

L@b Brief | February 2025

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COMMENT

Turbulent times in the US



AMIDST ALL the hoopla surrounding Donald Trump's return to office, an issue has emerged with significant consequences for laboratories: the widespread layoffs currently taking place within the US public lab sector.

Reports indicate that a quarter of the workforce in nearly 60 US laboratories have been laid off. Additionally, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which employs around 12,000 individuals, has dismissed 1,300 staff members. These employees constitute approximately 45% of all 'probationary' workers at the CDC and while many of those affected are new recruits, some were recently promoted individuals who had occupied their current roles for less than a year.

Among those made redundant are employees from the CDC's Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS), a programme established to train public health professionals in identifying and responding to disease outbreaks. The loss of personnel in this critical department raises concerns about the ability of the US to respond to emerging public health threats.

Cuts also affect the US National Animal Health Laboratory Network, responsible for ensuring consistency in lab efforts to monitor animal disease outbreaks. The impact will be immediate, according to Keith Poulsen, of the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory.

"They are already struggling with staffing shortages, so if you remove all the probationary staff, you eliminate the capacity to do the work."

Another casualty is the Livermore Lab which has closed its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) office, because of the crackdown on DEI initiatives. The facility's director, Kimberly Budil, noted that numerous laboratories are shutting down their DEI offices, laying off or reassigning staff, and implementing structural changes to comply with the new mandates. However, Budil warned of the wider implications for collaborative research environments:

"The critical importance of bringing together a broad range of ideas, backgrounds, and experiences is really how we drive excellence in our laboratories, so we remain strongly committed to upholding that focus on excellence."

These reductions in US laboratory operations will influence scientific progress and public health, but their impact on local economies is equally significant; a 2024 report from Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico reveals that, in addition to paying \$1.96 billion in salaries to its local workforce, the lab spent over \$1 billion with New Mexico businesses and contributed \$138 million in state gross receipts tax. With an annual budget of \$5.24 billion, Los Alamos National Laboratory is a crucial driver of economic activity in the region.

These changes in the US lab environment will inevitably have an impact on UK lab suppliers who may want to refocus their efforts from public to private labs in the US or to other regions altogether. If so, have a look at our sections on lab construction and forthcoming events – there is useful information there for you!

Jacqueline

UK News

Champion jockey to share exclusive Cheltenham tips at GAMBICA conference

STOP PRESS – One of our keynote speakers, Chris Neasham, who was procurement lead for Almac, one of the country's biggest pharma companies, has moved to another pharma giant, Sterling Pharma Solutions where he is the Vice President of Global Procurement. Chris will be presenting his thoughts on the future of laboratory procurement practices at this year's conference. Chris has over 15 years' experience in pharmaceutical and laboratory procurement and is a member of the Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply.

Final speaker announced

We are really pleased to announce that we have a new addition to the conference. Jess Andrews, who is Team Leader in the Automation & Digital team at the Centre for Process Innovation (CPI). Working in the formulation technology centre and a chemist by training, Jess focusses on driving digital transformation across the formulating industries, specialising in pharmaceuticals. She will be talking about the smart labs of the future, providing a summary of laboratory automation research at CPI, targeting a variety of market sectors from pharma to batteries and beyond. She will discuss novel high throughput automation hardware, connected digital systems, and advanced data architecture that drives us towards the smart labs of the future. Importantly, she will look at the barriers to the adoption of novel lab automation, and how they can be overcome.

If you can be with us for dinner...

Get ready for an unforgettable evening as three-time champion jockey and polar explorer Richard Dunwoody takes the stage as the after-dinner speaker. From the adrenaline-fueled world of horse racing to the unforgiving extremes of the South Pole—where he conquered a route that even Ernest Shackleton could not—Richard's journey is one of resilience, determination, and triumph.

Richard will explore the winning mindset that propelled him to success, offering exclusive insights not only into high performance but also his expert tips for the upcoming Cheltenham and Liverpool race meetings.

Join us at the stunning Barnsdale Hotel. Click [here](#) to book.

FULL CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

BELOW

FULL CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Tuesday 11th March 2025 | Venue: The Barnsdale Hall Hotel, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 8AH

