£130 million world-class manufacturing technology centre work on track

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Manufacturing Technology Centre

A groundbreaking technology centre being built in the Midlands, of which the University of Birmingham is a partner, is on schedule to open next summer. The Manufacturing Technology Centre (MTC) at Ansty Park, Coventry, will help put the Midlands at the forefront of global manufacturing research.

The MTC brings together experts from manufacturing and academia to turn new manufacturing ideas into reality. Once completed it will allow businesses to test new techniques and manufacturing methods prior to full-scale production.

It represents a £130 million private and public sector joint investment over 10 years, the largest investment in any of the UK manufacturing research facilities. The MTC will be staffed by 100-150 highly qualified technical specialists.

Advantage West Midlands (AWM) and the East Midlands development agency emda have committed to investing £40 million in building and equipping the MTC. At least a further £90 million private and public sector revenue is planned over the next 10 years.

Industries which will benefit from the MTC include aerospace, automotive, energy, electronics, and heavy duty construction equipment companies.

Economic impact assessments show that investment in the project will return £46 for every £1 invested. In addition, over 10 years, the MTC is expected to create or safeguard 2,100 jobs, support 625 businesses, and generate around £5.5 billion for the UK economy.

Research projects which will eventually be tested out at the MTC are already underway.

The MTC at Ansty Park will be operated by a partnership made up initially of four leading UK research organisations: University of Birmingham, University of Nottingham, Loughborough University, and TWI Limited – the operating division of The Welding Institute. Founder industrial members of the MTC are Rolls-Royce, Aero Engine Controls and Airbus UK.

Professor Nigel Weatherill, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences at the University of Birmingham, said: "Universities are at the forefront of innovation and are key partners in this important collaboration. We can utilise our research base to help provide solutions to key industrial problems. MTC will provide unique facilities needed to explore smarter processes for high value manufacturing."

Mick Laverty, chief executive of AWM, said: "It's great to see the MTC becoming a reality after so many years of planning. I look forward to seeing the first development work running in the facility next year. The work done here will help revitalise manufacturing in the Midlands and put us firmly on the world stage."

Jeff Moore, Chief Executive of emda, said: "Manufacturing is vitally important to the economies of both the East and West Midlands. The Manufacturing Technology Centre will enable manufacturers to utilise the expertise of our leading universities, helping to transform innovative ideas into products and processes that will give them a competitive edge in the global market."

Dr Hamid Mughal, Rolls-Royce Executive Vice President, Manufacturing Engineering and Technology said: "We are delighted to see progress being made on the construction of the Manufacturing Technology Centre, which joins the network of advanced manufacturing research centres we are championing. Work has already started with our partners on exciting research projects which will help the competitiveness of manufacturing in this country and we look forward to these transferring to the MTC next year."

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