



Press Release, Monday 26 September 2016

New €5.83 million project to boost growth for biobased SMEs and Start-ups in North-West Europe

The European Commission has launched through its INTERREG NWE Programme a three-year project “BioBase4SME” to further support the development of the biobased economy in North West Europe (NWE). The €5.83 million project will help start-ups and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to overcome technological and non-technological barriers on their path to turn biobased research into commercial innovation. BioBase4SME offers training, innovation biocamps, workshops and innovation coupons worth up to €100.000. The BioBase4SME partnership includes eight organisations from six different countries.

The biobased economy creates a big opportunity for Europe. Locally produced biobased feedstocks rather than imported fossil resources are used to produce materials, chemicals and energy, creating a new knowledge and technology intensive economy with high employment potential and with reduced environmental impact. The European bioeconomy showed a turnover of €2.1 trillion and employed 18.3 million employees in 2013 and has a huge growth potential.

The BioBase4SME network, representing leading biobased economy experts, will advise SMEs from across North-West Europe on how to develop new ideas into marketable products. The project will offer training, innovation biocamps, workshops and innovation coupons worth up to €100.000. These coupons can be used for technological assistance such as scale-up to pilot scale, Life-Cycle Assessment (LCA), techno-economic evaluation, market research, feedstock analysis, social acceptance, and business planning support or a combination thereof.

Dr. Lieve Hoflack, Manager of the BioBase4SME project, says: “We expect to bring at least 20 promising innovations closer to the market, resulting in new investments and job creation, and provide training to about 200 entrepreneurs active in the biobased economy, thus boosting their innovation capacity. Other main outputs are a strong, interregional network to guide entrepreneurs towards successful innovation and improved regional support for the biobased economy in terms of innovation and investment climate, regulatory framework and public approval.”

BioBase4SME is a follow-up of the highly successful Bio Base NWE project (www.BioBaseNWE.org). This three-year (2013-2015) project mentored 755 companies in total and granted 30 innovation coupons worth €10-30.000 for technological assistance to SMEs and start-ups. The work done within the innovation coupon scheme created a substantial leverage effect: up to €71million of investments and the creation of 320 new jobs in the biobased economy in the coming years.

BioBase4SME intends to do even better!

For more information regarding training, biocamps, workshops and innovation coupons, please visit <http://www.nweurope.eu/BioBase4SME> or contact the **Bio-Innovation Agent** in your region (see below).

Notes to editors:

1. The BioBase4SME partners are:



For Belgium

Bio Base Europe Pilot Plant (BBEPP), Ghent, Belgium, <http://www.bbeu.org/pilotplant/>

Ghent Bio-Economy Valley, Ghent, Belgium, <http://www.gbev.org/en>

- **Bio-Innovation Agent for Flanders:** Mrs. Sofie Dobbelaere, Tel: +32 9 264 59 05, sofie.dobbelaere@gbev.org

Materia Nova, Mons, Belgium, <http://www.materianova.be/>

- **Bio-Innovation Agent for Wallonia:** Mr Guillaume Wégria, Mob: +32(0)484 13 90 07, guillaume.wegria@materianova.be

For France

Association of the Chambers of Agriculture of the Atlantic Arc (AC3A), Nantes, France, http://www.ac3a.fr/AC3A_en.php

- **Bio-Innovation Agent for France:** Mr. Pascal Dagrón, Tel +33 253 466 257, contact@ac3a.chambagri.fr

For Germany

CLIB2021 Cluster Industrielle Biotechnologie, Düsseldorf, Germany, <http://www.clib2021.de/en>

- **Bio-Innovation Agent for Germany:** Mrs. Carolin Lange, Tel +49 211 679 31 34, lange@clib2021.de

For Ireland

tcbb RESOURCE, Galway, Ireland, <http://www.tcbbresource.ie/>

- **Bio-Innovation Agent for Ireland:** Mr. Pádraic Ó hUiginn, Tel +353 87 905 3806, pohuiginn@tcbb.ie

For The Netherlands

REWIN Projecten, Breda, The Netherlands, <http://www.rewin.nl/>

- **Bio-Innovation Agent for The Netherlands:** Mr. Dennis van der Pas, Mob: + 31 (0) 6 513 599 94, D.vanderPas@rewin.nl

For UK

The National Non-Food Crop Centre, York, UK, <http://www.nnfcc.co.uk/>

- **Bio-Innovation Agent for UK:** Mr. Davide Di Maio, +44 (0)1904 435182,
d.dimaio@nffcc.co.uk

2. INTERREG North-West Europe Programme

BioBase4SME is 60% funded by the INTERREG NWE Programme. The Interreg North-West Europe Programme fosters transnational cooperation to make the North Western Europe a key economic player and an attractive place to work and live, with high levels of innovation, sustainability and cohesion. <http://www.nweurope.eu/>

3. BioBase4SME is co-financed by:



4. BioBase4SME Project Office:

The BioBase4SME project is coordinated by Bio Base Europe Pilot Plant (Ghent, Belgium). For more information, comment or interview requests about BioBase4SME, please contact:

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OR

Your local Bio-Innovation Agent (see 1.)

OR

<http://www.nweurope.eu/BioBase4SME>