



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

## *News Release*

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### **Scientists secure £25.7m to create powerhouse of research**

A £25.7 million funding boost will advance biological research and aid the quest for new therapies to treat damaged tissues.

The investment by the UK Government will enable the University of Edinburgh to create a new biology complex with world-leading laboratory space for 350 researchers and to establish a new Centre for Tissue Repair.

The two projects are the only Scottish bids to secure funding in a fiercely competitive round of awards from the UK Research Partnership Investment Fund.

More than £50 million has been leveraged from industry, charity and philanthropic funds to double-match the investment.

Professor Jonathan Seckl, Vice-Principal Planning, Resources and Research Policy at the University of Edinburgh, said: “This investment will be a major catalyst for our goal of creating a powerhouse of research and intellectual discovery that will ultimately generate health, social and economic benefits for Scotland and the UK.”

An investment of £15m will help to create a research complex that integrates three research areas with an advanced technology hub to transform how biology is investigated. A key part of its focus will be infection and global health.

Another vital component will be synthetic biology, which creates artificial biological systems that can be used by industry and in medical research. They could also aid the discovery of new drugs.

Scientists will also focus on epigenetics – studying how genes can be modified without a change to the DNA sequence.

The new biology complex will include facilities for community engagement.

Professor David Gray, Head of the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Edinburgh, said: “This investment will position Edinburgh as one of the world’s finest research clusters for biological sciences.”

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A second investment of £10.7 million will enable the creation of a Centre for Tissue Repair, bringing together experts in inflammation and scarring, and tissue regeneration.

Researchers hope to discover and deliver new treatments for tissue damage, such as the destruction of nerve cells in multiple sclerosis or damage to the liver caused by infections.

The Centre will provide a platform to investigate the mechanisms underlying tissue injury.

Advanced imaging and sensing technologies will be developed that will enable researchers to view and measure tissue regeneration in real time.

Such techniques will be critical for helping researchers to evaluate the effectiveness of new treatments in clinical trials.

Professor Charles ffrench-Constant, Director of the MRC Centre for Regenerative Medicine at the University of Edinburgh, said: “The Centre for Tissue Repair will build on Edinburgh’s world-leading expertise in regenerative medicine and inflammation to speed up the delivery of clinical therapies.”

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