

BIOCHEM case study

A chemical Italian start-up approaching innovation and investors

Chemical Center - short description of the SME

Chemical Center is a private Italian start-up, founded in 2009 on the initiative of professors and researchers in the University of Bologna. Chemical Center is a new reference for public and private research in innovative materials, ranging from the design of new generation materials to the development of the conventional ones, including bio-based products.

Chemical Center is structured to design, synthesize and characterize innovative materials and to set up new chemical processes for application in biomedical, environmental and technological fields. They have specific competence in the synthesis of nano-particles with various dimensions, morphology and surface area changing synthesis parameters.

The business

The company scientific approach for manufacturing new materials is based on the intention to reduce pollution and energy from not renewable sources as much as possible, by using water-based chemical processes, sol-gel, hydrothermal, electromechanical, self-assembly and 'tem-plant mediated' synthetic methods. This

philosophy is possible thanks to the precise use of nano and bio-technologies and to the bio-and geo-mimetic approaches characterizing the basic inspiration: to mimic Nature.

The SME is open to work in close collaboration with new potential clients and in synergy with other private and public research organisations to improve their innovation performances. They are looking for public funding, especially to support the recruitment of new specialized personnel. They are also interested in establishing contacts with private investors to better develop their business ideas, and to enhance their marketing activity to get more chance in the European market of the future.

What is it that BIOCHEM did for them?

The company was approached by Aster (Italian BIOCHEM partner) during R2B - Research to Business, an international industrial research exhibition held in Bologna in June 2011, where Chemical Center had a stand. The short introduction of the BIOCHEM tools and services caught the interest of the SME. A company visit was arranged in July 2011, allowing Aster staff to collect complete information about the main features of the enterprise and their specific needs. After few weeks an Individual Development Plan was drafted out and presented to the company.

In the following months Aster supported Chemical Center in:

- registering and using the BIOCHEM Partnering Data Base
- obtaining information about regional and international public funding
- creating opportunities to get in touch with private investors.

What is the outcome?

Chemical Center took part to the BIOCHEM Accelerator Forum arranged in Milan in October 2011, within the CHEM-MED LIFEMED exhibition. During the Technology Transfer event they gained updated info on the development of bio-based industry in Europe and carried out direct contacts with a number of national and international experts participating at the Forum, improving the possibility to find in a soon future area of collaborations. During the Venture Capital event they had an opportunity to give a public presentation of their projects (in particular a new photocatalytic material they have recently developed) to a panel of European investment experts and received their feedback.

The participation to the BIOCHEM VC event paved the way for further involvement in other VC events arranged at European level, in particular as member of the panel of reviewers. This was an extremely useful experience, enabling Chemical Center to be more effective when approaching both investors and the bio-based market arena.

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