

Success Story

Notpla

Notpla - profile



Circular Booster

Supported since 2017

Support given: Amplify, Validate

Notpla revolutionised the single-use packaging scene when they discovered how to make drinks packaging disappear with their seaweed based, edible Ooho water sachets. A very successful crowdfunding round in 2017 meant they could scale up and commercialise the Ooho product. In addition to having a waste-free product, the team is driven by their desire to be an authentic circular business, so they are continuously trying to understand their environmental impact along their product value chain.

Circularity Strategy: [Circular Design](#), [Clean Resources](#)



“We have a desire as a business to be as true as we pertain to be. It’s really important to have a proper analysis done and know there isn’t anything lurking there. Advance London showed us that how we deliver goods is a big part of our impact and it’s certainly on our minds as we scale. It’s been very useful for things like evaluating whether we should do events and to build strategies around how to distribute locally.”

Lise Honsinger CFO & CCO

About Notpla

Notpla is an innovative packaging company, pioneering the use of plant-based materials to create sustainable packaging.

Their first product, Ooho, is a flexible, edible sachet that can be used for drinks and condiments. It biodegrades in under 6 weeks in a home compost or any natural environment and much faster in industrial composting facilities.

The idea for Ooho came about during a student project in 2013, where co-founders Rodrigo Garcia Gonzalez and Pierre Paslier, were trying to find ways to reduce carbon emissions associated with packaging. They were looking for inspiration in nature and...

“...stumbled upon this concept of membranes, look at oranges with their different segments, or even us, we are essentially packaged in a membrane”

Rodrigo and Pierre explored this concept and found that seaweed in its raw form could be used to create a membrane that would make bubbles for water and so, Ooho was formed.

Rodrigo and Pierre knew they were onto something and founded Skipping Rocks Lab (SRL). They entered a Climate-KIC competition and won, joining their accelerator based at Imperial University.

The team started collaborating with chemists and chemical engineers to test Ooho at running events, festivals and takeaway shops.

It was around this time that they met Lise, who helped them put together a business plan and in April 2017 the team crowdfunded on Crowdcube. Their video went viral and was picked up by a news channel Now This Future and within 24 hours was being re-posted all over the world with investments being made every minute.

SRL more than doubled their target of £400K, raising £850K in three days. This helped grow and commercialise the business.

“We had this great concept for flexible packaging, but we didn’t know exactly how it would be used. We were also making the bubbles by hand, so Pierre started to focus on designing the first industrial Ooho machine.”

Notpla (Skipping Rocks Lab at the time) was on a mission to make packaging disappear both through product packaging and by localising production to try and eliminate transport and the packaging associated with it. Before meeting Advance London, the team were keen to analyse their business and understand what their true environmental impacts were.

When Notpla met Advance London

Notpla and Advance London's partnership led to Notpla:

- Gaining insight on the life cycle of packaging materials for liquid products
- Understanding hotspots and opportunities in their supply chain to improve the business.

“This gave us a deeper understanding of the seaweed extraction process and we now source from a very sustainable manufacturer in northern France.”

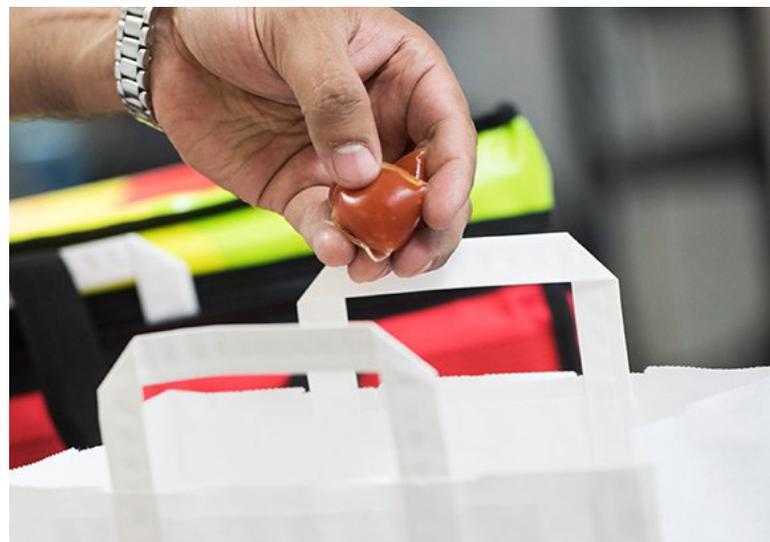
- Getting a bespoke carbon calculator to compare their Ooho membrane with 9 other conventional packaging options, such as PET and PLA, using environmental and economic indicators.