Lab customers: their requirements - our future	
08.30 / 09.00	Conference registration and refreshments
	SESSION ONE: FORECASTS FOR THE COMING YEAR
09.00	Welcome: Jenny O’Connell, Chair, GAMBICA Lab Tech Board
09.05	Political forecast: The UK in Europe under the new government: Anand Menon
09.30	Economic forecast: Lee Hopley, Director, Economic insight and research, UK Finance
09.50	The future of lab sales: Joshua Chapman, SLS
10.10	Update for GAMBICA Members: Steve Brambley, GAMBICA
10.25	Refreshments
	SESSION TWO: HOW THE LAB IS CHANGING
11.00	Nature-inspired engineering – the way of the future: Prof Marc-Olivier Coppens, UCL
11.30	Formulating biology; challenges for lab suppliers in the growth of biochemistry: David Calvert, iFormulate
11.50	Building the smart labs of the future: Jess Andrews UK-Centre for Process Innovation
12.10	How continuous training drives instrument performance and maximizes ROI for suppliers - <i>Unlocking value by partnering with lab technicians and researchers through training:</i> Dr Han Wu, UCL
12.30	Q and A panel session
13.00	Lunch
	SESSION THREE: WHAT CUSTOMERS WANT
14.15	What pharmaceutical clients want from their suppliers – Chris Neasham, Associate Director – Sterling Pharma Solutions
14.40	How university purchasing is changing, sustainability requirements and the pipeline of tenders: Lisa Blackburn NWUPC
15.05	Carbon metrics for chillers and biotech products - how we are going about it: Tony Withers, Grant and Stephen Pygott, Eppendorf
15.25	Refreshments
	SESSION FOUR: INCREASING SALES
15.45 – 16.15	Sales – what’s working right now – in the UK and in Europe Jayne Green and Christian Walter from George James Ltd
16.15 - 16.20	Results of business sentiment survey and close

Key battery component supplies ‘vulnerable’

INDONESIA IS the world’s largest producer of nickel, and by 2030 is forecast to account for nearly two-thirds of global supply, as well as 44% of refining capacity. In the face of this aggregation, the International Energy Agency (IEA) has called for urgent efforts to secure nickel supply chains after research has indicated that 75% of Indonesia’s refining capacity has ties to China.

China has large reserves of nickel which is a crucial component in lithium-ion batteries and stainless steel and it imposed restrictions on nickel ore exports in 2020.

In a report published this week, the IEA warns that if the supply of Indonesian refined nickel was disrupted, alternative sources would fall ‘significantly’ below expected demand.

In that scenario, it estimates that non-Indonesian producers would only be able to meet around half of global demand in five years’ time.

In December, Beijing announced a total ban on exports of gallium, germanium, antimony and graphite to the US, and said this month that licences would be required to export tungsten, bismuth and a handful of other materials with industrial uses.

A US based organisation with a mission to ‘defeat the illicit networks that threaten global peace and security’ known as C4ADS has alleged that Indonesia’s 8 million metric tons nickel refining industry appears to be spread across 33 companies.

“However, when ownership is traced to the second level, Chinese companies or shareholders control 61% of the refining capacity, while Indonesian companies or shareholders control just 13%. Further tracing uncovers that Chinese beneficial ownership exceeds 75%,” reports C4ADS.

A report published by McKinsey in December also warned that ‘limited transparency into the origins of battery raw materials... poses environmental, social and governance and concerns’.

LABMATE launches Awards for Excellence

NOMINATIONS ARE now open for the Labmate Awards for Excellence 2025. The awards, launched this year, will recognise innovation, quality and achievement within the laboratory sector in the following categories:

Innovation of the year for a product or service	Best lab safety product or solution
Best supplier and end-user partnership	Best bench top innovation
Best customer service	Best separation science innovation
Best marketing campaign	Best portable technology product
Best IT solution	Best imaging or optics
Best sustainability initiative – GreenLab Award	

Nominations close on 17 April with the shortlist announced on 6 May. An initial process of shortlisting will be conducted by the *Labmate Awards for Excellence 2025* judging panel, and

then the finalists in each category will go forward to a public vote which will be open to all Labmate's readers, contributors and partners.

The winners will be announced at the Solutions in Science (SinS) conference, Brighton, UK, on 16 July 2025.

You can either nominate yourself or a customer by clicking [this link](#), alternatively, if you would like me to nominate you or help with your nomination – please email me on jacqueline.balian@gambica.org.uk

‘Global growth team’ appointed by Trade Secretary

A NEW ‘global growth team’ of UK Trade Envoys has been appointed by the Trade Secretary, Jonathan Reynolds. Thirty-two parliamentarians, from across the political spectrum, have been assigned target markets across six continents and tasked with identifying trade and investment



opportunities for businesses and championing the UK as a destination of choice for investment in those markets.

The Trade Envoys are to use their experience, expertise and knowledge to unlock new markets around the world for British businesses, drumming up investment into the UK and ultimately driving economic growth. They will work closely with the Department for Business and Trade. The announcement comes ahead of the new Trade Strategy in Spring, which will prioritise rebuilding the UK’s relationship with the EU and seizing opportunities to access new markets further afield.

