

Metallisation and Aston University take top innovation award

Black Country manufacturing company Metallisation Ltd and Aston University have scooped a top innovation prize at the prestigious Lord Stafford Awards* dinner, beating off stiff competition from local universities and businesses.

The Lord Stafford Impact through Innovation Award was presented to Aston and Black Country manufacturing company Metallisation Ltd in front of VIP's from across the West Midlands at the special 10th anniversary dinner on the evening of Thursday 15th November at the NEC.

On collecting the winning cheque for £5000 and a special edition Wedgwood plate, Terry Lester, Managing Director of Metallisation said: "The collaboration with Aston University enabled us to undertake invaluable research work on our products that we simply wouldn't have been able to conduct ourselves. Aston has world class facilities and expertise to support new product development and we intend to collaborate closely with the University in the future."



Founded in 1922 in Dudley, Metallisation produces flame spray equipment for anti-corrosion applications and exports more than two-thirds of its produce overseas. Working with Aston University, the company has developed a pioneering spray gun known as the Met Jet 4 which is a High Velocity Oxy-Fuel system which offers substantial technological, quality and commercial benefits to both Metallisation Ltd and their end users. This new product has the potential for opening significant new markets for the company, particularly in condition where extreme wear takes place. Typical uses for the products include spraying protective coatings for hydro electric turbines, oil valves and mining equipment which significantly increase the lifespan of materials.

The catalyst for the collaboration was the availability of funding through MAS-WM which enabled the initial combustion modeling investigation. This work was followed by a number of additional projects including an EPSRC-funded Co-operative Award in Science and Engineering (CASE) Award, a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) and more recently a consortium-based collaboration through the DTI Technology Programme – all facilitated by Aston University's Business Partnership Unit.

"The project with Metallisation is a great example of how our academics can work with local companies to help them develop new products and open up new markets," says John Richards from Aston's Business Partnership Unit. "Winning a Lord Stafford Award is fantastic recognition for the work that has been carried out to date and I wish Metallisation well for the future"

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Note to editors:

***The Lord Stafford Awards**

Sponsored by Advantage West Midlands, The Lord Stafford Awards exist to recognise and encourage the development of collaborative relationships between West Midlands Businesses and Universities.

The awards are a public declaration of the value and importance of such collaborations both to those directly involved, in terms of increased competitiveness and the growth of the knowledge base, and also to the region as a whole as a result of the contribution they make to economic prosperity. In the context of the Lord Stafford Awards, collaboration is a metaphor for mutual benefit, for partnership, support, growth and a brighter future. It is these elements and the commitment to collaboration, which will provide the businesses and the Universities with whom they work, with the key to unlocking the potential that the future has to offer.

Impact Through Innovation Award

This Award will be given to a business, which demonstrates the greatest impact, or potential impact, for a product, or process it has developed in association with a West Midlands University.