“We used it to support the environmental credentials of our packaging, to help our clients and investors understand that the impact is truly a lot less, from an energy point of view as well as from a waste creation point of view.”

- Pinpointing areas for improvement and creating strategies for scaling the company sustainably
- Broadening their understanding of how packaging waste is processed through a tour of an incineration facility and a Materials Recovery Facility organised by Advance London.

“We were so curious about how the recycling system works and trying to understand how things are processed, it was an eye opener.”

- Gaining access to investors, potential buyers, funders and relevant stakeholders that have supported the business in amplifying their impact



The reward

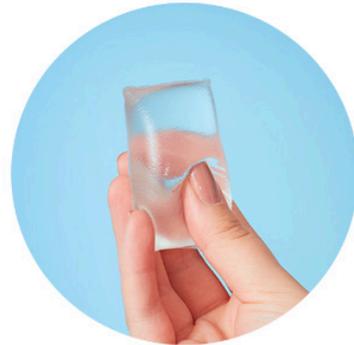
Advance London are very pleased to have helped Notpla better understand their environmental impacts and use this to refine and strengthen their product offering, and secure a transparent and responsible supply chain.

Since that first Ooho bubble, they have excelled in the industry and in 2018 partnered with Just Eat to run a trial of Ooho condiment sachets, which led to a commercial market test in London. Notpla are now working to bring this to the whole of the takeaway market.

They have supplied Oohos filled with water and Lucozade Sport drinks at over 15 sporting events to date, handing out over 42,000 Oohos to participants. The pinnacle of this was supplying over 36,000 Lucozade Sport Oohos at the 2019 Virgin Money London Marathon.

In 2018, Sky Ocean Ventures invested in Notpla, which has further supported the company in developing their own proprietary machine technology to make Oohos.

“By making the machine technology we are able to encapsulate liquids that weren’t previously possible such as alcohol which can be used to provide drinks at festivals and events.”



What's next?

Notpla are building more Ooho machines and will initially operate them themselves as a service for content brands, but ultimately plans to lease them out to businesses to be used by their staff on site, removing the need for complex distribution channels.

“We are going to supply lots of events next year, and once we have proven this works in the UK and Europe, we can launch it to the rest of the world.”

Notpla are in the midst of fundraising again so they can commercialise some new developments in their pipe line.

“The Ooho’s are working well, so we are trying to get them out there and scale those operations, but we also have a great research and development team who are looking at new materials and have developed some exciting prototypes of new packaging products”

They have been prototyping a liner for cardboard food containers, as an alternative to plastic and PLA linings, to make them water and greaseproof and are expecting their first industrial trials in January 2020 with Just Eat.

Notpla are also working on a flexible film that can be used to package dry goods such as rice, tomatoes or screws, anything that is currently stored in a plastic sleeve.

“We see ourselves as a materials manufacturer that will provide packaging materials. That means we will provide a roll of film for packaging machines, or liner to spray onto cardboard for food trays and containers. For the Oohos we will provide the bespoke machines and help them set up.”

Watch the video here:
www.advancelondon.org/story/notpla

Or find out more about Notpla at
www.notpla.com

