for the future – how we will help businesses create better, higher-paying jobs in every part of the UK with investment in skills, industries and infrastructure.

The Industrial Strategy committed to increased government investment in R&D to 2.4% of GDP by 2027 and 3% over the longer term – delivering an estimated increase of £80 billion over the next 10 years. The Life Sciences Sector Deal set out plans for the Health Research Authority to speed up approvals for clinical trials.

Additional quotes:

ABPI CEO, Mike Thompson said:

Global pharmaceutical companies are excited about UK science, our world leading Universities and unique research centres like the

Crick Institute.

The Life Sciences Council signals our joint commitment to implementing the Life Sciences Industrial Strategy to ensure the UK becomes a home for even more global companies to research, develop, manufacture and launch the next generation of medicines and vaccines.

Michelle Brennan, EMEA Company Group Chair, Johnson & Johnson Medical Device Companies said:

I am delighted to be joining the Life Sciences Council, supporting the implementation of the Life Sciences Industrial Strategy in collaboration with our government partners. The Strategy is key to the UK remaining an attractive place for the Life Sciences industry to invest and to ensure that patients continue to benefit from the latest medical innovations. The NHS has an important role to play in the success of the strategy, with the potential to become an early adopter of new technologies and an engine for innovation and research. Johnson & Johnson is committed to working in partnership with both the NHS and government to make their ambition a reality.

Phil Thomson, President, Global Affairs, GSK said:

Bringing government, the NHS and industry together through the Council is an important step in ensuring the UK remains globally competitive in life sciences. We must all continue to work together through the Brexit negotiations to ensure the supply of medicines, regulatory alignment and the needs of patients remain priorities.

Notes to editors

Full list of Council attendees

Government

- Greg Clark, Business Secretary
- Jeremy Hunt, Health and Social Care Secretary
- Liam Fox, International Trade Secretary
- Lord O'Shaughnessy, Parliament Under Secretary of State for Health
- Simon Stevens, NHS England
- Kristen Mcleod, Office for Life Sciences
- Steve Oldfield, Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)
- Sir Mark Walport, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)
- Matthew Speers, Department for International Trade (DIT)
- Gareth Davies, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

- Professor Chris Whitty, Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC)

Industry

- Pascal Soriot, CEO of AstraZeneca
- Jean-Christophe Tellier, CEO and Chairman of the Executive Committee of UCB
- Mike Thompson, Chief Executive of the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI)
- Philip Thomson, President of GSK
- Peter Ellingworth, Chief Executive of Association of British Healthcare Industries (ABHI)
- Dr Roger Perlmutter, Executive Vice President of Merck & Co
- Michelle Brennan, President of Johnson & Johnson Group
- John Young, Group President of Pfizer Innovative Health
- Steve Bates, CEO of the UK BioIndustry Association
- Jackie Hunter, CEO of Benevolent AI
- Professor Sir John Bell, Life Sciences Champion
- Professor Jeremy Farrar, Director of The Wellcome Trust
- Haruo Naito, Director, Representative Corporate Officer and CEO of Eisai Co