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Research Fineness

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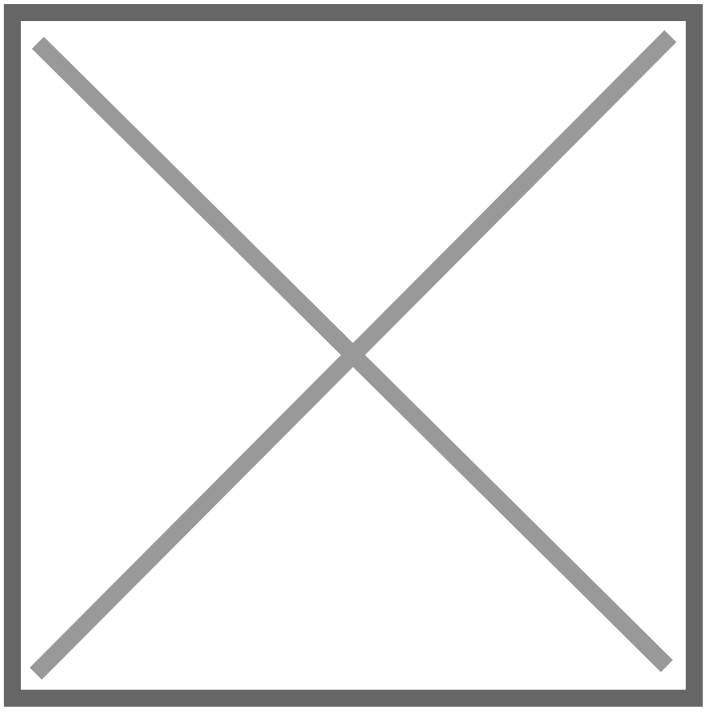

The North East of England is home to R&D.

This region is focused on creating a world-class center in R&D and commercialization of R&D in Life Sciences. A strong broad-based bio-scientific research portfolio exists in the North East with activities spanning medical, agricultural and environmental areas. In particular, the major strengths in the North East Life Sciences sector have been identified in oncology, ageing and health, genetics and stem cell research, and plant biotechnology. The Centre of Excellence in Life Sciences (CELS) is tasked with identifying key areas of regional scientific excellence and those platform technologies, which will strengthen their development.

At the heart of the life sciences cluster in the North East lies one of the most successful Millennium projects in the UK, Â£70 million International Centre for Life. It has low-cost incubator units for use by university spin out companies and start-up projects alike. Further, The Institute for Human Genetics is also located at the site, which is the largest of its kind in Europe with over 100 geneticists researching into genetically related diseases. Newcastle University is one of the UK's leading biomedical schools. It is one of the only three research establishments to have been given official approval by the UK government to take forward its work in the area of Stem Cell research. Newcastle also has the leading health informatics research center, the Sowerby Centre for Health Informatics (SCHIN).

The Institute for Ageing and Health is the UK's largest research grouping of basic, clinical and social scientists in the field. Durham University is home to a Centre of Excellence in Biochemistry and Genetic Engineering. The University of Sunderland has the largest school for pharmacy in the UK. The Northern Genetics Knowledge Park was awarded to the Region in January 2002, which will create a new laboratory center, providing an interface between the Institutes of Human Genetics, Cancer Research and Ageing and Health. The unifying theme will be genome instability.

These centers of excellence have been some of the main driving forces for several multinational companies like Glaxo SmithKline, Merck Sharp and Dohme, Pharmacia and Sanofi-Synthelabo to have their base within the region. Avecia, a world leader in biologics manufacturing, is investing Â£70million to build one of the world's most advanced biologics medicines manufacturing facilities in Billingham, Tees Valley.