Press Release

Obratori enters the capital of FunCell, a startup aiming to replace some oil-based additives used in papers and contribute to the substitution of single-use plastic packaging.

Marseille, France – Thursday December 8th, 2022

As an extension of its approach to investing in breakthrough technological innovations, Obratori is pleased to announce its entry into the capital of FunCell, a startup that develop and produce biobased additives to increase the mechanical performances of cellulose-based materials. (papers, cardboards, textile fibres, etc.) and to give them new properties. A new alternative to some oil-based plastics and additives!

This stake demonstrates the major interest of Obratori, the corporate investment fund of the L'Occitane Group, in supporting projects with a positive impact on people and the planet.

Founded in 2020 by Gilles du Sordet, Henri Sors, Julien Leguy and Laurent Heux, FunCell, abbreviation of "Functionalization of Cellulosic Materials", has developed an innovative technology resulting from several years of fundamental research within CERMAV (a CNRS laboratory) from Grenoble.

The startup develops biobased additives for cellulose-based materials: papers, cardboards, textile fibers, etc. FunCell make it possible to increase their mechanical performances and also provide on demand functionalization.
The additives developed by FunCell come from the valorisation of agricultural waste, not competing with food production. FunCell initially targets the packaging and hygiene paper markets (tissues, paper towels, wipes).

They extract from fruit and vegetable waste a polymer whose role in nature is to give resistance to cellulosic materials and further improve this capacity by slightly modifying this polymer through a green chemistry process.

This innovative process saves raw materials: paper pulp but also energy:

- By replacing petroleum-based products used for mechanical reinforcement, particularly for hygiene paper (tissues, paper towels, wipes)
- By contributing to the replacement of single-use plastic products with mechanically improved, water-resistant paper.
- By increasing the profitability of manufacturers, by reducing the amount of paper required for certain use cases by up to 30%.

According to **Gilles de Sordet, president and co-founder of FunCell**, "Obratori's entry into our capital comes at a key moment in the life of our company. Their financial contribution and their support will enable us to demonstrate our full potential in three areas: the industrialization of our solution, the pursuit of our Product R&D efforts, the qualification of our products by customers…"

For **Amaury Godron, Managing Director of Obratori**: “The transition to replacing petro-based products and single-use plastics is becoming vital. To succeed in this transition, it is essential to allow innovative technologies such as that of FunCell to ensure its industrialization and to offer interesting and above all less energy-consuming prospects on the eco-responsible packaging market. »

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About Obratori
Created in 2018, OBRATORI is the corporate investment fund [CVC] of L'OCCITANE Group. The fund invests in early-stage startups.
Specialist in pre-seed | seed, we support responsible founders with ambitious projects that change the game. Our role? We team up with entrepreneurs and accompany them to create, launch, take risks and take the first decisive steps.
We support projects that meet the criterion: "Better for people and for the planet".
The team supports 17 companies including Le Rouge Français, Bocoloco, InHairCare, Eclo,…

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About FunCell
Founded in 2020 and located in Isère, at the heart of a historic and strong paper ecosystem, the start-up FunCell develops additives for the paper industry from a natural polymer extracted from fruits and vegetables agroindustry’s residues, modified by a green chemistry treatment. These biobased additives improve the properties of papers, in particular the mechanical strength in the dry and wet state. It is also possible to graft different molecules giving the paper new properties, in particular barrier properties (hydrophobicity for example). The advantage of this technology is also its flexibility, the additives being directly added to the materials, without requiring the use of an additional specific process.

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