

## Toulouse White Biotechnology confirms its success with the arrival of new industrial partners and the hosting of start-ups

The pre-industrial demonstrator Toulouse White Biotechnology (TWB) is dedicated to accelerating the transition from academic research to industrial applications. Since its creation in 2012, TWB has proved an undeniable success which has been confirmed in 2016. Indeed, TWB reported a very positive performance over the past year, with a turnover of €9.5 M, representing a 10% increase in activity compared to 2015. Furthermore, as a token of its attractiveness, TWB announces the arrival of 8 new industrial partners in its consortium. For this new year, the pre-industrial demonstrator intends to continue supporting new collaborative R&D projects and aims to further encourage start-up creation and accompaniment.

### 46 active R&D projects in 2016

TWB aims to promote new biological production procedures, alternative to conventional ones, based on the use of renewable carbon and innovative biological tools which will be implemented at the heart of industrial processes. To this end, the structure facilitates the interface between public research and industry by supporting public/private collaborative R&D projects. **Since its creation in 2012, TWB has supported 79 projects. 46 projects were ongoing in 2016, including 15 new projects.**

Different types of collaborative R&D projects are proposed, together with researchers of the best public laboratories. Hence, the projects conducted by TWB in 2016 breakdown as follows:

- **46% of competitive industrial projects:** these research projects, financed at 100% by industrial partners, address a specific issue and cover subjects such as the optimization of microorganisms or fermentation processes, the technical validation of an industrial process, etc.
- **26% of projects co-financed by industrial partners and public funds** in response to national or European calls for tender, such as for example the Synthacs project (financed by the French National Research Agency and the ADISSEO company) which opened a new metabolic pathway in order to produce molecules for animal feed;
- **28% of pre-competitive research projects:** each year, TWB self-finances with approximately €1 M fundamental research projects with strong potential, aimed at generating innovative results exploitable by industrial partners.

Within the framework of the R&D projects, TWB provides researchers and scientific staff of the **high-tech technical platforms**, offering original and effective technical solutions with an industrial development vision. Besides the R&D projects, the provision of services is also offered on these platforms. In 2016, TWB's investment capacity of €850 000 enabled it to **maintain a high level of robotic equipment**. Hence, for example, on the "High-throughput strain engineering" platform, the molecular biology robot (the installation of which began in autumn 2015) was completed in 2016 by adding new features.

### Token of the TWB model's success, 8 new partners join the consortium

TWB's strength and the success of its model rest on its consortium of public-private partners. In practical terms, industrial partners who enter the TWB consortium pay an entry fee which is directly reinvested in **high-risk research projects**. This model thus makes it possible to finance research programmes to **explore innovative scientific fields**.

Following the gathering of the consortium on 9 March last in Toulouse, TWB announces the arrival of 8

**new industrial partners:** AB7 Industries, BGene, BIOASTER, Heurisko, Naturamole, Servier, Micropep Technologies, Syngulon.

The consortium is now composed of 53 partners (11 large companies, 10 SMEs, 16 very small companies, 7 investment funds and valorization structures, 9 public partners) involved in various sectors: Agro-industry, Chemistry (materials and products), Equipment, Biotechnology Solutions, Flavours, fragrances and cosmetology, and finally Energy and Pharmacy.

### 2017 Objective: to develop start-up accompaniment

Whereas in 2016 two start-ups, namely Enobraq and Pili, moved into TWB's premises, it is the turn of **the start-up MicroPEP Technologies to settle there**. The TWB mechanism provides assistance and a significant acceleration to start-up development, particularly in the initial phase.

Other examples of successful collaboration:

- the **Amoeba** company, which collaborates with TWB since 2014, raised €15 M in 2016 and inaugurated its production site near Lyon;
- the creation of Carbiolice, a joint-venture between the start-up Carbios and the Limagrain group, fruit of the results achieved as part of the flagship project Thanaplast in partnership with TWB.

Following this direction, **TWB intends to pursue and increase in 2017 the accompaniment of start-ups which will be the nuggets of tomorrow by providing them with both technical platforms at the cutting edge of innovation and scientific and technological support by top level teams.**

*"In 2016, TWB enhanced the achievements of its first five years of existence. Value generation in TWB's collaborative ecosystem has been confirmed: the technological support to young companies has allowed them to raise funds or to create subsidiaries. The commitment of TWB's personnel and public and private partnerships remains unflinching, reinforced by the achieved results and by the sense of being directly involved in the building up of a rare experience. The projects continue to be numerous and promising."* concludes **Pierre Monsan, Founding Director of TWB**.

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#### About TWB:

Toulouse White Biotechnology (TWB) is a preindustrial demonstrator whose goal is to speed up the development of industrial biotechnologies by facilitating exchanges between public research and industry. Its vocation is to contribute to the expansion of a bioeconomy based on the use of renewable carbon in various fields (chemistry-biochemistry, materials, energy, etc.). Various kinds of collaborative research and development projects are proposed, as well as personalized services for businesses. Since 2012, TWB has supported a total of 79 projects including 33 finalized at the end of 2016. In March 2011, TWB was awarded the call for project for the Investments for the Future Program (PIA – Programme Investissements d'Avenir). It receives State aid through the ANR (Agence Nationale de la Recherche - National Research Agency). TWB is a UMS (Unité Mixte de Service – Mixed Service Unit) managed by INRA under triple INRA/INSA/CNRS tutelage. With €18.6 M of signed contracts since its creation, TWB confirms the relevance of its role at the interface of the public/private transfer.

**More information:** [here](#)

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