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London Life Sciences Week: Three trends shaping London's life sciences future

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London's life sciences sector is entering a new phase of growth. With strengths in fundamental research, precision medicine, genomics-enabled health, artificial intelligence and international investment, the capital is well positioned to turn scientific breakthroughs into commercial opportunities.

London Life Sciences Week brings together the global biotech, pharmaceutical, investor and research communities, providing an opportunity to showcase London's life sciences strengths, build partnerships and unlock new opportunities for investment and collaboration.

As we look towards 2027, three key trends are shaping the capital's competitiveness and creating opportunities for businesses and investors:

1. London turns scientific discovery into commercial success

- London is already one of Europe's leading life sciences hubs, with 13 London life sciences companies achieving unicorn status since 2015, more than any other European city.
- UK life sciences companies raised £4bn in venture capital so far in 2026, 13% higher than the £3.6bn raised in 2025. London life sciences companies raised £2.5bn over the same period, 40% higher than the £1.8bn raised in 2025.
- The next opportunity is scaling: helping London's innovative life sciences businesses grow, attract investment and bring their products, treatments and technologies to global markets.
- London's research strengths are also translating into advances in patient care. Capivasertib, a precision medicine treatment developed by AstraZeneca, building on research at London's Institute of Cancer Research, was recommended for NHS use in certain breast cancers in 2025, demonstrating how scientific discoveries can lead to new treatment options.
- Improvements in the UK's clinical trials environment are also encouraging. Average commercial clinical trial set-up times reached 100 days in 2026, helping to strengthen the wider environment in which London's life sciences businesses operate.
- London's NHS serves nearly 10m patients and spends around £30bn annually, giving it significant purchasing power to accelerate life sciences innovation. The NHS London Life Sciences Strategy aims to coordinate up to £900m of working capital, reform procurement and introduce measures including Innovator Passports and an MHRA regulatory sandbox for AI medical devices, helping innovations move more quickly into patient care.

What this means for business: Greater opportunities to connect research, investment and industry expertise, with a growing focus on scaling innovation, harnessing NHS purchasing power, accelerating adoption and bringing new technologies to market.

2. London is at the forefront of AI-driven life sciences innovation

- In 2025, AI-enabled biotechnology attracted around £750m ($1bn) in London, making the capital the second largest destination for investment after Boston.
- International businesses are recognising this potential. Boehringer Ingelheim has committed £150m over ten years to its London AI and machine learning programme, while Medtronic has expanded its London presence into a global hub for AI and surgical robotics.
- London-based Isomorphic Labs announced a £1.6bn ($2.1bn) Series B funding round in May 2026 to support the development of its AI-driven drug discovery capabilities.

What this means for business: Growing opportunities at the intersection of AI, healthcare and biotechnology, particularly in drug discovery, diagnostics and precision medicine.

3. London's specialised innovation clusters are supporting life sciences growth

- London’s Knowledge Quarter brings together research institutions and science and technology businesses within a one-mile radius of King’s Cross Station, while other clusters extend from the London Cancer District in Sutton to Whitechapel and Canary Wharf. Together, these clusters connect researchers, clinicians, businesses and investors.
- London already has around 1.6m sq ft of existing lab and R&D space, with a further 6.6m sq ft currently under construction across 31 projects, according to CBRE.
- The London Growth Plan identifies life sciences as a priority growth sector, with a focus on expanding specialist infrastructure, supporting innovation and attracting investment to enable future growth.
- Across London's specialised life sciences clusters, infrastructure continues to evolve alongside the needs of the sector. Alongside traditional wet labs, companies are increasingly looking for digitally enabled offices, dry labs, computing capabilities and facilities that support data-intensive research and collaboration.

What this means for business: Opportunities to establish and grow operations across London's specialised life sciences clusters, with access to research institutions, clinical partners, investors and increasingly diverse facilities.

Looking ahead

London's opportunity in 2027 lies in building on its world-class research and commercialisation strengths, attracting international investment and helping innovative life sciences businesses scale and compete globally.

Through its concentration of research institutions, businesses, investors and specialist infrastructure, London offers the connections and partnerships needed to turn scientific innovation into commercial success.

Explore more

Stay connected with Team London for the latest insights, opportunities and stories showcasing London's strengths across key sectors and international networks.

Source: London Life Sciences Market Outlook 2027, London & Partners Insights.