# From lab to market

In the not so distant future, we all could be wearing clothes or sleeping in tents made of synthetic spider silk.

Bolt Threads, an NSF-funded start-up, made headlines last week when it announced a $50 million investment round and a deal with Patagonia to develop products made with Bolt Threads yarn. While Bolt’s first products will be apparel, but its material can be tailored to have superior strength and elasticity, opening the door for a variety of future products.

The California-based company came up with a way to make yeast that produce silk proteins: it inserts genes inspired by the spider into yeast, where they program the organism to make silk proteins.

In 2010, Bolt Threads received a Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grant from the National Science Foundation – some of the first outside money into the company.