



Sawubona Mycelium



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **LOCAL BIOTECHNOLOGY COMPANY LAUNCHES TWO BETA-GLUCAN BASED SKIN CARE PRODUCTS**

Sawubona Mycelium (Pty) Ltd launched its locally-developed fermentation-based skin care products at the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) Bioprocessing Platform in Umbogintwini, Durban on Wednesday, 26 October 2022.

Sawubona Mycelium (Pty) Ltd, led by its CEO, Ms Busi Moloi, is a biotechnology company operating a fermentation-based platform that manufactures bio-based ingredients and extracts derived from mushroom mycelium for application in the cosmetic, pharmaceutical, as well as the food and beverage industries. It is the first South African company to develop a fermentation technology to produce beta-glucans using micro-organisms, for the cosmetics industry.

The company launched two beta-glucan based skin care products, a hydrating serum, and an anti-aging serum, under the brand Blu Beryl™, that have been tested dermatologically and confirmed to be suitable for use in skincare formulations. The technology deployed in the production of these prototypes was developed at the TIA Bioprocessing Platform through financial support from the TIA and the Department of Science and Innovation's SIIP program.

The use of beta-glucans is growing and gaining interest worldwide. Beta-glucans (or  $\beta$ -glucans) are polysaccharides mainly found in the cell walls of yeast, bacteria, fungi, cereals, and oats, and have long been used as supplements for medicinal purposes to support the immune system, lower cholesterol, fight heart disease, control hay fever and more. They are also known to boost skin health when consumed or applied topically, and can accelerate healing, soothe the skin, reduce inflammation, and help transform the skin.

“Sawubona Mycelium, a majority black owned biotechnology start-up, has won several accolades in various innovation competitions. This is testament to the quality of science and the potential for commercialisation through the work TIA does to fund and support innovation start-ups and SMMEs. In the case of Sawubona Mycelium, the support from TIA included the facilitation in-bound technology from Malaysian partners, as well as the acquisition of follow-on funding from the One Bio, a life sciences venture capital company. It is envisaged that will support Sawubona Mycelium to break into the lucrative pharmaceutical and nutraceutical markets as this is directly



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linked to the ideals of the Bio-economy Strategy of South Africa”, said Dr Vuyisile Phehane, Executive Bioeconomy at TIA.

Speaking at the launch, a visibly elated Ms Busi Moloji, CEO of Sawubona Mycelium, detailed the journey the SMME has traversed from 2018 to the launch of their product offering.

“We are delighted to have reached this milestone in our innovation journey. We have had tremendous support from various partners in the innovation space particularly from TIA and the DSI, in commercialising our products,

Through this journey we have also imparted important skills to young graduates who are part of our technical team. We have permanently employed two of them and one has ventured out to start their own business,” said Ms Moloji.

The products are available on order from the @bluberyl\_skincare Instagram page and from the Sawubona Mycelium website [www.sawubonamycelium.com](http://www.sawubonamycelium.com)

Ends.

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