

Biotech startup RWDC raises \$22 M in A3 round

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RWDC Industries Ltd, a Singapore-based biotech start-up, has announced that it has raised US\$22 million in an oversubscribed Series A3 round, led by Vickers Venture Partners and Eversource Retirement Plan Master Trust (the pension fund of Eversource Energy, a Fortune 500 company) - RWDC's first US-based institutional investor. Participants in the round include previous investors WI Harper Group, and other investors.

The funding is a follow-up to the US\$13 million that RWDC raised during its Series A2 round just six months ago. In this period, RWDC has expanded its PHA (polyhydroxyalkanoate) production capacity in Athens, Georgia (United States), initiated development programs on new applications such as non-woven fabrics, and successfully completed trials with its clients on PHA straws and coated paper.

Governments around the world are beginning to legislate more aggressively on plastic waste, with the EU leading the way with a new directive on single-use plastic articles. However, current responses focused on 'Reduce, Reuse and Recycle' are inadequate to alter the growth trajectory of plastic waste, risking serious consequences. RWDC believes a better solution is to replace single-use plastics with the right material, PHA - an unmodified, naturally-occurring polymer that offers many of the benefits, versatility and functionality of modern petroleum plastic materials, while being naturally biodegradable.

Founded and headquartered in Singapore, RWDC develops innovative and cost-effective biopolymer material solutions – particularly medium-chain-length Polyhydroxyalkanoate (mcl-PHA). PHAs are naturally produced by bacterial fermentation of plant-based oils or sugar, and, due to its versatility in application, are widely recognised as the world's only commercially-viable biodegradable biopolymer.

The company's PHA is certified to be fully-biodegradable in soil, water and marine conditions (namely, all potential end-of-life

scenarios) by certification agency TÜV Austria (formerly Vinçotte). It fully biodegrades within weeks with no toxic residue. RWDC's customers will be able to label their products as 100 percent bio-based, non-toxic and truly biodegradable.

Funds raised in this round will primarily be used to accelerate the Company's plan to significantly increase PHA production capacity in Georgia, USA, as well as to support its R&D efforts into prioritised applications. The company expects its first commercial batch of PHA straws to be available in the market in 2019. The PHA resin formulated by RWDC for these straws is designed as a drop-in replacement of Polypropylene that can be used on existing extrusion machines.

In 2018, RWDC won the first Liveability Challenge, presented by Temasek Foundation Ecosperity, based on a proposal to use PHA to start replacing single-use plastics.