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# SGL Group is Development Partner for High-Performance Fuel Cells in the Automotive Sector

- EU-funded project INSPIRE for the development of fuel cell technology in the automotive sector launched
- SGL Group responsible for the development of “gas diffusion layers” based on carbon fibers
- Dr. Gerd Wingefeld, Chief Technology Officer at SGL Group: “Participation in INSPIRE emphasizes our claim to shape developments in the megatrends of mobility and energy supply”

*Wiesbaden, December 1, 2016.* SGL Group is a development partner in the joint development project INSPIRE, that has been funded with a € 7 million award from Europe’s Fuel Cells and Hydrogen Joint Undertaking (FCH JU) and will run for three years. The aim of INSPIRE is to develop a new generation of fuel cells with higher performance and longer lifetime, which will play a major role in the electromobility of the future. At the same time, the commercialization of hydrogen-powered vehicles is set to be accelerated, since they represent an alternative to cars with solely battery-based electric propulsion.

SGL Group brings its long-established expertise as a component developer to the project, and is responsible for the development of the gas diffusion layers (GDL), which will be manufactured based on carbon fibers. The GDL allows a steady supply of gas to the catalyst layers, which are located on both sides of the ion exchange membrane and which convert hydrogen and oxygen into electrical energy and water.

Dr. Gerd Wingefeld, Chief Technology Officer at SGL Group: “INSPIRE, with high-profile partners from the fields of science and industry, offers an excellent platform to accelerate the utilization of fuel cell technology with its innovative materials and components. For SGL Group, it highlights our entrepreneurial claim to play a key role in shaping developments in the megatrends of mobility and energy supply. These include not only graphite anode material for lithium ion batteries and carbon fiber composites for lightweight-construction passenger compartments, but also our gas diffusion layers for alternative drive technologies based on hydrogen.”

The project, which kicked-off in May 2016, is being carried out under the coordination of Johnson Matthey, a leading manufacturer of catalyst coated membrane units, as well as other renowned industrial companies such as the BMW Group and Dana Holding Corporation (Neu-Ulm), along with several scientific research organizations (CNRS Montpellier, TU Berlin, TU Munich, University of Freiburg, VTT Espoo) and the SME Pretexo. In addition to the focus on development, the partners will also be concentrating on establishing a common European supply chain for

these critical components; namely the membrane, catalyst, gas diffusion layers and bipolar plates. With this step the capability of serial production will also be demonstrated.

**About INSPIRE:**

*This project has received funding from the Fuel Cells and Hydrogen 2 Joint Undertaking under grant agreement No 700127. This Joint Undertaking receives support from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme and Hydrogen Europe and N.ERGHY.*

*Further information: <http://www.inspire-fuelcell.eu>*

**About SGL Group – The Carbon Company**

SGL Group is one of the world's leading manufacturers of carbon-based products and materials. It has a comprehensive portfolio ranging from carbon and graphite products to carbon fibers and composites. SGL Group's core competencies are its expertise in high-temperature technology as well as its applications and engineering know-how gained over many years. These competencies enable the Company to make full use of its broad material base. SGL Group's carbon-based materials combine several unique properties such as very good electrical and thermal conductivity, heat and corrosion resistance as well as high mechanical strength combined with low weight. Due to industrialization in the growth regions of Asia and Latin America and increased substitution of traditional with innovative materials, there is a growing demand for SGL Group's high-performance materials and products. Products from SGL Group are used predominantly in the automotive and chemical industries as well as in the semiconductor, solar and LED sectors and in lithium-ion batteries. Carbon-based materials and products are also being used increasingly in the wind power, aerospace and defense industries.

**With 34 production sites in Europe, North America and Asia as well as a service network covering more than 100 countries, SGL Group is a company with a global presence. In 2016, the Company's workforce of around 4,000 employees generated sales of €769.8 million. The Company's head office is located in Wiesbaden.**

Further information on SGL Group can be found in SGL Group's newsroom at [www.sglgroup.com/press](http://www.sglgroup.com/press) or at [www.sglgroup.com](http://www.sglgroup.com).

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