

R&D projects involving Britishvolt get Government backing

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Two research projects involving the company aiming to build an electric battery gigafactory to bring thousands of jobs to Northumberland have secured multimillion-pound Government backing.

Britishvolt last week held a ground-breaking ceremony for the factory it will build at Cambois, near [Blyth](#), if it can raise more than £1bn in funding to make its plans a reality.

The company hopes to manufacture thousands of batteries for electric vehicles, and now two R&D projects in which it is involved have won funding from Innovate UK.

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The GENESIS programme will see Britishvolt work with fellow North East firm Entek Membranes – with which is recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding – and multinational chemicals company Johnson Matthey. The project aims to design and demonstrate a large format lithium-ion pouch cell which delivers fast charging for an automotive company.

Britishvolt is also involved in the SABRE (Silicon Anode

Battery for Rapid Electrification) project, which hopes to deliver an advanced lithium-ion cell design incorporating a novel silicon anode that has the potential to increase the range of electric vehicles.

Both projects won backing through the Faraday Battery Challenge, which is using public funding to develop the UK's capabilities in batteries.

Craig Chapling, Britishvolt's R&D programme manager, said: "The GENESIS project is a great opportunity to collaborate closely with both our supply chain and a prestigious automotive OEM, in addition to leveraging the significant capability in battery modelling available at Imperial College London.

"Whilst helping to deliver on Britishvolt's goals of building the UK's first full-scale gigaplant, as well as a native supply chain required to support it, it is also encouraging to see the Faraday Battery Challenge delivering on its aims.

"Here is research undertaken at UK universities, building into collaborative R&D, with the outcome being full-scale production at Britishvolt's gigaplant facility in Northumberland."

Despite being a relatively new company, Britishvolt has secured finance to buy the former coal yards of the old Blyth Power Station and obtained planning permission for its factory.

It hopes to win substantial Government backing for the project, and is also trying to secure major private investment.

Last week battery manufacturer Envision AESC formally submitted plans for the enlarged battery plant it wants to build next to its current plant in Sunderland.

The company is creating around 750 new jobs to produce batteries for a new electric vehicle at Nissan. Around 900 jobs will be created at Nissan.

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