

GE Healthcare invests \$100m in Uppsala life science plant

Written by Staff reporter

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The Stockholm-Uppsala region is famous for its advanced life science sector. GE Healthcare, which is a unit of General Electric, has announced plans to invest \$100 million to expand its facilities in Uppsala, a city in the Stockholm region.

GE Healthcare's investment is the second largest investment in the region recently. The company, which provides medical technology and services, plans to use the investment to double its capacity to manufacture components which are key to producing vital medicines such as insulin.

Uppsala's County Governor Peter Egardt welcomed the investment.

"It's like a school graduation where you receive the highest grades," he said at a press conference.

The investment is linked to the news that the company's life sciences business in Uppsala has been certified an international standard for business continuity. That means it has put systems in place to ensure it could continue to function in the wake of major disruption.

Nigel Darby, head of GE's bioprocess business, pointed out that being able to supply key manufacturing components even in difficult circumstances was vitally important to their customers who produce the drugs that many people around the world rely on.

"Being one of the first companies in the bioprocessing field to achieve ISO certification in business continuity reflects our commitment to minimizing risk and any potential impact of unforeseen disruptive incidents," he said.

The investment came only months after British-Swedish firm AstraZeneca also announced a large scale investment in the Stockholm region. The multinational pharmaceutical company said in May it planned to invest \$285 million in a new high-tech facility for the manufacture of biological medicines in Södertälje.

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Jan-Olof Jacke, president of AstraZeneca, said the Swedish government had actively sought to boost the region's life science industry.

"In addition to our strong internal capabilities and the access to a highly skilled workforce within the life science sector, we are encouraged by signals from the Swedish Government regarding a competitive and supportive environment for business investment," he said.

Today, GE Healthcare's Uppsala facility produces 250 different types of chromatography medium, which are used in the purification of more than 90 percent of all biopharmaceuticals approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

GE Healthcare – a subsidiary of American conglomerate General Electric but headquartered in the UK – employs some 1,200 highly skilled people in Uppsala.

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