The new appointments are:

Afzal Khan MP Appointed to Türkiye
Alex Sobel MP Appointed to Ukraine
Bell Ribeiro-Addy MP Appointed to Ghana
Ben Coleman MP Appointed to Morocco & Francophone West Africa
Calvin Bailey MP Appointed to Southern Africa
Carolyn Harris MP Appointed to New Zealand
Dan Carden MP Appointed to Mexico
David Pinto-Duschinsky MP Appointed to Switzerland & Liechtenstein
Fabian Hamilton MP Appointed to Southern Cone
Flo Eshalomi MP Appointed to Nigeria
George Freeman MP Appointed to Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore & Brunei

Lord Iain McNicol of West Kilbride Appointed to Jordan, Kuwait & the Occupied Palestinian Territories
Lord Ian Austin of Dudley Appointed to Israel
Baroness Jane Ramsey of Wall Heath Appointed to Ethiopia
Jess Morden MP Appointed to Central America
Lord John Alderdice Appointed to Azerbaijan & Central Asia
Lord John Hannett of Everton Appointed to Sri Lanka
Lord John Spellar of Smethwick Appointed to Australia
Josh MacAlister MP Appointed to Brazil
Kate Osamor MP Appointed to East Africa (Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda & Rwanda)
Matt Western MP Appointed to Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia & Laos
Mohammad Yasin MP Appointed to Pakistan
Naz Shah MP Appointed to Indonesia & ASEAN
Paulette Hamilton MP Appointed to Commonwealth Caribbean
Lord Richard Faulkner of Worcester Appointed to Taiwan
Lord Roger Liddle Appointed to Andean
Dr Rosena Allin-Khan Appointed to South Africa
Baroness Rosie Winterton of Doncaster Appointed to Bangladesh
Sarah Olney MP Appointed to North Africa
Sharon Hodgson MP Appointed to Japan
Lord Tom Watson of Wyre Forest Appointed to Republic of Korea
Yasmin Qureshi MP Appointment to Egypt

EU industry tries to torpedo CBAM

A RECENT meeting of Orgalim, the body for Europe's technology industries, has decided that there is no way to mitigate the negative impact of the current EU plans for the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), on competitiveness and is planning to recommend that the whole legislation is withdrawn.

CBAM, the world's first carbon border tax was introduced by the EU in 2023 with the objective of reducing carbon emissions by addressing 'carbon leakage' - where companies transfer production of carbon intensive goods such as steel and glass, to countries where the emissions standards are lower. Under CBAM, companies placing such goods on the EU market have to report on the amount of carbon 'embedded' in the products which is proving difficult to calculate, and from 2026 they will have to buy carbon credits. The UK consulted on introducing its own version of CBAM for the UK in 2023 and plans are underway to implement it in 2027.

Coming soon - new recycling law for workplaces

NEW WASTE legislation comes into force from 31 March 2025 giving workplaces in England a legal duty to separate their recycling, food and black bin waste. The new 'Simpler Recycling' legislation states that dry recyclables (like paper, card, metal and glass), food waste and black bin waste must now all be separated. For further info [click here](#).

LABORATORY Construction Update

€370 million to upgrade Greek research infrastructure



A CONTRACT has been signed for the construction of two new buildings for the Biomedical Research Foundation of the Academy of Athens (IIBEAA). The €20 million project involves the construction of Biosecurity Laboratory and Radiogenomics Units, with a budget funded by the Recovery Fund and the European Investment Bank. It is part of a broader €370 million initiative to enhance research and innovation infrastructure across Greece.

The new facilities will include:

- The Biosecurity Level 3+ Unit: A six-story building with two underground levels (2,700 sqm total), fully equipped for safe and efficient research, diagnosis, and epidemiological surveillance of highly pathogenic organisms, benefiting public health.
- The Radiogenomics Unit: An underground facility that will integrate computational approaches and AI algorithms for the functional analysis of genetic and imaging data. The aim is early diagnosis of complex diseases and the advancement of personalised medicine.

The project is expected to be completed by June 2026.

Vaccine design and development lab moves to Jersey City, USA



THE INTERNATIONAL AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI), a research organisation that develops vaccines and antibodies for HIV, tuberculosis, emerging infectious diseases, and neglected tropical diseases, has relocated its Vaccine Design and Development

Laboratory (DDL) to 95 Greene Street Jersey City, USA.

The DDL has expanded substantially since its inception and now working with a global network of collaborators, the DDL researchers design novel vaccine candidates. They specialise in working with the recombinant vesicular stomatitis virus (rVSV) vaccine delivery vector.

Seen above are Mark Feinberg, IAVI president, Swati Gupta, head of emerging infectious diseases and epidemiology, Christopher L. Parks, associate vice president of viral vaccines and John Coelho, senior advisor, Life Sciences Strategic Innovation Centers at the [New Jersey Economic Development Authority](#).

Bordeaux institute of pathology to be built at cost of €50m



A CONSORTIUM led by France's Eiffage has signed a €51m design-build contract to build an institute of biology and pathology at the Bordeaux University Hospital Centre site in Pessac. The five storey, 16,460 sq m project will be based at the Haut-Lévêque site, linking the logistics hub in the north with the cardiology building and care buildings to the south. *Image courtesy of Grandmaisonc/Dreamstime*

New £40.7m health building for University of Salford



A 5,550sq m building is to be added to the University of Salford which will accommodate courses including podiatry, prosthetics and orthotics, sports rehabilitation, occupational therapy and sports science. Plans are also being explored for the delivery of mother and child health sessions, weight management clinics and wellbeing support services.

Forming part of the University's School of Health and Society – the largest School at the University with over 8,400 students – the new, all-electric, building will help to develop the next generation of healthcare professionals. Work is underway and is expected to complete late 2026.

