

Vita Hydrokultur Opens £1.5m Series A Round to Scale Plant-Grown Skincare Ingredients

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, July 27, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Vita Hydrokultur Group](#) Ltd (VHK), the biotechnology manufacturing platform that develops and manufactures high-value, plant-derived bioactive proteins and botanical active ingredients, has announced the opening of a £1.5m Series A funding round to accelerate commercial scale-up and bring its plant-expressed ingredients to the global beauty and wellness industry.



The funding round is being conducted with advisory support from [Abell Limited](#), an ICAEW-authorized chartered accountancy and advisory firm based in Canary Wharf, London. Abell has worked with Vita HydroKultur on investment readiness, fundraising strategy and supporting the current capital raise.

Addressing a Crisis in the World's Most Valuable Ingredient Market

The global cosmeceutical market — currently valued at \$65.7bn and projected to reach \$152.58bn by 2034 — is facing a supply crisis. The world's most effective skincare ingredients remain expensive, inconsistent, and environmentally intensive to produce. Existing manufacturing methods require compromises between cost, sustainability, quality, and scalability.

Vita Hydrokultur Group has developed a precision plant biomanufacturing platform that combines the control of biotechnology with the efficiency of plants, enabling consistent, animal-free production of premium bioactive ingredients at scale.

"The beauty industry is entering a new era where ingredient performance alone is no longer enough," said Gary Thorneycroft FCA, Founder and CEO of Vita Hydrokultur. "Brands increasingly seek ingredients that combine efficacy with sustainability, ethical sourcing, traceability, and manufacturing resilience. Our platform makes that possible."

The Technology: Plants as Living Bioreactors

Vita Hydrokultur's approach uses *Nicotiana benthamiana*, a fast-growing plant, as a temporary bio-manufacturing unit. Rather than permanently altering the plant's genome, VHK's process temporarily instructs the plant to express specific proteins during its growth cycle. The molecules are then harvested and purified using supercritical CO₂ extraction to pharmaceutical-grade quality.

As Vita Hydrokultur describes: "not improving agriculture — redefining how high-value biological ingredients are manufactured."

The platform delivers:

- Pharmaceutical-grade consistency — batch-to-batch reliability that beauty brands increasingly expect
- Animal-free production — no reliance on animal sources, marine life, or engineered microbes such as *E. coli*
- Full traceability — from gene design to final vial
- Non-GMO process — temporary expression only, no permanent genetic modification
- Commercial Infrastructure: Norwich and Sweden

Vita Hydrokultur Group's R&D facility is to be located at Norwich Research Park, where the company will validate protein expression and optimisation protocols. This facility will operate as a miniaturised commercial factory, proving every growth protocol before it flows into scaled manufacturing.

The company's planned commercial production facility in Sweden takes advantage of the country's abundant renewable hydroelectric power at competitive rates, which is critical for energy-intensive controlled environment agriculture. Swedish municipalities are also able to make planning decisions efficiently, avoiding the permitting delays common in other markets.

The company has received outline approval from the Swedish Gene Technology Advisory Board and is advancing toward full commercial operations.

Unit Economics: Demonstrated Traction

VHK's platform has demonstrated it can turn £9 of input into £244 of highly valuable cosmetic ingredients, reflecting the high value density of bioactive proteins compared to conventional agricultural products.

Phase 1 production metrics:

- Revenue per tower: £638,000
- Gross margin: 88%
- Average selling price: £150/mg
- EBITDA positive: projected 2029, reaching £4.8m by 2030

The company projects revenue growth from approximately £60,000 in 2026 to £8.58m, with a long-term ambition to deploy 40+ growth towers by year seven.

Proven Execution by The Team

Vita Hydrokultur Group is led by Gary Thorneycroft FCA, a Chartered Accountant with over 20 years of experience advising and scaling privately owned businesses. Thorneycroft previously co-founded Jones Food Company — Europe's largest hydroponic vertical farm — where he oversaw financial and operational strategy before Ocado became a major shareholder.

He is joined by Dr. Paul Challinor, a pioneer in Totally Controlled Environment Horticulture (TCEH) and co-founder of Jones Food Company, whose experience spans the design, build, and operation of large-scale vertical farming infrastructure. The team brings deep expertise in plant science, infrastructure execution, and capital markets.

Chris Valentine, Head of Private Equity at Abell Limited, commented:

"At Abell, we look beyond the technology itself and assess whether a business has the commercial foundations to scale. Vita HydroKultur combines an experienced leadership team, proprietary technology and a clearly defined market opportunity in an industry seeking more sustainable, high-performance ingredient production. We believe that combination makes the company an exciting business to support as it enters its next stage of growth."

The company's current pre-money valuation stands at £8.8m, with a defined growth strategy targeting a £96m valuation within five years. The funding will be used to complete R&D and protein validation, commission the commercial facility, deploy initial growth towers, and expand commercial partnerships with tier-1 ingredient suppliers and formulation labs.

About Vita Hydrokultur Group

[Vita Hydrokultur Group Ltd](#) is a precision biomanufacturing company that develops and manufactures premium plant-derived recombinant proteins and botanical bioactive ingredients using advanced controlled-environment agriculture and plant molecular farming. The company enables the world's leading beauty, wellness, and life science companies to replace conventional animal, microbial, and resource-intensive production with scalable, sustainable, high-performance alternatives.

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