



## **Kick-off for the new GEC Catalyst Cohort**

# **The Global Entrepreneurship Centre launches the GEC Catalyst Programme 2023 with new sustainable startups**

Meerbusch, 05 April 2023 – *The Global Entrepreneurship Centre (GEC) has assembled a new cohort for the Catalyst Spring 2023 programme after an extensive selection process. The invitation to compete for places, which started at the beginning of the year, looked for sustainable DeepTech startups in four thematic areas: Building & Living, Textiles, Energy, and Food & Agriculture.*

More than 500 companies were screened in the four focus sectors through the highly targeted scouting by GEC Venture Developers. A total of 80 startups applied for the GEC Call for Solutions with their outstanding DeepTech innovations. A jury of experts reviewed and evaluated the submissions in terms of technology maturity, innovation and business viability, among other things. This was followed by the multi-stage GEC internal sustainability assessment.

### **A strong cohort of 15 pioneers in sustainability**

There emerged a total of fifteen qualified startups from ten countries, including Germany, Poland, Canada, Finland, the Netherlands, France, Italy, Ireland, Belgium and the USA. The GEC Catalyst Programme is designed to help the founders grow their Sustech startups into scalable businesses. The following companies will work closely with GEC Catalyst mentors on their business models over the next three months:

#### **Building & Living:**

- eco-softfibre GmbH [<https://www.eco-softfibre.com/>] from Germany has developed the world's first environmentally friendly and recyclable foam made from collagen fibres.
- Vestaeco [<https://vestaeco.com/index.html>] from Poland produces environmentally friendly materials using lignocellulosic fibres from agricultural biomass.
- Rongo [<https://rongodesign.com/>] from Germany uses fungal mycelium to replace synthetic and unhealthy materials in building insulation and interiors.
- Jeosal [<https://jeosal.com/>] from Canada has developed a viable solution for recycling and reusing fibre-reinforced plastic waste.
- Polycare [<https://polycare.de/en>] from Germany is working on a range of solutions to enable the use of secondary raw materials in construction.



#### Textiles:

- Fluff Stuff [<https://fluffstuff.fi/>] from Finland replaces environmentally harmful textile fillings with a natural alternative and promotes sustainable farming methods.
- Zeefier [<https://zeefier.eu/>] from the Netherlands produces natural dyes from seaweed and its waste streams for the textile industry.
- Sortile [<https://sortile.co/>] from the USA is changing the world of textile recycling by developing AI-driven and data-analytical solutions for textile waste.
- Bucha Bio, Inc [<https://bucha.bio/>] from the USA makes materials from bio-based sources that can be recycled and reused.
- IDELAM [<http://idelam.fr/index.php/en/>] from France has found a fast and robust solution for recycling complex multimaterial waste.
- O-lia [<https://www.oliafiber.com/>] from Italy produces sustainable and innovative materials from olive tree waste.

#### Food & Agritech

- SomaTech from Ireland provides a solid-state fermentation platform that enables the use of a range of substrates and fungal strains.
- Hermetia tech [<https://hermetiatech.de/>] from Germany offers consultancy, engineering and ready-made solutions around insect production and by-product recycling.
- Greenhub [<http://www.greenhub.eu/>] from Germany provides access to growth data for the next generation of indoor farms.
- Peelon [<https://www.linkedin.com/company/peelon/>] from Belgium offers a biodegradable packaging solution that extends the shelf life of fresh produce threefold.

#### About the GEC Catalyst Programme

GEC lecturers from Silicon Valley teach in the GEC Catalyst according to the Lean Launchpad method, supported by industry experts for mentoring and master classes. In terms of technology maturity, GEC Catalyst startups are at 4-5 and can look forward to support in further developing their product and growth strategies. The most promising graduates of the GEC Catalyst programme are also eligible to join the GEC Scaling Factory by invitation, receiving a total investment of €200,000.



## About the Global Entrepreneurship Centre

Global Entrepreneurship Centre (GEC) is a transformation hub for scaling sustainable technology innovation and entrepreneurship. It addresses the scaling challenges of promising sustechs – deep-tech startups with a clear sustainability and climate protection focus – from all over the world. The selection process includes a proprietary sustainability assessment, diligently carried out internally by the GEC. The GEC will support up to 20 startups per year in the GEC Factory programme in the sectors building & living, textiles, mobility & transport, food & agriculture and energy, providing access to venture capital, business development, advisory services, production and lab facilities. In addition, approx. 60 startups p.a. will be scouted for participation in the GEC Catalyst cohorts. The GEC is funded by the Rhineland region's STARK initiative for structural transition of the former coal mining areas and the Rhine County of Neuss. The Global Entrepreneurship Centre is based in Duesseldorf / Meerbusch, Germany.

More information on our homepage at [www.cec-scaleup.com](http://www.cec-scaleup.com)

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The whole new GEC Catalyst Spring Cohort 2023 with their GEC Catalyst mentors Katarzyna Dembska, Daniella Russo and Dr. Greg Baxter.



The GEC Venture Developers giving an introduction into their fields during the GEC Catalyst Kick-off.

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