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Siemens and the University of Lincoln win prestigious award for innovation

Siemens and the University of Lincoln have been awarded the prestigious Lord Stafford Award for Innovation at the award ceremony held on Thursday, 17 November at the University of Birmingham.

The groundbreaking collaboration between Siemens and University of Lincoln in driving innovation in industrial power generation engineering was recognised last night at the Lord Stafford Awards ceremony in Birmingham. Siemens and the University received the award in the 'Open Collaboration' category for this unique industry/academic collaboration. The awards recognise, showcase and reward the best in collaboration between businesses and universities across the Midlands.

The new Engineering School, developed by Siemens and the University is the first of its kind for 20 years in the UK. At its inception in 2009, the school concept was immediately recognised by HEFCE (Higher Education Funding Council in England) as a unique collaboration. The new school was opened in September 2010, to accept the first batch of engineering graduates. The school now in its second year has recently opened the Engineering Hub, a brand new state-of-the-art building, which houses Siemens' gas turbine training centre, leading-edge Research and Development (R and D) facilities, teaching and training rooms, and social areas for staff and students.

The £7m School of Engineering provides specialist courses in industrial power and energy, which are designed to meet the future needs of engineering enterprise and innovation. Academics and Siemens employees are co-located, meaning that students benefit from the real-world, practical experience with Siemens' world-class gas turbines alongside the delivery of the theoretical underpinnings provided within an academic environment. The collaborative nature of the School means that graduates are 'industry-ready' and able to immediately contribute when they enter the workplace – whether with Siemens' own manufacturing facility in the city, or other engineering companies.

Lord Stafford, patron of the awards, said: "This is an example of a superb link-up between a major employer and the higher education provider in a city to create a facility which is beneficial to both parties. Not only does the involvement of a major company like Siemens make the University of Lincoln's offer more attractive to engineering students but the graduates produced also benefit Siemens. This is collaboration at its very best and really shows what the Lord Stafford awards is all about."

In its first year, the new school took 34 students, of which 12 received bursaries from Siemens. This year, this has increased to 84. Students come from a wide variety of backgrounds, including fresh new students straight from 'A' levels, to experienced engineers, who value the learning opportunity and qualification. One of these students, Troy Pickard, a Siemens employee for many years, was keen to take up this opportunity and commented: "I have 25 years practical engineering experience with Siemens. When this opportunity arose, I was keen to grasp it and furnish myself with the more of the theoretical underpinnings that I take for granted in my everyday work and also achieve the qualification. I also combine my degree with teaching fellow students, and giving them something of my practical experience."

Steve Middlebrough, director of engineering at Siemens in Lincoln, said: "Siemens has a very long heritage and commitment to skills and training. Our collaboration with the University of Lincoln, to establish the UK's first engineering school for 20 years is groundbreaking in many ways. The location of Siemens' world-class gas turbine training facility is unique, enabling students to benefit real-life engineering issues first hand. This is all part of our focus on creating "industry-ready" graduates with the practical engineering skills needed in today's business. We also focus on highly innovative research for next generation turbines and other technical engineering issues. Our goal is to make the school a centre of excellence for engineering."

Head of the School of Engineering, Dr Jill Stewart, said: "What sets Lincoln's School of Engineering apart is that we really did start with a blank piece of paper. We were and still are able to work with collaborators such as Siemens in a completely new and innovative way. We are raising the profile of engineering and many of our new entrants are people who might never previously have considered enrolling on an engineering degree. That can only be good news for the future of the engineering profession."

The Engineering Hub will be opened officially on the 19th January 2012.

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Notes to editors:

About Siemens in the UK

Siemens was established in the United Kingdom 168 years ago and now employs around 16,000 people in the UK. Last year's revenues were £4.1 billion. As a leading global engineering and technology services company, Siemens provides innovative solutions to help tackle the world's major challenges, across the key sectors of energy, industry, infrastructure and cities and healthcare. Siemens has offices and factories throughout the UK, with its headquarters in Frimley, Surrey. The company's global headquarters is in Munich, Germany. For more information, visit www.siemens.co.uk

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