

14-10-2023

## **DS Smith, the Packaging giant, launches R&D and innovation centre in UK**

DS Smith launches its global Research & Development (R&D) and Innovation Centre, 'R8'. The new facility is an industry-first and allows to accelerate the research and development of radically new packaging fulfilment solutions. Located near Birmingham in the UK, the R8 facility includes a 4,000 m<sup>2</sup> pilot hall, four laboratories, conditioning chambers, an ideation and design studio, prototyping areas, and collaboration spaces. The Group Innovation Centre is intended to spearhead research in manufacturing, maximising on the growing demand for sustainable packaging, and the innovation needed to deliver it.

With R8, DS Smith has created a collaboration space that allows it to cover the whole innovation spectrum under one roof: from early technology and material development, ideation, and concept development, testing and product development, through to prototyping and customer pilots. Projects will be informed by key industry drivers rooted in sustainability, supply chains, and data. Smart packaging for tracking and monitoring the supply chain, alternative natural resources in papermaking, reusable fibre-based packaging and technologies, and advanced barrier technology for food and industrial applications, are all areas for exploration. The R8 facility is carbon neutral. It has been designed for both re-use and deconstruction, and uses reconditioned furniture, solar panels, and air-sourced heat pumps.