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**Touchlight extends funding round to US\$125M
as demand for its dbDNA™ grows rapidly**

- *Demand for Touchlight's synthetic DNA vector has grown rapidly since last year*
- *dbDNA™ is driving biomedical innovations such as DNA and mRNA vaccines, synthetic DNA-based neutralising antibody therapies, and more*
- *Touchlight's synthetic DNA vector is revolutionising genetic medicine manufacture by offering a superior alternative to traditional plasmid DNA*

Hampton, UK – 15 September 2021 – Touchlight, a biotechnology company pioneering enzymatic DNA production to enable the genetic medicine revolution, today announces extension of its fundraising round to a current aggregate total of US \$125 million (£92 million GBP). The round was led by Bridford Investments Limited and Novator Partners.

Demand for Touchlight's proprietary synthetic DNA vector, dbDNA™, has grown rapidly in the last year. The latest aspect of its ongoing fundraise will be used to support Touchlight in its mission to be the world's leading synthetic DNA manufacturer and drive the genetic medicine revolution.

Bridford and Novator will support Touchlight through investments in additional manufacturing capacity, R&D, and growth initiatives, and by leveraging their strong healthcare expertise. Touchlight is expanding the footprint of its Hampton-based facilities to enable production of up to 1 kilogram of GMP DNA per month once operational in Q2 2022.

In addition, Touchlight is significantly expanding its team this year. From a headcount of 65 in January, the Company anticipates growth to more than 125 by the end of this year. This expansion includes assembling dedicated commercial and marketing operations in the UK and North America.

Touchlight also continues to drive innovative biomedical approaches through genetic medicines, such as DNA vaccine development for both [COVID-19](#) and [head and neck cancer](#), alongside [synthetic DNA-based antibody research](#) in collaboration with Vanderbilt University and DARPA.

dbDNA™ ("doggybone DNA™") is a synthetic DNA vector. The enzymatic manufacturing process for dbDNA offers multiple advantages over traditional plasmid DNA (pDNA), which is currently a key component of mRNA vaccines and gene therapies. GMP dbDNA can be produced more rapidly than pDNA (weeks versus months) and is manufactured using benchtop equipment with a significantly smaller physical and carbon footprint, making it simple and rapid to scale up as well as highly portable and amenable to technology transfer. dbDNA vectors contain no antibiotic resistance genes – a topic of increasing regulatory scrutiny.

Touchlight DNA Services, the manufacturing focal point of the Touchlight business, already supplies GMP materials to leading players across the genetic medicines industry. Touchlight



expects to build on this with significant further growth across viral vectors, cell therapy, mRNA and DNA vaccines.

Jonny Ohlson, Executive Chairman of Touchlight, said: “As the market for genetic medicines continues to expand at pace, we believe our dbDNA™ technology can be a key enabler of the industry, combining our revolutionary DNA manufacturing solution with a vector that sets a new regulatory gold standard. We are delighted that our investors also see the immense opportunities the field offer.”

Steve Bates OBE, Chief Executive of the BioIndustry Association said: “Touchlight’s pioneering DNA technology is being recognised by investors with this stellar fundraise and it’s great to see that this investment will be used to increase Touchlight’s manufacturing footprint here in the UK.”



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Notes to Editors

About Touchlight

Touchlight, based in London, UK, is the world’s leading manufacturer of synthetic DNA. The company is pioneering enzymatic DNA production to enable the revolution in genetic medicines, including DNA and mRNA vaccines and cell and gene therapies. Touchlight has developed a novel, synthetic DNA vector known as “doggybone” or dbDNA™.

dbDNA™ is a minimal, linear, covalently closed structure, that eliminates bacterial sequences. Touchlight’s revolutionary enzymatic production platform enables unprecedented speed, scale, and the ability to produce genes with a size and complexity that is impossible with current technologies.

Touchlight is enabling companies across the genetic medicine industry, providing contract development and manufacturing capabilities to produce dbDNA as a critical starting material and active pharmaceutical ingredient for use in advanced therapies.



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For more information, please visit our website, www.touchlight.com, or connect with us on [LinkedIn](#).

About Bridford Investments Limited

Bridford Investments Limited is part of Bridford Group, an investment group which deploys its proprietary capital in a range of sectors, including biotech and life sciences (investments include Baccuico, Hudson River Biotechnology, LenioBio, Meatable and Solar Foods). Bridford Group's focus is on backing founder-led businesses with long-term growth potential, ideally those concerned with societal or environmental welfare.

About Novator Partners LLP

Novator is an investment firm founded by Icelandic businessman Thor Björgólfsson in 2004, with offices in London, Iceland, Luxembourg and Switzerland. Novator invests proprietary capital in private equity, growth equity and capital markets across a variety of sectors, including healthcare (investments include Sidekick, Numan, and Xantis Pharma).

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