

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE BBSRC

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[Eight biotechnology SMEs boosted by research funding](#)

Eight small businesses are to share more than £1.8 million after winning funding through the BBSRC's Small Business Research Initiative, it was announced today.

The biotechnology companies, based throughout the UK and operating in fields as diverse as pest control in agriculture to fluorescent probes for use in medicine, will use the funding to help develop their research portfolio and strengthen their business potential.

"Since its launch in 2001, the SBRI scheme has helped some 22 companies expand their research capabilities and strengthen their position within the competitive biotech sector," says Dr Doug Yarrow, head of BBSRC's Corporate Science Group. "Small companies, such as these, play an important role in helping the UK benefit from the advances in the laboratory and will help the UK strengthen its position as the second largest biotechnology industry in the world, after the US."

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deltaDOT Ltd intends to research and develop a label free intrinsic imaging (LFII) bench top DNA sequencing machine for basic genomics research. The machine will initially be aimed at short run sequencing of up to 200 bases. The major aim of the unit will be to free researchers from the service sequencing system that can take up to 3 days to deliver the results. This will allow researchers to check DNA manipulations and have data the same day. The unit will be useful for other sequencing needs such as SNP validation and is designed to exploit deltaDOT's proven expertise in LFII by imaging all four DNA sequence reactions in a single capillary or microfluidic channel. This advanced genomic tool is a fusion of LFII, microfluidic technologies and advanced signal processing algorithms. This combination can change the face of lab-based bench-top DNA sequencing.

[BBSRC 25 May 2005](#)

[11 companies benefit from biotech research funding](#)

11 small and medium enterprises will benefit from a total of £2.2M of funding from the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) after winning backing under BBSRC's Small Business Research Initiative.

The initiative, now in its fourth year, is designed to boost the research and development capabilities of small to medium businesses in the UK's highly competitive biotechnology sector. The successful companies from the 2005 competition come from across the UK and are involved in projects as diverse as developing new ways to apply treatments to diseases of the nail and exploring biotechnology to control insect pests.

Highlights from the successful companies include: Zyentia Ltd's project to develop nanostructured calcium phosphate as a potential novel bone replacement material and deltaDOT Ltd's development of a microfluidic chip with the technology to isolate individual biomolecules from complex mixtures.

Dr Doug Yarrow, BBSRC Director of Corporate Science, said, "The UK biotechnology sector is second in the world to only the USA. Schemes such as the Small Business Research Initiative help small and medium size companies to enhance their research capacity and hence international competitiveness." [http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/media/pressreleases/05\\_05\\_24\\_11\\_companies.html](http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/media/pressreleases/05_05_24_11_companies.html) 2005 Small Business Research Initiative Awards

Critical Pharmaceuticals Ltd, Nottingham  
Evaluating Biological Responses to Single-Dose Vaccines

Daniolabs, Cambridge  
Identification of Factors responsible for the Differentiation of Oligodendrocytes

deltaDOT Ltd, London  
Isolating unlabelled biomolecules in a microfluidic system – Switching samples for multiple downstream procedures

Celltran Ltd, Sheffield  
Pre-clinical Development of an Advanced Surface for Culture and Transfer of Limbal Epithelium for Ocular Surface Disease

Farfield Sensors Ltd, Salford  
Towards a new structure-function workstation for multimolecular assemblies

Oxitec Ltd, Oxford  
Improved Insect Transformation

MedPharm Ltd, Charlbury, Oxfordshire  
The Development of a Novel Topical Ungual Delivery System (MedNail)

Lumora Ltd, Cambridge  
2D-NAAT: A Universal Handheld Assay Platform for Ultra-Sensitive Low-Cost Biological Detection

Plaso Technology Ltd, Sheffield  
Sugar Binding Surfaces

**Southampton PolyPeptides Ltd, Southampton**

Chemical Synthesis of Therapeutic Proteins Using PEGylated Precursors

**Zyentia Ltd, Cambridge**

Nanostructured Calcium Phosphate as a Novel Bone Replacement Material

**Notes to Editors**

The Small Business Research Initiative (SBR) aims to encourage small high-tech firms to develop new research capacities. The scheme is open to all companies, but is expected to be most attractive to SMEs. All tenders must demonstrate that the company has access to other sources of finance or risk capital. The R&D proposed must fall within BBSRC's science remit. Examples of science areas can be found on this website.

Information about SBRI can be found at:

[www.bbsrc.ac.uk/business/sbri/Welcome.html](http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/business/sbri/Welcome.html)

**About BBSRC**

The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) is the UK funding agency for research in the life sciences. Sponsored by Government, BBSRC annually invests around £336 million in a wide 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)