

# Oerlikon celebrates opening of state-of-the-art R&D and production facility



Oerlikon, a global provider of surface solutions, equipment, advanced materials and materials processing, inaugurated its USD 55 million Innovation Hub & Advanced Component Production facility in Huntersville as part of its ongoing US growth strategy. The facility will serve as a cornerstone of Oerlikon's additive manufacturing business in the US.

The 125 000 square foot facility currently employs about 60 people and is fully functional. The additive manufacturing production facility is Oerlikon's second location in North Carolina – the other site being a center that provides manmade fibers, in particular, carpet yarn systems. Additive manufacturing uses high-tech tools, rapid prototyping and metal and plastics 3-D printing to help customers create new components and transform production processes. With the help of Oerlikon additive manufacturing experts and using these new technologies, companies can produce more complex and better

performing components that are lighter and last longer, while also simplifying logistics and reducing their environmental impact.

Oerlikon employs more than 1 300 people in 18 US states. The company previously announced that it intends to expand its US footprint in upcoming years. This USD 55 million investment is part of the USD 400 million the company has invested in the US in the past five years. Oerlikon expects to invest another USD 200 million in the next three years, adding some 400 new jobs. The Huntersville facility will continue to add jobs gradually and is poised for expansion as the business grows.

"This facility marks an important step in our investment strategy for growth," said Prof. Dr. Michael Süß, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Oerlikon Group. "Additive manufacturing will play a decisive role in how industries and industrial processes will look in the future. We are committed to investing in this

business and leading the industrialization of this technology."

"We are already working with customers in the aerospace, automotive, energy and medical industries in the US, and we anticipate continued growth in those sectors, as well as in others," said Dr. Sven Hicken, Head of Oerlikon's Additive Manufacturing business. "We believe that additive manufacturing can transform production in many industries, and we are excited that our presence here in North Carolina allows us to better demonstrate those possibilities to our customers."

State and federal officials will speak at the event, which is expected to be attended by some 200 customers, academicians and business leaders, as well as employees and their families. The company will present a check to a local robotics club to show its support for STEM learning and ongoing collaboration with academic institutions. ♦