

## The innovation of matter

Plastics rewrites the rules of the industry



Mariacristina Gherpelli

Industrial research, product innovation and technological transfer: all this is routine for Ghepi, a company from Emilia leader in the processing of high-performing, polymer-based materials, using injection-molding technology. It's with these materials that Ghepi drives progress in a variety of industries, leading companies on what is firstly a cultural leap that leaves behind the use of metals to opt for the higher performance, efficiency and flexibility of plastics. A top of the league role that the company has played for 40 years deeply convinced that innovation and research are the keys to competitiveness. The internal research and development lab, in fact, has become a benchmark for the entire manufacturing and scientific fabric of the region, obtaining official recognition by Rete Alta Tecnologia, the high technology network of Emilia. Thanks to its intensive research on graphene, a hi-tech and performing material, Ghepi has attracted attention from large research projects funded by the European Union. Graphene, in fact, is also a primary objective of Horizon 2020, an opportunity that Ghepi did not allow to slip, forming with other Sme's the network of companies "Graphene R2B Net", which works together with the Cnr of Bologna. An experience that has opened new horizons for growth to Ghepi. "European tenders at first are bit intimidating for all the paperwork and requirements -, explains Managing Director, Mariacristina Gherpelli -, but I will never grow tired of repeating that they represent a vital breeding ground for opportunities to Sme's".