

PRESS RELEASE

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Bär: The first battery cell from FFB PreFab marks a milestone for batteries “Made in Germany”

In Münster, a significant milestone has been reached in the commissioning of the first research factory “FFB PreFab” (1st construction phase): The Fraunhofer Research Production Battery Cell FFB has produced its first electrically functional lithium-ion battery cell. This is the first time that a continuous process chain has been realized using exclusively European plant technology, from electrode production to charged cells.

Dorothee Bär, Federal Minister of Research, Technology, and Space, explains: “Only those who master battery technology and can also manufacture battery cells competitively will be able to hold their own in international competition. Batteries are indispensable for climate-neutral mobility and energy generation. As a flagship measure of Germany's High-Tech Agenda, the FFB focuses on “Lab to Fab” – from science to industry. The first battery cell from FFB PreFab therefore marks a decisive milestone for batteries ‘Made in Germany’.”

Minister for Economic Affairs, Industry, Climate Action and Energy of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), Mona Neubaur: “With the battery cell research and production facility in Münster, North Rhine-Westphalia is demonstrating that we are the location for state-of-the-art high-tech industry. Strong European battery production is central to economic success, technological independence, and the transformation of our industry. Münster is significantly strengthening our innovative power in this area: research, development, and industrial transfer are perfectly interlinked here – a project that is significantly advancing Europe in the future field of battery technology.”

Minister of Culture and Science of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, Ina Brandes: “A unique research facility for the battery cell production of the future is being built in Münster. Smart batteries are already part of people's everyday lives – as a key technology in energy supply, electromobility, and smartphones, for example. With the FFB, we in North Rhine-Westphalia have the opportunity to close the gap between basic research and large-scale industrial application. This will have a magnetic effect on well-trained specialists and excellent scientists.”

Professor Holger Hanselka, President of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft: “With our focus on future-oriented technologies, Fraunhofer strengthens the technological sovereignty and innovative power of Germany as a business location. Battery technologies play a central role in this – they are crucial for making value creation in mobility, energy, and industry more independent and securing a leading position in global competition. The launch of the pilot line and the establishment of a high-performance research and production

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FRAUNHOFER RESEARCH INSTITUTION FOR BATTERY CELL PRODUCTION FFB

environment at FFB PreFab mark a key milestone on the road to competitive battery production. I would like to thank the BMFTR and the state of North Rhine-Westphalia for supporting Fraunhofer FFB and including it as a flagship project in the high-tech agenda. The commissioning of the production line and the first battery cell produced there show that Fraunhofer FFB, as a link between basic research and series production, contributes significantly to technological sovereignty."

In this context, the federal government will ensure that the necessary financial resources are made available for the establishment of the FFB. Only in this way can the performance target of the FFB – the establishment of a gigafactory-scale research factory – agreed jointly with the state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) and the Fraunhofer Society be achieved. As was previously the case with the state of NRW, the costs have risen since 2019/2020, primarily due to inflation, from €500 million in 2019/2020 in an initial planning phase to €750 million now.

Background

The battery is an outstanding key technology in terms of Germany's and Europe's technological sovereignty – for climate-neutral mobility and energy generation alike. The High-Tech Agenda Germany sets out the goal of establishing competitive battery production and recycling in Germany by 2035, embedded in a European production network.

The central flagship measure is the FFB as a link between science and industry. Technologies from the laboratory are to be scaled up and transferred to commercial application. To this end, the FFB provides a globally unique research infrastructure that enables small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), large companies, and academic institutions to test, implement, and optimize the production of new battery technologies in a digitized, flexible, and modular manufacturing environment.

The FFB will also demonstrate production and operating concepts, thereby making batteries "Made in Germany" competitive. To this end, the core competencies of German industry (automotive industry, mechanical and plant engineering, specialty chemicals for the development of new materials) will be brought together. The FFB also makes an important contribution to the training of urgently needed skilled workers.

The FFB infrastructure will be built in two construction phases. The Federal Ministry of Research, Technology, and Space (BMFTR) is investing up to €750 million in setting up the FFB's research operations, thus ensuring that the necessary financial resources are available for the FFB's construction.

The **Fraunhofer Research Institution for Battery Cell Production FFB** is a facility of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft at the Münster site. Its concept provides for a combination of laboratory and production research for different battery cell formats - round cell, prismatic cell and pouch cell. Fraunhofer FFB employees research individual process steps or the entire production chain as required. Together with the project partners – Münster Electrochemical Energy Technology (MEET) at the University of Münster, the Chair PEM of the RWTH Aachen and the Research Center Jülich – the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft is creating an infrastructure in Münster that will enable small, medium-sized and large companies, as well as research institutions, to test, implement and optimize the near-series production of new batteries. As part of the "FoFeBat" project, the German **Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space** and the **state of North Rhine-Westphalia** are funding the establishment of the Fraunhofer FFB with a total of approximately **1,07 billion EUR**. The federal government is providing up to 750 million EUR for research facilities and projects at the Fraunhofer FFB, while the state of North Rhine-Westphalia is investing around 320 million EUR in land and new buildings.

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The state of North Rhine-Westphalia is investing around €320 million in the land and research buildings – NRW is responsible for the construction and financing of the buildings in this major project, while the BMFTR is responsible for the targeted provision of infrastructure in the building, including the financing of the clean rooms and dry rooms necessary for operation. The Fraunhofer Society is the largest recipient of funding and consortium leader for the large-scale project. It is implementing the project together with other location partners.

The first construction phase (“FFB PreFab”) with more than 3,000 square meters of research space offers a pilot-scale manufacturing environment and was opened in spring 2024. The second construction phase (“FFB Fab”) is currently under construction and progressing rapidly. With a floor space of around 20,000 square meters, FFB Fab will enable gigafactory-scale production research for both science and industry.

Further information

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