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PowerCo SE and the University of Münster sign cooperation agreement

- PowerCo SE cooperates with renowned international research school for battery chemistry, characterization, analysis, recycling and application (BACCARA).
- Among other things, the cooperation serves to finance doctoral positions as well as training and further education programs.
- Battery research is a central building block for the long-term competitiveness of Germany as an automotive location.

Münster/Salzgitter, 05. June 2024 – The battery company PowerCo SE and the International Research School for Battery Chemistry, Characterization, Analysis, Recycling and Application (BACCARA) at the University of Münster are entering into a comprehensive cooperation. Over the next three years, PowerCo will support the financing of the BACCARA research program and the associated doctoral positions. In addition, students will gain a deeper insight into practice, for example through expert lectures and on-site projects. PowerCo SE was founded in Salzgitter in 2022 and is on its way to becoming a global battery cell manufacturer. As an innovation-driven company, it places a particular focus on promoting science and education.



Left to right: Prof. Martin Winter, Dr. Kerstin Neuhaus, Dr. Julia Quante, Prof. Frank Glorius (BACCARA) Centre: Sebastian Krapoth (CHRO PowerCo SE)

In recent years, battery research in Germany has made enormous progress. The combined funding of the establishment and expansion of regional competence centers and supra-regional joint projects from industry and academia have helped Germany to position itself among the world's strongest research nations in recent years. This upswing is primarily linked to electromobility, which has brought battery research into focus.

Sebastian Krapoth, Chief Human Resources Officer of PowerCo, emphasizes: "With PowerCo, we want to establish the battery cell as a key technology in Germany and Europe. To achieve this, we are relying on the brightest and most committed minds in the industry who want to work with us to build a sustainable, reliable cell manufacturer with European roots. By working together with Münster, we want to make our contribution to ensuring that these minds can continue to be trained in Germany in the future and do not have to move abroad at an early stage. We need strong battery research with top researchers in order to be able to compete with our Asian competitors."

"It is essential to further optimize the lithium-ion battery and to continue substituting critical raw materials. Research is also focusing on solid-state batteries and lithium-free systems such as sodium-ion batteries. This is because there will not be one universal battery technology of the future. Rather, the market will become more differentiated," says Prof. Dr. Martin Winter, one of the two scientific directors of BACCARA, the MEET battery research center of the University of Münster and the Helmholtz Institute Münster of Forschungszentrum Jülich.

45 doctoral students from the University of Münster are trained at the highest level in science and research at the research school, including workshops in intercultural communication, learning programming languages and other qualifications that may prove valuable in their future careers. Participants also benefit from the knowledge of the more than 30 researchers involved in the program. The cooperation agreement is initially set to run for three years. The Ministry of Culture and Science of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia and the University of Münster have been funding the BACCARA International Research School since 2020.

In view of the significant reduction in federal research funding, battery research in Germany is now heavily reliant on external support. Prof. Dr. Martin Winter: "With the support of PowerCo, we are now ensuring that in Münster top-level research and top-level training can continue to go hand in hand. The entire spectrum of highly qualified specialists will continue to come from Münster in the future. They will provide decisive impetus for battery research and industry both nationally and in Europe. Ultimately, PowerCo's support also guarantees that the industry connection is ensured at the highest level."

BACCARA Managing Director Dr. Julia Quante explains: "The challenges of the energy transition are enormous. By providing industry-oriented doctoral training at the highest level of research, we can make an important contribution in the field of battery research. This is why the cooperation with PowerCo that is now beginning as part of the sponsorship of BACCARA is far-sighted and promising."

PowerCo is a global battery cell manufacturer that was founded by the Volkswagen Group in 2022. Headquartered in Salzgitter, the company is responsible for the development and production of battery cells as well as the vertical integration of the value chain. PowerCo is currently building a total of three cell factories with a total volume of up to 200 gigawatt hours per year: Salzgitter in Germany, Valencia in Spain and St. Thomas in Canada.

At BACCARA, young research talents benefit from the concentrated knowledge of renowned researchers: More than 30 professors and heads of junior research groups from the Departments of Chemistry and Pharmacy, the MEET Battery Research Center, the Helmholtz Institute Münster and other departments at the University of Münster are involved in the BACCARA research and training program.

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About the Volkswagen Group:

The Volkswagen Group is one of the world's leading car makers, headquartered in Wolfsburg, Germany. It operates globally, with 114 production facilities in 19 European countries and 10 countries in the Americas, Asia and Africa. With around 684,000 employees worldwide. The Group's vehicles are sold in over 150 countries.

With an unrivalled portfolio of strong global brands, leading technologies at scale, innovative ideas to tap into future profit pools and an entrepreneurial leadership team, the Volkswagen Group is committed to shaping the future of mobility through investments in electric and autonomous driving vehicles, digitalization and sustainability.

In 2023, the total number of vehicles delivered to customers by the Group globally was 9.2 million (2022: 8.3 million). Group sales revenue in 2023 totaled EUR 322.3 billion (2022: EUR 279.1 billion). The operating result before special items in 2023 amounted to EUR 22.6 billion (2022: EUR 22.5 billion).
