



Plant protein plastic start-up continues rapid growth with expert hires

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- Xampla, creator of plant protein alternatives to single-use plastics, makes two expert hires ahead of first products being brought to market.
- Former Pladis Head of Packaging and Unilever R&D Manager Leo Bianchi joins Xampla as Head of Product Development.
- Former CFO of ip.access Laura Lawrence joins Xampla as Chief Financial Officer.
- The Cambridge University spin-out hired its first employee in January 2020, and has since grown to a 20-strong team following seed investment from world-leading tech investors.

CREATOR of natural alternatives to single-use plastics Xampla has welcomed two expert hires ahead of bringing its first products to market later this year.

Leo Bianchi joins the Cambridge University spin-out as Head of Product Development from Pladis Global, makers of McVitie's, where he was UK & Europe Head of Packaging. Prior to this he worked at Burton's Biscuits as Head of Packaging, and led R&D efforts and product developments at Unilever for more than 19 years across both Food and Personal care categories.

Laura Lawrence joins as Chief Financial Officer from ip.access where she was CFO for three years, and Finance Director prior to this. At ip.access she oversaw its successful sale to Mavenir Systems, bringing significant financial expertise to Xampla as it develops its commerciality.

Xampla's workforce has grown to a 20-strong team after making its first hire in January 2020. This growth follows investment rounds from leading tech investors Horizons Ventures and Amadeus Capital Partners.

The product of 15 years of research by Cambridge University, Xampla has created the world's first plant protein material for commercial use, engineering entirely natural alternatives to single-use plastics.

Its material performs like synthetic polymers and offers a circular substitute for plastic sachets, flexible packaging films, edible labels and microplastics used in home and personal care products.

Leo Bianchi, new Head of Product Development, said: “Having worked in the packaging industry for decades, I’m excited to be playing my part in bringing sustainable solutions to market that offer a scalable solution to the plastics crisis.

“It’s long been a challenge for businesses to find a truly circular packaging solution that has the same functionality as plastic to protect the quality of their products. Xampla’s material has this covered whilst also being completely circular. It’s a real game changer for the industry, and for the planet.”

Chief Financial Officer Laura Lawrence said: “I’m delighted to have joined Xampla at such a pivotal time for the business. It’s thrilling to be part of a passionate team pioneering a cutting-edge technology that could change the face of plastics on a global scale, and I’m proud to be helping develop its commerciality.”

Simon Hombersley, CEO of Xampla, said: “Xampla may be a start-up, but the potential for our products to substitute conventional plastics is well-recognised, meaning we’re now in a position to be bringing aboard experts to scale the company at a global level.

“I couldn’t be more pleased to welcome Laura and Leo to the team. It’s clear they’re completely bought in to, and driven by, our mission to replace single-use plastics. Their expertise will be integral as we bring our launch products to market later this year.”

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Notes to editors

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About Xampla

- Xampla is a spin-out from the University of Cambridge. Its Supramolecular Engineered Protein has been developed over the past 15 years.
- It has created the world’s first plant protein material for commercial use. Its material performs like synthetic polymers, but decomposes naturally and fully without harming the environment.
- Xampla is the first UK University spin-out to be awarded B Corp status.
- Its first products will be launched in 2021.
- For more information: <http://www.xampla.com/>