Novartis has announced a unique and flexible long-term partnership with Lonza, a global biotech leader in process development and manufacturing, to rapidly scale up technical development and clinical production for part of the rapidly growing Novartis biologics pipeline.

Biotechnology is a strategic focus for Novartis. Extensive research and development (R&D) activities over the past few years have resulted in a sharp increase in the number of biological compounds, currently accounting for about a quarter of the Novartis development portfolio. The Novartis Biologics unit aims to further grow the biological pipeline.

The strong Novartis R&D capabilities, coupled with Lonza’s leadership in process development and manufacturing, offer an ideal platform for rapid development and production of innovative biological medicines. This may include monoclonal antibodies for treating patients with diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, cancer, asthma and spinal cord injury.

Mr Mark Levick, global head of Novartis Biologics, said: “The strategic partnership provides a win-win for both companies. It gives Novartis access to the most advanced technology and processes available to develop new biological medicines faster for the benefit of patients. At the same time, it allows Novartis to delay investments into manufacturing.”

Under the partnership with Lonza, each project will have a specific development agreement. Following successful development of a compound, Novartis can choose to transfer the commercial manufacturing in-house. In the short term, the agreement will fulfil the need for additional resources in technical development. It will also provide Novartis with extra manufacturing capacity, to be utilized in a flexible way.

Novartis currently has six biopharmaceutical production plants, in Europe and the United States, and is planning to expand its in-house manufacturing capabilities with a new site in Singapore.
About Novartis
Novartis offers a wide range of healthcare products through their Pharmaceuticals, Vaccines and Diagnostics, Sandoz and Consumer Health divisions. They want to discover, develop and successfully market innovative products to prevent and cure diseases, to ease suffering and to enhance people's quality of life.

About Lonza
Lonza is one of the world's leading suppliers to the pharmaceutical, healthcare and life science industries. Its products and services span its customers' needs from research to final product manufacture. Lonza is the global leader in the production and support of active pharmaceutical ingredients, both chemically as well as biotechnologically. Biopharmaceuticals are one of the key growth drivers of the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries. Lonza has strong capabilities in large and small molecules, peptides, amino acids and niche bioproducts which play an important role in the development of novel medicines and healthcare products. Lonza is a leader in cell-based research, endotoxin detection and cell therapy manufacturing. Lonza is also a leading provider of value chemical and biotech ingredients to the nutrition, hygiene, preservation, agro and personal care markets.