USask's cutting-edge soil science laboratory receives \$760K

THE UNIVERSITY of Saskatchewan (USask) has received more than three-quarters of a million dollars to conduct soil research more quickly, efficiently and with greater detail than ever before.

USask researchers have long been innovators in soil science research and now a project to upgrade and overhaul the USask soil sciences laboratory has received funding from the Canadian Foundation for Innovation's John R. Evans Leaders Fund (JELF). The fund supports innovative research and research infrastructure projects across the country.

Dr. Colin Laroque (PhD), the head of the Department of Soil Science and a professor in the College of Agriculture and Bioresources, said this funding will help upgrade both tools and technology.

The USask soil sciences laboratory was renamed the BMO Soil Analytical Laboratory in recognition of the support from BMO as part of a \$2 million donation received in 2023.

The JELF funding of \$761,727 will go towards the purchase and installation of 11 new tools in the BMO Soil Analytical Laboratory. These new devices – including instruments like leading-edge mass spectrometers used for detailed soil chemical analyses – will give researchers a leg up when working on impactful research projects.

Top US lab construction firms named

Building Design+Construction has published its latest list of the top laboratory construction firms in the US.

Rank	Company Name	2023 Laboratory Design Revenue
1	Affiliated Engineers	\$71,796,985
2	Burns & McDonnell Vanderweil Engineers	\$49,480,000 \$29,862,400
4	Tetra Tech High Performance Buildings Group	\$27,340,000
5	WSP	\$24,540,162
6	Salas O'Brien	\$21,015,624
7	Alfa Tech Consulting Engineers	\$20,160,000
8	IMEG	\$19,340,250
9	Arup	\$16,166,286
10	EXP	\$13,824,000

To see the remainder of the list, click [here](#).

GAMBICA Events

**PATENT BOX – ARE YOU GETTING THE TAX BREAKS YOU DESERVE? | ONLINE | 18 MARCH 2025
| 10.30 - 12.00**



THE PATENT Box regime offers a significant tax reduction for UK businesses investing in R&D and protecting the IP generated, yet remains a lesser-known and underutilised tax incentive. In this webinar, ForrestBrown's Patent Box expert will explore everything from eligibility to example calculations, taking on popular misconceptions about the relief along the way. Our speaker will be Angela Banerjee, associate director at ForrestBrown who has more than a decade of experience with Big Four and specialist R&D firms, expertise in UK Patent Box, and in working with businesses to commercialise IP. To register to attend, please click [here](#).

GROWING YOUR SALES IN CHINA | ONLINE | 19 MARCH 2025 | 09.00 - 10.00

ARE YOU looking to expand your business in or into the Chinese market? Sam Yuan who worked for Oxford Instruments in China for 15 years is now offering his services for those wishing to enter the Chinese market, or grow their presence there. He has offered to present a webinar for GAMBICA's export group on 19th March (Starting at 9 am rather than 10.30 because of the time difference).

He will give an overview of the Chinese market for lab equipment and of general trends, legal issues etc. He will also explain China's strategy: green, innovative, digital and healthy China and what it means for UK suppliers. He will also provide an overview of the kind of support he can provide, including with the Beijing 'BCEIA' event.

Don't miss this opportunity to learn from industry professionals and take your sales to the next level in China.

To reserve your place, click [here](#).

**PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE FOR LAB COMPANIES | ONLINE | 25 MARCH 2025
| 10.30 - 11.30**

ALTHOUGH NORTH Western Universities Purchasing Consortium have recently acknowledged that PI insurance should only be requested where the relevant agreement/contract would include the provision of advice upon which the customer is relying, other purchasing consortia continue to routinely request such cover for all those bidding to be included on frameworks - whether or not they are providing advice. Members have struggled to find reasonably priced PI cover, or indeed in some cases, to find PI cover at all.

In this webinar, Kate Rhodes from broker, Alan Boswell Group will set out some innovative alternatives that they can offer for companies in this position. The webinar will last an hour in total and there will be plenty of opportunity to ask questions.

Kate heads up the Technology & Life Science division for Alan Boswell Group and has over 20 years' experience in this sector. She works with a range of companies from pre-

revenue/start up's through to established global organisations. Kate and her team look at pragmatic and bespoke solutions for their clients needs.

To register to attend, please click [here](#).

**SELLING THROUGH DISTRIBUTORS – SHARED COST TRAINING | GAMBICA OFFICES, LONDON
| 28TH AND 29TH APRIL 2025 | 09.00 - 17.00**

WE ARE delighted to be able to offer GAMBICA members specialist training in selling through and managing channel partners. This training has been specifically developed for the lab industry by trainers with huge experience in our industry, Sharon Eaton of BioChannel Partners and Steve Vaughan of George James. This training normally costs £3600 per person, but it is available through GAMBICA as shared cost training which could cost as little as £750pp if 12 people register.

