

British biotech company focuses on creating cellular factories

Synthace is the first company in the UK to specialise solely in the synthesis of new biological production systems, overseeing design all the way through to application. A spin-off from UCL, Synthace uses the university's biochemical engineering facilities to test its innovative biological inventions that have applications for a range of industries.

The UK's innovation agency has taken notice. In March 2013, the Technology Strategy Board awarded Synthace a £500,000 grant in collaboration with UCL and the University of Manchester for the "Rapid Engineering of Cellular Factories". Using the suite of novel technologies at the firm's disposal, the project's ambitious aim is to tune cells that can convert abundant feedstocks such as vegetable oil into high value chemicals such as pigments, fragrances and pharmaceutical ingredients.

These new cellular factories not only promise to cut the cost and time normally associated with chemical production, but also waste, risk and energy use.

Read the full, original article: [From bacterial robots to synthetic blood cells: The biotech boom at British universities](#)

Additional Resources:

- ["Disruptive genomics: Is China's BGI the epicenter of the world's biotech revolution?"](#), Genetic Literacy Project
- ["Promise and peril of synthetic biology,"](#) Council on Foreign Relations
- ["First lab-grown burger: Groundbreaking, a bit bland, and definitely not GM,"](#) Wall Street Journal