MetGen receives John Sime Award and Plantics becomes PitchFest winner at #EFIB2018

Wealth of innovation on display at annual showcase event demonstrates Europe’s strong response to SDG challenges and potential of the circular bioeconomy

PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 30 October 2018 – Recognised by their peers for their innovative bio-based solutions at the 11th Annual Forum for Industrial Biotechnology and the Bioeconomy (EFIB), Finland’s MetGen Oy received the coveted annual John Sime Award and Plantics BV from the Netherlands won the strongly contested PitchFest.

The John Sime Award for the best innovation presentation was received by Matti Heikkilä, CTO of Finnish company MetGen Oy from EuropaBio’s Secretary General, Joanna Dupont-Inglis and Toulouse White Biotechnology’s Founding Director, Pierre Monsan in recognition of their pioneering work in designing enzymatic processes and solutions for industrial biorefineries. “We are honoured to be this year’s John Sime Award recipients,” says Heikkilä. “MetGen has collaboration written in our DNA: We always tailor the enzymatic solutions and licensed technologies to match the customer specific need. The winning technologies presented at EFIB are designed to solve value-chain-wide challenges, and they are developed in the spirit of open innovation. While the biggest thanks belong to MetGen’s team for coming up with these incredible technologies, we also owe a debt of deep gratitude to all the European collaboration partners who have shared our audacious visions and worked with us towards shared objectives. We believe, the only thing that a bioindustry revolution needs is more collaboration.”

With its strong, 100% plant-based and fully biodegradable bioplastic, Plantics BV was voted PitchFest winner by the participants, in the face of strong competition from 4 other pitching companies: “We are delighted to emerge as winners,” says CEO Dr. Wridzer Bakker. “We believe our Plantics-GX technology can become a building block for the bioeconomy, having reached the position where our biopolymer based on plants can provide an environmentally sustainable alternative for several applications at a competitive prize.”

Agnes Borg, Industrial Biotech Director at EuropaBio commented: “EFIB remains a key forum showcasing leading innovation in industrial biotechnology and the bioeconomy, and providing answers to key challenges. We are delighted to congratulate both MetGen and Plantics on their awards and would also thank all the attendees, who together demonstrated that the drive towards building a circular bioeconomy in Europe is gathering real momentum.”
About EFIB’s John Sime Award: Each year EFIB dedicates an award to John Sime who played a pivotal role in the early development of the Forum and to recognise his commitment both to the event and to the bioeconomy. John Sime’s own background as an R&D director for an SME ensured he was a keen advocate of new science and technology. To reflect this, an award is presented in his memory for the most innovative idea responding to societal and environmental challenges.

About the EFIB 2018 PitchFest: Now in its third year, EFIB PitchFest is a session for innovative, start-ups and early-stage SMEs focused on capturing the potential of Industrial Biotech to find new solutions that boost the Bioeconomy and deliver on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The objective of this programme, which was part of a dedicated track session on Finance and Investment is to help raise awareness of investment opportunities in industrial biotech solutions whilst facilitating entrepreneurialism and creating a supportive environment for SMEs to help their business grow and innovate. It provides an opportunity for SMEs to deliver an ‘elevator pitch’ for their most promising products and processes to a panel of influential VCs in this space and to receive constructive feedback on how to maximise potential for investment.

About EuropaBio: EuropaBio, the European Association for Bioindustries, promotes an innovative and dynamic European biotechnology industry. EuropaBio and its members are committed to the socially responsible use of biotechnology to improve quality of life, to prevent, diagnose, treat and cure diseases, to improve the quality and quantity of food and feedstuffs and to move towards a bio-based and zero-waste economy. EuropaBio represents 77 corporate and associate members and bio regions, and 15 national biotechnology associations in turn representing over 1800 biotech SMEs.

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