THE TRAINING CONTENT IS AS FOLLOWS:

<p>DAY 1</p> <p>Module 1: Channel partner skill development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role model channel partner manager • Developing personal goals • Prioritising a focused workload • Managing v Leading skills • Communication & listening skills <p>Module 2: Channel partner management planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business plan development • Current situation audit & gap analysis • Defining best partner profile for optimal coverage • Channel partner recruitment process • Planning and managing growth 	<p>DAY 2</p> <p>Module 3: Managing Channel Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing channel partner performance • Managing targets and sales funnels • Business reviews with your channel partners • Managing channel conflicts • Managing under-performance, recovery and termination <p>Module 4: Influencing channel partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing capability and willingness • Managing power imbalances • Channel partner motivation • Constructive feedback • Developing trusting relationships
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This training is being offered by GAMBICA on a shared-cost basis, the more people who attend, the lower the per person price will be. Please register your interest [here](#) and Sarah Wicks (sarah.wicks@gambica.org.uk) will inform you about the cost per person and invoice you nearer the date.

We can accommodate between 6 and 12 people and the cost will be between £1500 plus VAT per person (if six people attend) and £750 per person (if 12 book).

INDUSTRY Events

UK SCIENCE PARK ASSOCIATION | EXETER SCIENCE PARK | 13-14 MARCH 2025

THE UKSPA conference will discuss challenges and opportunities within the UK's Science and Innovation sector, including: Funding Beyond the Golden Triangle, Effective and Sustainable Incubation Ecosystems, The Journey to Net Zero Carbon Science, Sustainable Facilities and Infrastructure, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion- Inclusive Workspaces, The Procurement Challenge in Volatile Markets plus much more. Tours of Exeter Science Park will also be available. Sponsorship and exhibition opportunities are available from [Adrian Sell](#).

CIM2025 INTERNATIONAL METROLOGY CONGRESS | LYON | 11-14 MARCH 2025

CO-LOCATED WITH France's largest industrial trade show this event aims to be a hub where science, industry and metrology players come together. For more information, click [here](#).

LABORAMA | BRUSSELS EXPO | 20-21 MARCH 2025

TWO DAY conference plus exhibition now in its 25th year. For more information, click [here](#).

FORUMLABO | PORTE DE VERSAILLES, PARIS | 25-27 MARCH 2025

A SHOWCASE for the French laboratory supplier market, enables academic and industrial buyers to meet their suppliers. For more information click [here](#).

**ANALYTICA VIETNAM | SAIGON EXHIBITION & CONVENTION CENTRE, HO CHI MINH CITY
| 2-4 APRIL 2025**

VIETNAM'S LARGEST international trade fair for the lab tech, biotech and analysis markets. For more information, click [here](#).

PITTCON | BOSTON, USA | 1-5 MAY 2025

PITTCON WILL run at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center as usual in May. Click [here](#) for more details.

LONDON LAB LIVE | EXCEL LONDON | 14-15 MAY 2025

YOU ARE invited to join industry leaders and innovators at London Lab Live 2025, where professionals from pharma, biotech, food & beverage, academia, and more unite to tackle the challenges shaping tomorrow's labs. Explore cutting-edge technologies on the exhibition floor, including the latest hardware and software from top suppliers and groundbreaking innovations in the start-up zone. With 8 themes across the conference program and countless networking opportunities, this event is your chance to connect, learn, and innovate. You can register now and attend for FREE by clicking [this link](#)

SLAS EUROPE CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION | HAMBURG | 20-22 MAY 2025

SLAS IS the society for lab automation and screening and its exhibitions concentrate on lab automation. For more information about the German exhibition, click [here](#).

CHEM UK | NEC BIRMINGHAM | 21-22 MAY 2025

REGIONAL UK exhibition for the chemical industry, includes chemlab. For more information click [here](#).

FUTURE LABS LIVE | BASEL, SWITZERLAND | 28-29 MAY 2025

THE SAME UK company, Terrapin is behind both London Lab Live and the original event which was developed to serve the pharma industry in Switzerland. You are also invited to experience what the organisers describe as Europe's most dynamic and inspiring event for lab innovation, bringing together professionals from pharma, biotech and academia, this free event features cutting-edge technologies and breakthrough ideas in the start-up zone. With nine conference themes, you'll leave inspired, connected, and ready to innovate. You can register for a free pass to this event by clicking [here](#).

LONDON BIOTECHNOLOGY SHOW | EXCEL | 18-19 JUNE 2025

THIS RELATIVELY new show aims to bring together policymakers, industry leaders, innovators, and investors from the global biotech and life sciences ecosystem. The event will showcase advances in biotechnology, pharmaceutical research, digital health, biomedical engineering, and regenerative medicine. With a well-curated exhibition and content-rich conference, the event will serve as an invaluable networking and knowledge-sharing opportunity for professionals and businesses in the sector.

