

# Minister for Science backs biodegradable materials to support net-zero transition

*Lord Patrick Vallance emphasised the vital role of bio-based and biodegradable materials in achieving the UK's net-zero goals at the BBIA's Demeter Awards.*

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EINPresswire.com/ -- LAST NIGHT, the Bio-based and Biodegradable Industries Association (BBIA) hosted the inaugural Demeter Awards and Innovation Showcase, the only UK awards dedicated to recognising excellence in the bio-based sector.



Holiform, Carbon Cell, Lord Deben, 2M and Xampla at Demeter Awards

Minister of State for Science, Research and Innovation Lord Vallance opened the event, paying tribute to the importance of the bioeconomy to the UK's industrial strategy and the UK's net zero ambitions.

He said: "There is a unique opportunity to have the design, development and manufacture of new products and materials secured through a thriving bioeconomy. We can transition away from petrochemicals and become an engine for net zero, and set an example for the rest of the world to create well paid and meaningful jobs."

"We're committed to driving forward a more environmentally friendly economy, as it is a necessity for a more sustainable future. We will move from using the carbon below ground to harnessing the abundance of carbon above."

Former Science Minister George Freeman MP gave a keynote speech, saying: "It's great to see the bioeconomy get the traction it deserves. This isn't just an overlooked academic sector that needs to speak more loudly for research funding; it is an industry ready to solve some of the big planetary and societal challenges that we face in this country."

"The government has set out a massive ambition for an industrial strategy that implicitly

prioritises R&D. In this new political landscape, we have an opportunity to make this the industry of tomorrow.”

Former Secretary of State for the Environment Lord Deben closed the event, presenting the awards for Product Innovation, Start-Up of the Year and Collaboration and telling delegates, “What you do is not just a job. It’s actually helping the world to adapt to and mitigate climate change, which we have been stupid enough to allow to happen.”

“Holiform” won the Product Innovation Award, for developing a processes for the sustainable manufacture of biosurfactants, which eliminate the need for harmful petrochemicals.

“Carbon Cell won the Start-Up of the Year, for their mission to eliminate the need for polystyrene with their non-toxic, compostable foam material made from carbon-negative biochar and natural binders.

“2M Group of Companies, for their collaboration with Xampla” won the Collaboration Award for bringing their Morro™ Coating, a world-first plastic-free solution, from concept to large-scale production.

The winners will receive a 12-month co-working space membership in Manchester’s Renold Innovation Hub. They will also receive IP support from Potter Clarkson, grant funding application support from PNO Consultant, and Life Cycle Assessment advice from Oakdene Hollins, valued at a combined total of over £25,000.

Jen Vanderhoven, Chief Operating Officer of the BBIA said: “As global temperatures keep rising, the drive towards a more circular economy is not an option, it is an obligation.

“It is crucial to acknowledge the businesses that are developing bio-based products and materials, as they play a key role in driving innovative solutions for the future.

“Congratulations to the winners for their outstanding contributions to the bioeconomy, and we want to thank the prominent politicians who are giving us their backing. We now need to see government policy follow with clear backing bio-based products that are part of the journey to net zero.”

Richard Lock, Managing Director of Holiform, winner of the Product Innovation Award, said: “We are honoured to accept this award. From our beginnings in the University of Manchester labs, we’ve been driven by a mission to revolutionise the petrochemical market. Our naturally produced biosurfactants not only meet consumer expectations but do so while safeguarding our planet. This is just the beginning of a transformative journey!”

Elizabeth Lee, CEO and Co-founder of Carbon Cell, winner of the Start-up of the Year, said: “We are so pleased to accept this award in the company of such innovative and visionary start-ups.

We will continue helping businesses in packaging, the built environment and beyond replace polluting polystyrene for good.”

James Nelson, Business Director of 2M Group of Companies, winner of the Collaboration Award, said: “We’re delighted to accept this award that recognises the huge progress we have made in scaling Morro™ Coating in such a short period of time. It is a huge tribute both to Xampla’s technology and their collaborative spirit which enables partnerships like this to bring the product to scale at speed.”

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