

levels. The JIC also trains scientists and students, collaborates with many other research laboratories and communicates its science to end-users and the general public. The JIC is grant-aided by the BBSRC.

The BBSRC is the UK funding agency for research in the life sciences. Sponsored by government, the BBSRC annually invests about 350 million pounds in a range of research that makes a significant contribution to the quality of life for UK citizens and supports a number of important industrial stakeholders including the agriculture, food, chemical, healthcare and pharmaceutical sectors ([www.bbsrc.ac.uk](http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk)).

The UK leads Europe in the industrial exploitation of biotechnology. UK companies account for almost 75 per cent of Europe's publicly quoted biotechnology companies. According to the BioIndustry Association, the European market for biotechnology is expected to be worth nearly 60 billion pounds by 2005.

Within the UK economy, pharmaceuticals are consistently in the top three industrial sectors in terms of trade surplus, contributing 12.3bn pounds in exports. The industry is a major employer, with 83,000 people employed directly and many more in feeder industries. Of the major medicines sold in the UK, about half were developed in UK laboratories.



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