The organisers are offering participation opportunities for GAMBICA including the opportunity to host workshops which we will take up if members are interested. If you would like to attend or exhibit at this show, could you let me know in the first instance? Email me at jacqueline.balian@gambica.org.uk

SOLUTIONS IN SCIENCE | BRIGHTON | 8-10 JULY 2025

FEEDBACK FROM visitors to the last SinS conference in June 2023 was positive and the next event has now been scheduled to take place in Brighton. The aim of SinS is to showcase complementary and diverse ranges of analytical instruments, technologies, applications and present solutions to scientists from a range of industries and academic disciplines. To book your exhibition stand contact Chris Jarvis chris@intlabbmate.com 01727 855574.

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 both local and international markets. For more information click [here](#).

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](#).

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 because of that. 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. 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, NL | 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](#).

UPCOMING Tenders

New medical simulation and training framework

A MEDICAL Simulation and Training Equipment Framework (LAB3032 NW) tender opportunity was published in February and GAMBICA members are invited to submit applications.

The lot structure is as follows:

Lot 1 | Simulation manikins and ancillary products

Lot 2 | Clinical task trainers and ancillary products

Lot 3 | Dental simulation equipment and ancillary products

Lot 4 | Ophthalmology and audiology simulation equipment and ancillary products

The tender opportunity closes on 04th April 2025 – all communications to be via the EU Supply tendering portal [here](#).

Rebuild Ukraine?

YOU ARE invited to the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC's) Rebuild Ukraine Virtual Forum on Thursday, March 13. With \$200 billion already pledged and an additional \$300 billion expected, this is expected to be one of the largest rebuilding efforts in history and although the US clearly has designs on getting the lion's share, the ICC has launched a portal for those who wish to be involved. Key focus areas will be:

- Construction & Infrastructure Repair
- Machinery & Equipment Supply
- Power & Energy Repair & Transition
- Support Services (Consultancy, Legal, Customs, Finance, Logistics)

Membership of the portal will cost Euro 2500 but by registering for the webinar if you decide to subscribe to the Rebuild Ukraine Portal you will be entitled to a discount of 50% on the annual subscription price.

To gauge whether participation is worthwhile, use the Coupon FREEACCESS on the [registration page](#).

Don't forget our tender alert service is now available again, if you wish to be added to the circulation list, please email Sonia.dougall@gambica.org.uk

EXPORT News

Medlab 'lost its sparkle' but changes planned for 2026

ACCORDING TO GAMBICA's overseas pavilion manager, Kirsty Roberts, this year's Medlab Middle East, which took place in Dubai in February had rather lost its sparkle compared to previous years. Here's her report...

GAMBICA co-ordinated the UK pavilion at this year's Medlab and 14 companies participated. The event rated highly with some pavilion members, with 5 companies awarding marks of 8, or above, out of 10. Nevertheless, the show was generally felt to have been quieter than previous editions with only the first day as busy, in our area, as it has been in the past. This was reflected in the overall average rating of 7.36 (2023 and 2024 were rated 8.6 and 8.1 respectively). This may be due to the organisers having added another hall to the event which diverted a lot of early morning visitor traffic away from the UK pavilion area.

Numbers of visitors to individual pavilion stands ranged between 30 and 150, and those able to provide a figure, estimated the value of future orders at between £5K and £200K.

In 2026, as part of a portfolio rebrand by the organisers, Informa, Medlab ME will change name to World Health Expo (WHX Labs) Dubai. More details are available at www.worldhealthexpo.com. The show will take place on 9/12 February 2026 at the Dubai World Trade Centre and will run concurrently with Arab Health (rebranded to WHX Dubai). Arab Health will relocate to the Dubai Exhibition Centre (site of Expo 2020). This move will

allow both events the space to continue to expand and Medlab will move to a much more accessible location within the DWTC. GAMBICA is holding an excellent location within the new halls.

We expect to booking details for 2026 to be available in late spring but if you would like further information and/or to register interest please contact me on

kirsty.roberts@gambica.org.uk

Discounted export training available for GAMBICA members

GAMBICA PARTNER, Chamber International, is offering training in essential export/import competence at a discounted rate for

GAMBICA members. The courses below are available in March and GAMBICA members can book them at the same price as members of the Chamber.

11 March 2025 HS Code Classification & The UK Global Tariff Workshop

13 March 2025 Incoterms® - The Basics

18 March 2025 Shipping to the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Qatar

25 March 2025 Importing and Customs

25 March 2025 Shipping Lithium Batteries by Air, Road, & Sea

27 March - 14 May 2025 Export Trade Accelerator Qualification Programme

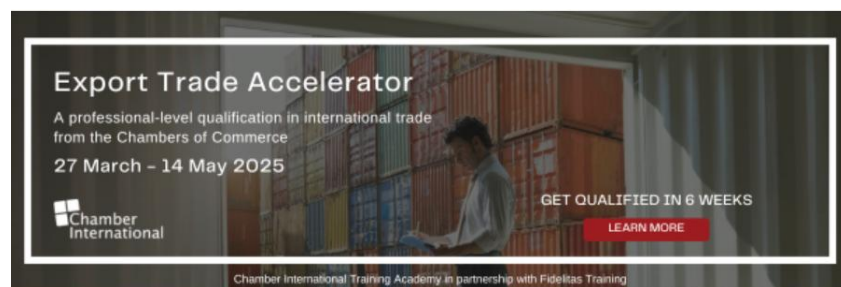
One of the courses likely to be of most interest to GAMBICA members is the Export Trade Accelerator Programme which was recently undertaken by the International Logistics Coordinator for an exporting furniture firm. Rosie Taylor commented on its effectiveness saying:

“Dealing with different country requirements is challenging. Some people think they can simply export anywhere, but then I tell them: for that specific country we’ll need this document, this certificate, and so on. I’m the only person here who’s 100% focused on these things”.

