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traceless materials receives €2.42 million grant from the European Innovation Council to quickly scale up technology

Circular bioeconomy start-up traceless materials is one of the 65 companies to receive a grant from the European Innovation Council (EIC). With their innovative holistically sustainable material solution, the company fights global plastic pollution.

HAMBURG, GERMANY. traceless materials, a female-founded start-up that developed a holistically sustainable alternative material for plastic, receives a €2.42million grant and equity investment from the European Innovation Council (EIC). The funding will allow traceless to bring its novel naturally compostable biomaterial to market, substituting plastic and bioplastic in products that can easily end up in the environment - solving global plastic pollution.

In Europe, only 32.5% of plastic consumer waste is collected to be recycled. 43% of plastic waste in Europe is incinerated while another 25% is being landfilled. A substantial proportion of all plastic waste ends up in the environment, leading to extensive pollution of oceans and land. The negative impact of plastic on the environment results in an urgent need for alternatives. Novel material solutions which avoid plastic and microplastic from ending up in the environment are needed. Furthermore, the impact of these solutions on other urgent issues such as climate change, the global food problem, land-use change, or the environmentally sound management of hazardous chemicals need to be taken into consideration.

traceless materials were developed taking into consideration all impact indicators: The patent-pending technology invented by CEO and co-founder Dr. Anne Lamp allows the use of agricultural food production residues to produce materials that are home compostable. While bio-based, traceless materials don't cause land-use-change, don't need any hazardous additives or solvents and have up to 87% lower CO2 emissions than conventional plastics. Using natural polymers that are neither chemically modified nor synthetically polymerized, they are expected not to fall under the EU Plastic Directive. And already competitive in quality, on industrial production scale traceless materials will even be price competitive to virgin plastic in the EU, making them a solution for people in all demographics and income levels. traceless is applicable to a wide variety of products that can easily end up in the environment - from rigid and flexible packaging to disposables to products with high abrasion and coating & adhesive solutions. As it is fully home-compostable under natural composting conditions, with their first-of-a-kind material the company contributes to solving global plastic pollution.

The EIC evaluation committee praises the excellence of traceless' invention: *"The proposed innovation represents a true breakthrough in the field of plastic materials as it combines a circular and sustainable approach, based upon agricultural waste, innovative transformation steps, and final characteristics of the materials, which are beyond the state of the art and will bring a fully biodegradable solution in many sectors. The combination of biodegradability with specific thermomechanical, barrier and compatibility properties, can generate relevant market opportunities, especially from the packaging industry."*

Since its founding in September 2020 traceless has shown clear ambitions to bring their materials to market fast. The continuously growing team is developing several prototypes, among others an e-commerce shipping bag with OTTO (https://www.otto.de/newsroom/de/kundenfokus/kampf-gegen-plastikmuell-wie-traceless-die-welt-aufraeumen-will), one of Europe's biggest e-commerce companies. Simultaneously, a successful seed investment allowed traceless materials to build its first pilot production plant to realize first market pilots. The company will use the EIC funding to further accelerate its scale up through the building of a demonstration production plant which will enable a first market entry for traceless materials.

The EIC Accelerator supports individual Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to develop and scale up game-changing innovations. The EIC aims to bring Europe to the forefront of innovation and new technologies by investing in new solutions for the health, environmental and societal challenges faced. It is the most competitive public funding scheme for deep tech startups at the moment - as highlighted by the 4000 companies which sent in their ideas this year and the only 65 winners.

Dr. Anne Lamp, CEO of traceless materials, reacted enthusiastically: *"Receiving the EIC Accelerator support is a clear recognition of the innovative nature and high potential of traceless' technology and the amazing work our team has done over the past year. The funding enables us to speed up our development even more and bring traceless to market fast – so that we can make our contribution to solve global plastic pollution!"*

Official EIC press release:
https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_21_5225

ABOUT TRACELESS MATERIALS

traceless materials GmbH is a female-founded circular bioeconomy start-up founded in September 2020, offering a holistically sustainable alternative to conventional plastics and bioplastics solving global plastic pollution. For the first time, agricultural industry by-products are used to produce a biomaterial that provides the beneficial properties of plastics while being home-compostable under natural conditions. Even though traceless materials are bio-based, they do not compete with food production, hereby preventing food conflict and land-use change. In contrast to conventional plastics and bioplastic, they don't need any harmful additives, solvents or chemicals and have up to 87% lower CO2 emissions. The environmental impact of traceless was analyzed in a life-cycle assessment (LCA). Based on scientific criteria and undertaken by an independent site, the analysis shows the positive impact potential of traceless materials for different impact indicators, like resource consumption, greenhouse gas emission, and waste production. A summary of the LCA is available online: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Q5vGYJc8rQ1J0bXgpS_i2b0sDJBGqZQI/view
Using natural polymers that are neither chemically modified nor synthetically polymerized, traceless materials are expected not to fall under the EU Plastics Directive. Already competitive in quality to conventional plastics and bioplastics, on industrial production scale the materials will also be price competitive to virgin plastics in the EU. During the past year, traceless already received high recognition in some European awards: After winning the Advanced Materials Competition (AdMaCom) by INAM in 2020, they won the Green Alley Award, Biopolymer Innovation Award 2nd, Future Hamburg Award 2nd and C-Voucher Prize 2nd in 2021.

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Website: http://www.traceless.eu

ABOUT THE EUROPEAN INNOVATION COUNCIL

The European Innovation Council (EIC) is Europe's flagship innovation programme to identify, develop and scale up breakthrough technologies and game changing innovations. The EIC was officially launched in March 2021 - after a successful pilot phase - as a major novelty under the Horizon Europe programme and following a successful pilot phase between 2018 and 2020. It has a budget of over €10 billion to support game changing innovations throughout the lifecycle from early-stage research to proof of concept, technology transfer, and the financing and scale up of start-ups and SMEs. Approximately €1.1 billion is available for the EIC Accelerator in 2021. The EIC Accelerator is a unique European funding instrument providing substantial financial support with a grant funding (non-dilutive) of up to €2.5 million for innovation development costs and investments (direct equity investments) of up to €15 million managed by the EIC Fund for scale up and other relevant costs. In addition, EIC selected companies receive coaching, mentoring, access to investors and corporates, and many other opportunities as part of the EIC community. The EIC aims to bring Europe to the forefront of innovation and new technologies, by investing in new solutions for the health, environmental and societal challenges faced.

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