

## Bio-based materials start-up LignEasy secures €1m investment from EIT InnoEnergy

*Capital injection and connection to EIT InnoEnergy's ecosystem will support rapid scale up of the cleantech company, with its 1 ton/day pilot plant due to be fully operational end of October.*

**Netherlands, 12 September 2024:** [EIT InnoEnergy](#), the leading innovation engine in sustainable energy supported by the [European Institute of Innovation and Technology](#) (EIT), a body of the European Union, today announces a €1m investment into bio-based materials pioneer, [LignEasy](#). Specialising in lignin separation technology, LignEasy aims to curb carbon emissions in the pulp industry and replace fossil-based raw materials with the forest-based feedstock.

The investment and incorporation of LignEasy into EIT InnoEnergy's portfolio will provide significant scale-up opportunities for the start-up's sustainable alternative to traditional practices in kraft pulp mills. This funding will build on the EIC Accelerator grant previously received by the company, enabling the full development of their pilot plant, which is set to reach a production capacity of 1 ton/day later this autumn.

LignEasy's innovative technology is designed to reduce the carbon footprint associated with the pulping and chemical industries. Each year, over 15 million tons of lignin, a natural polymer that is one of the main constituents of wood, are burned by European kraft pulp mills for energy. Instead of burning this valuable resource, LignEasy's patented technology separates lignin for use in high-value applications such as plywood, construction materials, bio-components in plastics and packaging, providing sustainable alternatives to fossil-based products.

In the plastics sector alone, achieving the net zero target by 2050 will require an annual production of 100-230 million tons of bioplastics, compared to the current global production of just 2 million tons. LignEasy's technology is poised to play a crucial role in meeting this substantial demand for sustainable materials.

Jonas Nordlund, Investment Manager at EIT InnoEnergy Scandinavia, commented: "We believe that LignEasy will play a significant role in decarbonising multiple industries, and we are delighted to welcome them into our portfolio. Their innovative approach to lignin separation not only addresses the significant wastage in kraft pulp mills but also opens up new avenues for sustainable bioproducts, transforming lignin from a waste product into a valuable resource."

Juho-Matti Karpale, CEO at LignEasy added: "This investment marks a major milestone for our company and one that will help us to scale up our efforts to decarbonise the pulp and chemical industries. There are currently major issues with lignin wastage; a technology gap in achieving separation sustainably; and a pressing need to provide the chemical industry with eco-friendly alternatives to fossil-based raw materials. Our technology delivers solutions to these problems, and with access to EIT InnoEnergy's ecosystem, we are now better placed than ever before to deliver them to the market."



Unlike existing lignin separation systems that can cause harmful sulfate discharge to the environment, LignEasy uses a sulfuric-acid-free separation technology and a novel filtration-based purification method. This innovation produces high-value lignin, reduces pulp mill emissions, and provides the chemical industry with a renewable feedstock in the form of an odourless, bio-based raw material available as liquid concentrate or dried powder. The lignin is ready for direct use in several products or possible chemical modification for an even broader range of applications.

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### About EIT InnoEnergy

[EIT InnoEnergy](#) operates at the centre of the energy transition and is the leading innovation engine in sustainable energy. It brings the technology, business model innovation and skills required to accelerate the green deal, progress towards Europe's decarbonisation and re-industrialisation goals, whilst also improving energy security.

Recognised as Europe's top Cleantech and Blue Economy venture capital firm and investor in 2023 by [Startup Genome](#), one of Europe's top 10 most active deeptech investors by [Sifted](#) in 2023 and the most active investor in the energy sector in 2022 by [Pitchbook](#), InnoEnergy backs innovations across a range of areas. These include energy storage, transport and mobility, renewables, energy efficiency, hard to abate industries, smart grids and sustainable buildings and cities.

InnoEnergy has a portfolio of more than 200 companies, which are estimated to generate €110 billion in revenue and save 2.1G tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e accumulatively by 2030. Collectively, these companies have raised more than €25 billion in investment to date.

InnoEnergy is the driving force behind three strategic European initiatives which include the [European Battery Alliance](#) (EBA), [the European Green Hydrogen Acceleration Center](#) (EGHAC) and the [European Solar Photovoltaic Industry Alliance](#) (ESIA).

InnoEnergy was established in 2010 and is supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology ([EIT](#)), a body of the European Union. Since its inception, InnoEnergy has screened more than 7,000 start-ups, launched more than 300 products to market and overseen its portfolio companies filing 370+ patents. Today, InnoEnergy has a trusted ecosystem of 1200+ partners and 38 shareholders and a 200+ strong team with offices across Europe and in Boston, US. [www.innoenergy.com](http://www.innoenergy.com)



## About LignEasy

LignEasy is a pioneering cleantech start-up based in Helsinki, Finland, specializing in innovative lignin separation technology for kraft pulp mills. Founded in 2022, LignEasy aims to transform lignin from a waste product into a valuable resource, reducing carbon emissions and providing sustainable alternatives to fossil-based materials. Their patented technology enables the use of lignin in high-value applications such as plywood, construction materials, and packaging.

Recognized with the European Seal of Excellence in 2023 and funded by the European Accelerator Grant (EIC), LignEasy initiated a pilot plant in Bäckhammar, Sweden, set to become fully operational later this year in collaboration with the Research Institute of Sweden (RISE).

Committed to sustainability and innovation, LignEasy collaborates with strategic partners and leverages a dedicated team to drive the global shift towards bio-based materials and unlock millions of tons of currently burned lignin for high-value end uses. For more information, visit [www.ligneasy.fi](http://www.ligneasy.fi).