Rosie graduated from Chamber International’s [Export Trade Accelerator](#) last year. Being part of a small professional peer group with logistics and trade specialists from other companies was a great experience for her. “There was a lady from Ireland; a lady who was shipping out metal components – it was so good to compare notes and learn from each other”, she says.

“The taught sessions were really helpful for me – I thought they might be a bit long and tedious, but the time really went past quickly, because there was so much interaction and the talk was far more insightful than had expected. The trainers we had each time were amazing.

“I would ring up Kate, the trainer, and ask questions about the course, coursework and how the guidelines affected our company. She would help me take things even further and ensure my knowledge was there”, says Rosie.



“I realised that we didn’t really have a succinct system for keeping records, because we weren’t clear about what HMRC expects, so now we have made changes and it’s working much better. The timing was just right. Because our exports business has grown so much, we have been given an HMRC case-worker to check over our routes to market. Our finance team were a bit worried about what would be required, but I was able to tell them: It’s OK, we collect the data now. The changes I have started to implement have saved Finance and myself a lot of headaches. I think they can all see the benefit of what I learned through the ETA, and are on board with it too”.

The next Export Trade Accelerator for people working in import and export roles begins on 27 March 2025. Find more information about this course, including how to enrol click [here](#).

Links for you in new markets

GAMBICA has identified in-market expertise for China (see GAMBICA events) and we will be running a special export group meeting on India in May/June. We have also recently been forwarded a contact in France by Jeremy Storey who you may remember from our overseas pavilions.



Laetitia Moreau is based in France has a lot of sales and administration experience and is offering her services to companies that are looking to export or import to France or French speaking countries. Jeremy commented: “I know with Brexit it has been a challenge for a lot of companies doing business in France and Europe generally and so I thought it might be good for members of Gambica to have a possible contact that they could use to help do business in France / Euro or French speaking markets.

“Laetitia’s services can be utilised on a contract / case by case basis or to assist on particular project or issues and members can contact her directly.

COMPANY News

SLS: Following their own route to success

ONE OF the fastest-growing companies in the UK’s increasingly consolidated lab market is Scientific Laboratory Supplies Ltd (SLS). Now the largest independent lab distributor, SLS has



avoided the boom-and-bust cycle that has plagued large multinationals. So how has it managed steady growth while others have faltered? *L@b Brief* visited SLS’s new, sustainable and highly automated site in Nottingham to find out.

Ian Roulstone, Managing Director at SLS, is clear on the foundation of their success: “SLS is, and will stay, a people business. While others have moved sales staff from the road to the phone, reducing personal interactions, SLS has maintained strong customer relationships. It’s a core commitment.

“We have a people-first approach embedded in our culture—it’s evident in how we treat our employees, interact with suppliers,

and serve our customers. We still have one of the most extensive sales teams per pound of business generated, and we're happy with that—it works for us.

“Whilst we are predominantly focussed on serving our customers in the UK and Ireland, we are also part of the Dutscher Group, a pan-European group of companies with a completely aligned business ethos. We think globally as group, but we act locally to meet the needs of our customers and suppliers – it’s a powerful approach and it works. Our day-to-day commercial and financial operations are entirely within our control. We make decisions quickly and implement them immediately making us quick to react to opportunities or changes in the market. We re-invest profits back into our business and this allows us to invest in what matters most—our people. They are the heart of our business, setting us apart, alongside innovations like our new facility in Fairham. This site provides automation that enhances our service speed and was designed to reduce our carbon footprint. As sustainability becomes increasingly important to our customers, we are investing to stay at the forefront.



Photo: MD Ian Roulstone with Operations Director, Bruce Mowbray and Marketing Director, Joshua Chapman.

“The majority of our board members have progressed from within the company. Our employees know they can start at any level and rise through the ranks. Creating an environment where people can reach their full potential is one of our greatest successes,

and we've managed to maintain that during our growth from a £5 million business to one approaching £100 million.”

Marketing Director Joshua Chapman agrees: “This is definitely a people-focused business. We recognise the need to innovate—in automation, AI, digital transformation and sustainability—but we implement these advancements to supplement and support our commitment to our customers and employees.

“Initially, we were a small, independent disruptor looking to grow our market share against strong competitors, and we succeeded. We grew by equipping our team to understand customers’ requirements and empowering them to provide effective solutions. Unlike other businesses constrained by rigid systems, our model remains adaptable and flexible, enabling us to do what others can’t.”

