

Solar energy company Eight19 spins off from CIKC project

Eight19 Limited, a new solar energy company, has spun out from Cambridge University to develop and manufacture high performance, low cost plastic solar cells for high-growth volume markets. The company is backed by a £4.5m investment from the Carbon Trust and leading international specialty chemicals company Rhodia.

Eight19, so called as it takes 8 minutes and 19 seconds for light to travel from the sun to the earth, will focus its efforts on developing product prototypes utilising techniques for fabricating large scale plastic electronic devices using roll-to-roll processes developed in the CIKC's 3PV project. The company will continue to be actively engaged with CIKC and its innovative research output through the CIKC '3PV+' project.

The company has been created by a partnership of Professor Sir Richard Friend, Professor Henning Sirringhaus and Professor Neil Greenham with technology development company TTP through the Carbon Trust's Advanced Photovoltaic Research Accelerator.

Solar cells made with semiconducting plastics (also known as organic photovoltaics, or OPV) offer potentially very low cost production enabled by low temperature and high throughput processing typical of plastic films, ease of installation for construction companies and simplified manufacturing integration. The market for organic solar cells has the potential to reach \$500 million by 2015 and to grow four fold to \$2 billion by 2020 (Nanomarkets, 2009) driven by applications such as building-integrated photovoltaics, and could save up to 900 million tonnes of CO₂ by 2050 – some 1.5 times the UK's current annual emissions.

Professor Sir Richard Friend, Co-founder of Eight19 commented, "This represents a great opportunity to transfer new technology out of the university, based on recent advances in fundamental science. Solar cells made with organic semiconductors work very differently to those made with silicon and are closer in operating principle to photosynthesis in green plants."

About CIKC:

The Cambridge Integrated Knowledge Centre (CIKC) is a centre of excellence for low temperature processing of macromolecular materials, such as polymers, liquid crystals and nanostructures, for applications in computers, displays and communications. CIKC brings together world-class research activities in Cambridge University in molecular and macromolecular materials in the Electrical Engineering Division and the Cavendish Laboratory with the expertise of the Judge Business School, the Institute for Manufacturing (IfM) and the Centre for Business Research (CBR) and industry partners to accelerate the commercialisation of emerging technology. The Mission of the Centre is to provide the business and technical expertise and infrastructure to enable those with exploitable concepts to achieve commercial success. For more information, visit www.cikc.org.uk

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