



## **METabolic EXplorer-led BIO2CHEM programme receives € 9.6 million OSEO grant**

**Clermont-Ferrand, April 16<sup>th</sup> 2010.** METabolic EXplorer, a green chemistry company that specializes in the development of bioprocesses for the production of chemical compounds used in a wide range of everyday products (paints, solvents, animal feed supplements, adhesives, textile fibres, resorbable surgical thread, etc.), today announced that it had obtained a €6.8 million ISI Strategic Industrial Innovation grant from OSEO in the framework of the collaborative BIO2CHEM biochemistry programme. OSEO has distributed total aid of €9.6 million to fund the programme.

METabolic EXplorer is lead managing the programme, which also includes SpecialChem, a company specialising in interactive marketing and open innovation in the chemicals field, and the LISB Biological systems and process engineering laboratory at INSA Toulouse, which specialises in biochemical engineering with prokaryotes.

The BIO2CHEM programme is perfectly aligned with the aims of the active search for manufacturing solutions providing alternatives to the use of fossil resources. The innovations of the BIO2CHEM programme correspond to the need to produce petrochemical commodities differently from renewable raw materials and the roll out new marketing approaches to meet the needs of chemicals processors seeking to source supplies of "green" products.

The programme consists not only in closely allying science and marketing to manufacture chemical compounds differently but also, and equally differently, to move closer to end-user markets. The combination within a single consortium of metabolic engineering expertise and a web platform grouping the first community of chemicals professionals should foster much faster, more tightly targeted access to markets. The programme will also help accelerate the products derived from METEX technologies in the process chemistry value chain and so meet the expectations of manufacturers looking for innovations and sources of "green products".

For SpecialChem, an interactive marketing company whose business is to promote innovations in the chemicals sphere and make it easier to bring them to market, the BIO2CHEM programme will speed the development of new applications and online services dedicated to innovation in the field of biochemistry aimed at global players in the chemicals sector.

For INSA Toulouse, and more particularly for LISBP (INSA/CNRS/INRA mixed research unit), its advanced research laboratory for biotechnologies and bioproducts, the BIO2CHEM programme will drive its work on improving the metabolic avenues for manufacturing bioproducts notably by developing ever more sophisticated original enzymes.

For METabolic EXplorer, the grant awarded under the BIO2CHEM programme should act as an accelerator to position one of its products in the process chemistry chain (MPG, which is useful for manufacturing personal hygiene products and furnishings) and to trigger the development of still confidential new products.

The grant comes on top of the more than a dozen grants and subsidies already received by METEX, notably from the Auvergne Regional Council, the Puy de Dôme General Council and, at national level, from FEDER, ADEME, and ANR/OSEO under the BIOHUB® programme. This latest grant will take total grants and subsidies received since 2004 to over €13.5 million.

The new grant shows:

- Government support for a large-scale programme, which sends an encouraging signal to innovative companies and initiatives,
- The desire to continue supporting METabolic EXplorer, which has passed key milestones in a genuine industrial development, even more closely.

The grant also strengthens the balance sheet of METabolic EXplorer, which at end-2009 had at its disposal cash and equivalent amounting to nearly €50 million, partly derived from its stock market flotation in 2007, which raised nearly €60 million.

Jean-Claude Lumaret, METabolic EXplorer Head of Strategy and Innovation said: *"I am delighted that OSEO has recognised the original character of the consortium; the distance travelled to obtain this recognition shows the strength and complementary nature of our respective business models."*

Bernard Hasson, Chief Operating Officer of SpecialChem, said: *"The chemistry of renewables, in which METabolic EXplorer is a world leader, constitutes a genuine breakthrough technology for chemicals manufacturers. The Bio2Chem consortium will enable us to create new online networks of innovators in order to accelerate the deployment of these sustainable technologies among our customers worldwide and to develop new open innovation services."*

Isabelle Meynial Salles, the academic researcher who heads the team involved in Bio2chem research at the INSA Toulouse LISBP laboratory added: *"We are thrilled with this cooperation, which continues the relationship begun as far back as 2003. Our cooperation will allow us, from the scientific point of view, to develop and validate new concepts, further improving our knowledge of biological systems which could be used in new applications."*

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About METabolic EXplorer - [www.metabolic-explorer.com](http://www.metabolic-explorer.com)

METabolic EXplorer is a biological chemistry company which was incorporated in 1999. Its goal is to help industrial businesses deal with the heralded "end of oil", so that they can continue to manufacture but in a sustainable way.

Based on the tried and tested principle of industrial fermentation, METabolic Explorer's solutions circumvent the problems posed by today's burdensome and expensive petrochemical processes via the use of a wide range of renewable, sustainable raw materials. By optimizing the metabolic yield of non-pathogenic bacteria in a contained, controlled environment, the company facilitates the production of chemical compounds used in a wide range of everyday goods (paints, solvents, adhesives and textile fibres) and industrial products (such as surgical thread and animal feed).

METabolic EXplorer is currently focusing its alternative biological solutions (implemented by the development of renewable, fermentation-based bioprocesses) on the production of five compounds that together have an estimated, annual, end-market value of €11 billion. The company's strategy will be implemented worldwide in two ways: either via limited-exclusivity industrial partnerships, or via the creation of manufacturing facilities at METabolic EXplorer's own initiative.

METabolic Explorer, based in Clermont-Ferrand, France, is listed on EURONEXT PARIS (EURONEXT C, METEX) and features in the SBF 250 and CAC Small 90 indexes.

*Get free financial information on METabolic EXplorer by registering with [www.metabolic-explorer.com](http://www.metabolic-explorer.com) or [www.actus-finance.com](http://www.actus-finance.com).*

### About SpecialChem

Founded in 2000, SpecialChem implements Interactive Marketing & Open Innovation processes in the chemicals and materials value chains to increase innovation speed and success of new products launches.

SpecialChem's team of industry experts manages the world's largest online industry network gathering hundreds of thousands of scientists, formulators, engineers, marketers and designers globally. These networks are provided with broad access to innovations, market trends and technical knowledge as well as business connections to people beyond their usual networks. They are in turn an invaluable asset to perform high-value services for chemicals and materials suppliers aiming at:

- identifying their future growth opportunities
- sourcing new technologies and detecting co-development partners
- finding new customers and penetrating new markets
- increasing their company, technology or product branding

### About INSA Toulouse

The "Institut National des Sciences Appliquées of Toulouse" (INSA) is a state engineering school, under the authority of the Ministry of Education and Research, offering Master in Engineering courses in five years. Its main mission is to train engineers in ten specializations from biochemical engineering to industrial processes engineering and nanotechnologies with students admitted from "baccalaureat" to 4 year degree level.

Numerous researchers, faculty, PhD students and technical support staff work in the school's nine laboratories, contributing to its international prestige. Three themes federate their work: environment, health and sustainable development; nano-objects; embedded systems.

### About OSEO's Strategic Industrial Innovation Programme

The Strategic Industrial Innovation Programme – or ISI, due to its French acronym – promotes the emergence of European champions. It supports innovative, ambitious, collaborative projects, which are industry-oriented and led by intermediate companies and SMEs, all advancing state-of-the-art technologies. When successful, these projects have a very promising outcome, as they aim at commercializing the innovations arising from technological breakthroughs, which would not be otherwise carried out without public funding. Funds are allocated in the form of grants and loans, ranging from €3-10 million. [www.oseo.fr](http://www.oseo.fr)

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