For Ian Roulstone, good financial decision-making and successful people management go hand in hand: “If you are solely driven by the bottom line, like some of our biggest competitors, you end up offering a ‘take it or leave it’ model. We can be more flexible. When customers require something different and are willing to make it commercially viable, we welcome that—it helps build long-term partnerships based on trust. For example, one customer needed same-day deliveries to Scotland. We found a way to make it happen, and 15 years later, that relationship remains solid.”

Like other players in the UK market, SLS acquires businesses to increase market share and add value.

“We acquire businesses because they are complementary to our existing organisation.,” says Ian. “Either they have a different approach, operate in a distinct sector, or serve a new geographic area. So, the last thing we’d do is devalue a company by imposing an unsuitable business model. A few years ago, we acquired Analab in Northern Ireland, which in time became part of the core SLS business in that region. However, we’ve also acquired businesses that will remain outside the SLS brand.”

SLS has recently acquired Aurora Scientific, a company which manufactures products for the water industry. Do they have concerns about entering such a troubled sector?

“When you see the pollution in our streams, it’s evident something isn’t right,” says Joshua. “However, there’s a fine balance between necessary regulation that improves public health and excessive regulation that stifles innovation. Deregulation in other G7 countries has led to significant growth, highlighting a lack of innovation in the EU.”

Ian takes a pragmatic stance: “Regardless of legislative changes, the water testing market is not shrinking. It represents a multi-million-pound opportunity, and we intend to be part of it. Our acquisition of a benchmark product puts us in front of a new set of customers for whom we can start tendering and offering our support.”

The future of exhibitions in the UK

As a marketing director, Joshua has strong views on industry events.

“I think we’ve hit saturation point with the number of exhibitions in the UK. We’ve withdrawn from several events because the footfall, lead generation, and return on investment don’t justify participation. We’ve chosen to focus on key events like *Lab Innovations* and some smaller regional ones. With the Aurora acquisition, we’ve added *WWEM* to our calendar. We’ll check out *London Labs Live* this year to see whether that can gain traction in a congested field. But I’ve never been a fan of *ExCeL*—it’s a nightmare to get to, even for Londoners.”

The mission for growth

The SLS team is brimming with ideas on how to support the UK lab industry but critical of past government decisions.

“Properly funding our universities and research institutions is essential,” says Josh. “They contribute significantly to the UK—look at the biotech industry, the spin-outs, and the skills they generate. Our sector is one of the UK’s crown jewels. The government must recognise that UK science—whether pharma, biotech, or chemistry—is a global leader and requires investment. Otherwise, we risk losing our competitive advantage, especially as private equity investment in the UK has declined after a period of sustained growth.”

Ian shares his concerns about government policy: “Laboratories exist across industries, from manufacturing to food production, and are impacted by all the same economic policies which affect those sectors - like the Employers National Insurance Contribution increase. In addition to funding science, the government really must support business.”

Both agree that economic stimulus through deregulation is necessary. “The continuous introduction of new regulations stifles innovation,” says Josh. “There needs to be a recalibration to make doing business easier.”

At the same time, SLS remains committed to sustainability. “We want to leave the world in the best possible condition for future generations,” says Ian. “That’s why sustainability was a key consideration when we moved to our new facility. We automated processes, maximised efficiency, and achieved an ‘Excellent’ BREEAM rating. Our solar panel-covered roof contributes energy back to the grid, and we’ve incorporated ecological grasslands into the site. Our efforts were recognised with an *EcoVadis Gold* award.



“We’ve also appointed a sustainability manager who has been instrumental in setting our roadmap and guiding our suppliers on this journey. We wanted to give our customers transparent information for making sustainable choices, so we developed a product-level model with five key sustainability categories. Our system is rigorous,

ensuring it withstands scrutiny and avoids greenwashing and it has been adopted by academic institutions.”

For Ian, SLS’s sustainability transition was both market-driven and financially beneficial. “Public sector and academic tenders now prioritise sustainability, shifting from a token 5% weighting to what is now a substantial portion of the evaluation. We listened to what the market demanded and acted accordingly. Our investment was a financial strain at first, but it has positioned us for success in the next generations.”

Looking ahead

While SLS has faced challenges, including the complexities of moving to a new facility, the company is now refocused on its core strategy.

“We’ve transitioned from logistics challenges to campaign planning for the new year,” says Josh. “With the discontinuation of our industrial catalogue, we need to ensure the SLS brand remains visible. Customers buy from us because of our value-added services, and our bespoke CRM helps maintain a holistic customer picture.”

Ian reflects on SLS’s journey: “We’ve grown significantly, we have a fantastic new facility, and our team is thriving. When I became MD, we had a very male-dominated Board. In the last five years, that has changed to reflect the diversity and energy in our whole business. I’m chuffed with that.”

“Our success comes from empowering people to do what they excel at. Ultimately, I’m immensely proud of our team and our achievements—of course that is reflected in our results but I’m most proud of our people and the culture that we all work within.”

