

## Venture capital firms pushing into synbio funding

Synthetic biology, which uses engineered gene sequences to create new biological systems and devices, used to be a subject for futurists and sci-fi writers.

In the last few years, however, applications of synthetic biology are regularly showing up in the business models of venture-backed healthcare companies. Startups engaged in drug, biofuel and crop development, as well as several producing tools and processes for biological research, have attracted sizable, and in some cases, exceptionally large rounds.

Venture firms have invested more than \$400 million in companies with a significant synthetic biology focus since last year, according to a VCJ analysis based on Thomson Reuters data. Most of that total is for companies like [Juno Therapeutics](#), which employ engineered gene sequences into therapies.

Also raising significant capital are companies that don't directly work on therapies, but develop technologies for engineering gene sequences. That includes companies like [Twist Bioscience](#), a San Francisco-based company developing a semiconductor-based synthetic DNA manufacturing process.

Investments add up to what look like large numbers. But VCs active in the space say commitments are miniscule in comparison to the impact synthetic biology will have over the next few decades.

**Read the full, original story: [Synthetic biology goes for scale: VCJ](#)**