

The client and market

We are working with a leading Tier 1 supplier of **material solutions to the global automotive sector**, and they are actively searching for step-change solutions and processes to address the rapidly changing marketplace for people transportation (*including domestic cars, shared autonomous electric vehicles and municipal vehicles*). The growing move to autonomous vehicles and future reliance on electric power offers both opportunities and challenges.

Existing solutions use **coatings to protect and decorate the vehicle**, but the **processes employed are costly in terms of time, labour and capital equipment**, resulting in a significant cost for the manufacturer. Now OEMs are demanding quicker and more cost-effective solutions for vehicles that utilise a broader range of materials and are designed to be replaced more regularly, in some cases negating the need for decades of service.

Whilst the emergence of **Mobility as a Service (MaaS)** necessitates cost efficiency for providers and therefore from the manufacturers, it also provides a new market for increased functionality of the car - as an informational, entertaining and socially responsible mode of transport.

The search

The client therefore seeks **truly innovative materials, coatings and processes to enable fully functionalised, active surfaces**, able to add value to the vehicle, assist the owner of the car, save cost and time for the manufacturer, or contribute to the health of the user or wider environment. This could include **solutions to protect, encase, decorate, monitor and/or functionalise the structure or external surface of a vehicle**, with **substrates including galvanised steel, aluminium, thermoplastic and thermosetting polymers, other composites, conventional or polymeric glass**. Areas of interest can be found below:-

<p>Current coating process issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costly capital equipment • Lengthy, multi-stage processes • High energy consumption of existing processes • process emissions (e.g. CO₂, VOC, etc.) • Use of transparent surfaces • Substrate specific coatings • Customised finishes <p>Potential solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative ways of applying wet materials (paints, coatings) to a surface • 1-step coatings able to provide multiple functions (protect, prime, finish) • New / improved coating processes 	<p>New surface functionality</p> <p><i>(in addition to basic functions of corrosion protection, appearance and colouring the surface)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove pollutants from adjacent air • Thermal management • Harvest, store or use energy • Self-healing from damage • Self-cleaning / antimicrobial • Connectivity and use of data • Weight reduction • Fire retarding / prevention / extinguishing
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They are interested in all elements of the process, from creation of a coating or surface finish, to the equipment to supply and deposit it, to its follow-up care. Solutions inspired by nature and those that have a positive effect on the environment are of key interest. **Solutions should have evidence of efficacy (e.g. Proof of Concept or ideally pilot stage trials).**

What the client can offer

The client is a world leader in the development and application of highly-functional branded materials to automotive OEMs, and is continually looking to offer solutions for emerging industry trends and to exceed the regulatory requirements. The company is able to leverage its resources for the further development, testing, and commercialisation of appropriate technologies, benefiting those currently developing solutions for this or alternative markets. The company has excellent routes to market through existing customers and an extensive global distribution network, ensuring valuable revenue streams for growing companies. They are interested in all forms of collaboration, including:- joint development; licensing; distribution; investment and acquisition. Please send preliminary information on any proposed opportunity to – Diane Kolonko via diane@strategicallies.co.uk