



Press release from 1/03/2021

Lightweight Materials For A Better Future

Accelerate Advanced Composite Manufacturing

The consortium of seven project partners, all situated in Euregio-Maas-Rhine area, presented the project **AACOMA - Accelerate Advanced Composite Manufacturing**, funded by Interreg EMR in a 2-hour Kick-Off webinar this 25 February 2021. The project has as objective to inspire companies for developing activities by innovating with new materials and new processes.

Composite materials can be manufactured into almost any shape, allowing great design flexibility. The opportunity to select the constituents and tailoring them to obtain the required properties make them very attractive to many industrial sectors. Safer, lighter and environmentally friendly through material savings and the use of biobased materials leads to reductions of the fuel consumption and CO2 emissions.

The needs and challenges for developing new composite materials was shown by three invited speakers. *Mr. Peter Reynaert*, R&D director at SABCA, a key player in aeronautics, presented challenges for introducing new materials in the sector of aeronautics to push aerospace industry forward to future green aircrafts. New materials and processes combined by advanced automation and digitalization will be key success factors. *Mr. Fredericq Peigneux* from FEBELAUTO presented to the audience the challenges for the automotive sector. The European Union traces the way to become C-neutral in 2050, that means reducing drastically CO2 emissions of the transport sector and by this also of the automotive sector. Electric or Hydrogen driven cars needs not only strong, lightweight, and sustainable materials for car body structures, also for subassemblies like battery housings or hydrogen tanks. Fulfilling those needs is a must for aligning the future mobility with the European Green Deal strategy. Also, the development of such lightweight materials and associated processes are no longer imaginable without the support of digitalization and CAE (Computer Aided Engineering), this was the message of the presentation from *Mr. Michael Bruyneel*, scientific director at GDTECH, an engineering company located in Liège.

AACOMA is a 3-year long Interreg-funded cross-border project in the Euregio Meuse-Rhine and is carried out by seven partners: Centexbel (B), University of Liège (B), Sirris (B), Flanders Make (B), AMIBM of Maastricht University (NL), Fontys University of applied Sciences (NL) and AMAC (D).³

The event was introduced by the project coordinator *Bernard Paquet*, R&D manager at Centexbel, the Belgian Textile and Plastic Competence center, who also presented the project and how companies can benefit from it.

Mr. Axel Noel, director of the Interreg EMR Antenna in Liège and *Mr. Marc Vos*, Interreg Program Coordinator explained the benefic effect of the Interreg EMR program by supporting projects to work together as equals, regardless of borders. Interreg Euregio Meuse-Rhine invests 96 million euros from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in the period 2014-2020. Through the investments in cross-border projects, the European Union invests in the economic development, innovation, territorial development and social inclusion and education of this region.

In the AACOMA project, companies and institutes can benefit from the networking activities organized during virtual or live Roadshows, being a member of the advisory committee or participating in trainings or follow-up workshops on composite demonstrators that will be organized by project partners. The event was attended by more than 70 persons from various sectors.