



PRESS RELEASE

GE to Create Center of Excellence in Europe for Automated Manufacturing of Carbon Composites

Global Research and the Technical University of Munich agree to multi-year, 5 million Euro investment that will make possible new carbon composite applications in wind power, aviation and oil & gas

MUNICH, JULY 3, 2009 — GE Global Research, the technology development arm of the General Electric Company (NYSE: GE), and the Technical University of Munich (TUM), today signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish a world-class carbon composites manufacturing Center of Excellence on the TUM campus in Garching, near Munich, Germany. The Center of Excellence will focus on automated manufacturing of complex composite structures for use in wind turbines, jet engines, and oil & gas applications.

Automated manufacturing of carbon composites addresses the key challenges in industrialization by reducing cost, improving quality, and increasing the rate and speed of production. This technology will provide a dramatic improvement over today's carbon composite manufacturing processes and will enable a new suite of commercial applications not practical or possible today. These applications include the development of a longer, advanced wind blade for increased wind capture and stronger risers to enable high-pressure deep-sea oil exploration and production. Products from GE businesses with locations in the European region, such as GE Wind in Germany and the Netherlands, GE Aviation Systems in the United Kingdom, and GE Oil & Gas in Italy, Norway and the United Kingdom, will benefit from advancements in the manufacturing of carbon composites.

"With this initiative we will be able to leverage the expertise and resources of both GE and the Technical University of Munich to further develop automated manufacturing of composites to improve commercial products," said Carlos Härtel, Managing Director of GE Global Research Europe. "This announcement also emphasizes GE's strong commitment to developing technology in Europe and marks five years of collaboration between the TUM and GE Global Research. The carbon composites Center of Excellence is a key project in GE's focus on advanced manufacturing technologies."

The Center of Excellence will benefit from Global Research Europe's carbon composites manufacturing lab, which opened in September 2007, and the TUM's newly created Lehrstuhl Carbon Composite (LCC) institute, led by Professor Dr. Klaus Drechsler. The establishment of the LCC at the TUM has been enabled through an endowment by SGL Carbon SE, headquartered in Wiesbaden, which is one of the world's leading manufacturers of carbon-based products.

"The partnership of the TUM with GE to advance carbon composite research is one of many corporate collaborations that the Center of Excellence will foster as we advance this technology," said Professor Dr. Drechsler. "The cost and performance benefits to carbon composite and automated manufacturing technology will have benefit to a range of businesses and industries."

Composites, which are comprised of carbon fibers and resins, are stronger than the metals that they replace and also are lighter weight, which allows for new product design and enables product efficiency such as fuel savings. GE Aviation used composites in the fan blade of the GE90 jet engine, which was commercialized in the mid 1990s and have since expanded the use to the fan case for the GEnx. In both engines, reductions in weight due to use of carbon composites have led to improved fuel economy and performance over previous-generation engines. GE researchers are applying carbon composite technology to wind turbine blades, which could ultimately result in weight savings of 30 percent. GE is a leader in composites research and development for applications in aviation and energy, as well as oil and gas.

About GE Global Research

GE Global Research is one of the world's most diversified industrial research labs, providing innovative technology for all of GE's businesses. Global Research has been the cornerstone of GE technology for more than 100 years, developing breakthrough innovations in areas such as medical imaging, energy generation technology, jet engines and lighting. GE Global Research is headquartered in Niskayuna, New York and has facilities in Bangalore, India, Shanghai, China and Munich, Germany. Visit GE Global Research at www.ge.com/research.

About GE

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