

Horizon 2020 SME Instrument

Dedicated funding calls for innovative SMEs in Europe.

Client: Micromix Plant Health Ltd. It provides a chemical formulation and production facility for customers who require bespoke products. Established in 1987, the company concentrates on developing micronutrients and foliar applied fertilisers for the UK, Europe, North Africa, and the Middle Far East. **Sector:** Agrochemicals and Specialty Chemicals.

1 Context / Challenge

Micromix has developed a chemical formulation capable of enhancing the crops' yield and quality. Independent technical comparison with competing products evidences the technology's superior performance. Although having a clear innovation, Micromix faces challenges common to an SME in the sector: competitors – mainly large multinationals chemical companies - have far more resources and customary scale to access the market.

2 What was provided

Micromix asked support for investigating funding and grant schemes that could support the development of commercial scale trials of the technology. After assessing Micromix's business model and market, it was recommended Horizon 2020 SME Instrument, since it would bring a multi-disciplinary focus and EU reach for the technology. Particularly, the coach support lead Micromix to focus on applying the technology for reducing pesticides dosage in food crops within EU, which can provide a 'blue-ocean' strategy for Micromix's growth.

3 What they achieved

Micromix accessed the support for understanding in depth the scheme requirements and multi-phase application process. Analysing the technology readiness level (TRL), the coach identified a gap in the technology development process that would limit the IP protection strategy and pursuing later stages of funds. Therefore, a long-term funding strategy was designed, providing Micromix with a path to access ensuing larger H2020 funds within a 24-month period.

The first stage was elaborating the plan and the application for a feasibility study. Having successfully accessed the EUR 50,000 grant, the study proved that the technology could expressively be cost-effective for cereal crops. The impact of this technology for meeting the new EU pesticides legislation is massive and, so far, unmatched.

Subsequently, Micromix was supported in developing a complete business plan to market the technology in the EU region. This document is providing basis for a second stage ongoing application within H2020, which may provide Micromix with further EUR 2 million for developing demonstration trials for early users by 2018.