

TWB® START-UP DAY **an international reference event** **in the field of industrial biotechnology**

For the 4th consecutive year, TWB, expert in managing R&D projects, organised two days dedicated to start-ups as well as players in the biotechnology field around two major themes for the future of the sector: circularity within the bio-economy and data processing & artificial intelligence. Two pitch competitions, one dedicated to established start-ups and the other to entrepreneurs at the ideation stage, had also been organised. The event, TWB® START-UP DAY, held this year 100% digitally and live, brought together 13 exceptional speakers and 225 international representatives of the domain.

The distinguished speakers

On the 2 and 3 February 2021, TWB organised the 4th edition of the TWB® START-UP DAY now firmly established as an unmissable event in the landscape for innovation and entrepreneurship in industrial biotechnology. The objective is to promote the ecosystem of start-ups in the field and to unite all its international players.

The first speech of the TWB® START-UP DAY 2021 was made by one of the many eminent speakers, Sarah Reisinger, Senior Vice President Research Operations of Firmenich, a leader in the perfumery and flavours industry. She shared the perspectives of the group on the road towards circularity and the bio-economy, and the transition to new applications such as taste, drawing on the contribution of industrial biotechnology. The speakers were: Mateus Lopes, Head of Innovation in Renewable Technologies at Braskem, Philippe Lavielle, CEO of Fermentalg, Michael Krel of Sofinnova Partners, Christophe Luguel of IAR and Stéphane Roussel of ECBF (European Circular Bioeconomy Fund).

Other notable presentations concerning a major issue for industrial biotechnologies: data processing and artificial intelligence (AI). Timothy Gardner, Founder and CEO of Riffyn, explained the originality of its data system to reduce product development time and costs. Other speakers included: Thomas Schiex, Researcher in AI and Computational Biology at INRAE, Joël Sirois, Founder and CEO of BioIntelligence Technologies, Ghjuvan Grimaud, Co-Founder and CEO of Biomathematica and Charlotte Leleu from Cabinet Plasseraud.

The 4th edition of the TWB® START-UP DAY closed with a remarkable speech given by Sean Simpson, Co-founder and Scientific Director of Lanzatech. He shared his personal experience as a founder; a particularly inspiring presentation for all participants.

The very last message had been sent by Will Wright of IGEM Foundation, who calls upon all European biotech players to promote a sustainable European bio-economy through the "Biofutures" initiative.

Focus on innovation

As part of the event, TWB organised two competitions to promote entrepreneurship. The competition, 'Fast track it!' was to select and support the start-up with the most promising and innovative solution and targeted European start-ups of less than 8 years in their developmental phase. At stake: a reward of 50,000 € in the form of services provided on TWB technology platforms and communication opportunities offered by the IAR cluster, a partner in the competition. This year, 5 short-listed start-ups pitched in turn to a jury of experts from the investment and innovation sectors. With an inspiring presentation, the Spanish start-up ZYMBOL won over the jury. ZYMBOL brings its know-how to assist industries with biocatalyst discovery and optimisation through computer-driven innovation.

The second competition, 'Go for it!', aimed this time at those entrepreneurs at the ideation and creation stage of start-up, awarded the winner 4 days of mentoring services provided by TWB and its ecosystem, and by the competition partners: La French Tech Toulouse and ShakeUpFactory. In total, 5 entrepreneurs came to present their start-up project. The winner of the 2021 edition of the competition 'Go for it!' is the nascent Swiss start-up Fluosphera, which offers test systems to predict the effects of compounds (chemicals, drugs, etc.) on consumers and/or patients.

The proofs of success

Organised for the first time in a digital format held live over two days, TWB® START-UP DAY 2021 brought together 225 professionals (young entrepreneurs, industrialists, investors, academics and consultants), from 17 countries: France, Switzerland, Canada, Spain, Japan, USA... Nearly 60 start-up companies were present. BtoB meetings were offered throughout these two days: an opportunity to network and meet future partners. 95 virtual meetings were held and more than 1000 messages were exchanged on the dedicated platform. The event, acclaimed by Toulouse Métropole and the Occitan region, benefited from promotion by partners from the IAR cluster, French Tech Toulouse and ShakeUpFactory and the sponsorship of Plasseraud IP, CARBIOS, Michelin, Sofinnova Partners, m2p-labs, Inscripta and the Agri Sud-Ouest Innovation cluster.

"I note that beyond being a simple posture, real commitments have been made by all industrial biotechnology players, including the large groups, to change the way we produce and consume, in an efficient way whilst respecting the constraints of our planet. However, this new course requires innovation, technological breakthroughs and original, unconventional strategies" concludes **Olivier Rolland, Executive Director TWB.**

About TWB:

Expert in steering R&D projects, TWB contributes to the development of new sustainable production pathways by providing innovative and economically sound alternative biological solutions. In order to accelerate the transition towards an eco-responsible industry, TWB has drawn on collective intelligence to drive pioneering links between researchers, industrial groups and investors. By fostering worthwhile, practical and innovative research, TWB meets a two-fold challenge: to effectively address the issue of climate change whilst creating economic value.

Since the creation of TWB (2012), under the triple supervision of INRAE, INSA and CNRS, and, as of the 1st January 2020 strengthened by 53 partners; (industrial groups, start-ups, investors, research bodies, local and regional authorities, etc.); TWB has contributed to the launch of 200 collaborative research and development projects and to the growth of numerous start-ups which in total have raised more than 100M€.

More information: <https://www.toulouse-white-biotechnology.com/en/>

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