

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**Babraham Research Campus**

**4 December 2008**  
**Cambridge, UK**

**Minister for the East of England visits the Babraham Research Campus and new Technology Development Lab**

The Minister for the East of England, Barbara Follett, today visited the Babraham Research Campus, and Babraham Bioscience Technologies (BBT), which earlier this year was awarded a £300,000 capital equipment grant for its Technology Development Lab (TDL) by the East of England Development Agency (EEDA). Babraham is a regional enterprise hub which has a role in promoting and supporting bioscience innovation in the East of England.

After chairing the Regional Economic Forum, the group which meets monthly to focus the Government's response to employment, financial and housing challenges in the region, Barbara Follett toured Babraham's new TDL to see how Babraham is strengthening and supporting biomedical innovation in the region.

As one of the leading enterprise hubs in the UK, the Babraham Research Campus has established a reputation for nurturing early-stage biomedical enterprises. Companies at Babraham's 'Bioincubator' benefit from being closely integrated with the Babraham Institute, facilitating academic and commercial collaborations as well as access to scientific services and capital equipment. This summer the importance of Babraham's TDL was recognised with the award of £300,000 by the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) through its Capital Equipment Competition. The TDL is a fully-equipped biology and chemistry laboratory, which fast tracks early-stage concepts and technologies into viable commercial propositions. This award will develop the facility further, building on existing expertise and capability within the TDL and put in place a suite of equipment supporting drug discovery.

Minister for the East of England, Barbara Follett said, "The strength and diversity of the East of England's economy means that it is better placed than many to weather the current difficult and uncertain economic times. We have a strong and growing biotechnology sector whose innovation and investment in technology and skills should ensure its continued success.

"The facilities I have seen here today at the TDL are state-of-the art. These are important for both the emerging and the established bioventures, especially during the critical developmental stages of new technology when cash and entrepreneurial expertise can be in short supply."

The Minister was shown around the campus and TDL by Professor Michael Wakelam, Director of the Babraham Institute. He commented,

"Babraham is unique in bringing basic biomedical research scientists and commercial biomedical scientists together on the one campus. This has benefits for both the academic and commercial scientists and promotes the translation of publicly-funded research. A bottleneck in the translation process has long been the difficulties in progressing ideas at an early stage into a commercially viable opportunity. The successful establishment of the Technology Development Laboratory, which supports this translational step through access to space, equipment and expertise, goes a long way in addressing this problem and further emphasises the key role played by the Babraham Research Campus in the East of England biotechnology sector."

The TDL facility has been set up so that, coupled with its chemistry capability, it allows innovators in drug discovery to develop their technologies all the way from DNA to protein and compounds to hit. In keeping with its mission to support innovators, the TDL focuses on the needs of cash-limited companies and is flexible in its approach enabling clients to pick and choose depending on their individual needs: for example, providing only bench space and access to the lab equipment, or to train the inventors and the company's scientific staff to undertake the work themselves.

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The Minister for the East of England, Barbara Follett, with Professor Michael Wakelam, Director of the Babraham Institute and Deborah Cadman, Chief Executive of EEDA (left).



From left: Professor Michael Wakelam, Director of The Babraham Institute; Barbara Follett, The Minister for the East of England; Dr Caroline Edmonds, Director of Operations, The Babraham Institute; Derek Jones, Interim CEO, Babraham Bioscience Technologies Ltd.

## Notes for Editors

**Babraham Bioscience Technologies Ltd** is the wholly-owned subsidiary and trading arm of the Babraham Institute. Coalescing scientific, technological and commercial excellence, BBT delivers the Knowledge Transfer remit of the Institute through the wider landscape of the Babraham Research Campus, catalysing opportunities for enterprise across the academic and commercial divide. BBT brings together all the elements to support innovation and enable the successful exploitation of research in the biomedical sector based on technologies emanating from the Babraham Institute and bioventures relocating to the Babraham Research Campus. Website: [www.babraham.com](http://www.babraham.com)

**The Babraham Research Campus** is the UK's leading knowledge-driven Biomedical Park where world-class research, business know-how and entrepreneurial excellence come together to stimulate effective knowledge transfer and bridge the academic and commercial divide. The campus provides a unique and highly successful environment that actively fosters innovation and plays a pivotal role for biomedical start-up companies in the Cambridge region and with delivering innovation at the frontiers of biomedical research. BBT has taken a prominent role regionally, initiating and leading partnerships to promote knowledge and skills flow and has established a reputation for successfully translating innovative science into viable business opportunities through partnerships for wealth creation. This is stimulating inward investment to the campus and contributing to regional development.

**The Babraham Institute** is an independent charitable organisation, sponsored by the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council, carrying out world-leading innovative research and advanced training with relevance to the biomedical, biotechnological, pharmaceutical and healthcare research and user communities. The Institute's research focuses on the mechanisms of cell signalling and gene regulation, which underlie normal cellular processes and functions, and on how their failure or abnormality may lead to disease. As such, Institute scientists are striving to find cures for conditions where there is currently no treatment or where the existing treatment is not fully effective or causes serious side effects. The latest technologies are being used to study the basis of conditions such as neurodegenerative disorders, foetal abnormality, cancer and diseases of the immune and cardiovascular systems. The commercialisation of the Institute's research is managed by its trading subsidiary, Babraham Bioscience Technologies Ltd. The Babraham Research Campus is located six miles south-east of Cambridge. Website: [www.babraham.ac.uk](http://www.babraham.ac.uk)

**The East of England Regional Economic Forum** provides feedback to the National and Regional Economic Councils and Council of Regional Ministers, advice on particular issues in the East of England and actions taken to counter these. It includes the following members: East of England Development Agency (EEDA); East of England Regional Assembly (EERA); Government Office for the East of England (GO-East); Learning and Skills Council ; Jobcentre Plus; NHS East of England; The Housing Corporation; English Partnerships; Highways Agency; East of England Business Group; Federation of Small Businesses; East of England CBI; Institute of Directors; Regional Chambers of Commerce & Industry; Local authority Chief Executives; TUC; East of England MEP

**The East of England Development Agency (EEDA)** is the driving force behind sustainable economic regeneration in the East of England: Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. The vision is for the East of England is to create a leading economy, founded on a world class knowledge base, creativity and enterprise to improve the quality of life for all who live and work here. For further information visit [www.eeda.org.uk](http://www.eeda.org.uk)