

North East firm Power Roll launches project to put solar panels in blinds

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Solar power generation could be made available to people living in flats after a North East firm launched a project to put solar panels into blackout blinds.

[County Durham](#) firm Power Roll – which has secured nearly £6m of investment in recent funding rounds – is working with London's Filia Solar to investigate the use of its solar film in blinds.

Filia wants to bring solar energy to every home, including people who live in flats and don't have roof space for conventional solar panels.

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Blackout blinds are a common feature in many sunny countries, and it's hoped [Power Roll](#)'s thin solar panels could help people generate power simply by drawing their blinds.

Power Roll chief executive Neil Spann said: "Filia's product is exactly the kind of completely new solar category that Power Roll's solar film can enable.

“Filia’s blind is a potentially game-changing application that only becomes feasible because of the physical properties and economics of our product. The market potential is huge and we’re really excited to be working with the Filia team.”

The agreement between the two companies will see them incorporate Power Roll’s solar technology into the fabric of Filia’s blackout blinds, as well as evaluating the markets, applications and regulatory requirements for the product.

The firms believe there is a large market for the product in countries like Italy, Greece and Germany, where more than half of the population live in apartments. Rising electricity prices in many countries could also help generate demand.

Power Roll, which recently announced 30 new jobs with a move to the Jade Business Park in Murton, uses simple roll-to-roll printing techniques to deposit perovskite into microgrooves patterned on a thin flexible film, which acts as the solar collector.

One of the unique features of its products is the ability to tune the characteristics of a sheet of film to match the needs of the application by changing the way it connects the microgrooves.

Filia founder and chief executive David Wharton said: “Filia is all about democratising energy. To deliver our vision we need to make our blinds affordable, and Power Roll’s solar film is key to that.

“In fact, Power Roll’s film is a complete game-changer at around 10 times cheaper than competing film-based solar products. Integrating Power Roll’s technology into our unique roller blind solutions will, for the first time, give many people access to affordable, clean solar power. What’s more, we are generating power exactly where it’s used – in the urban environment.”

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