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Supporting Big Ideas – VERSALIFT UK and University of Northampton Embark on Business Innovation Project

Local manufacturer, Versalift United Kingdom, is collaborating with the University of Northampton with a Business Innovation Grant to develop an automated process for stability loadings for its range of vehicle-mounted platforms.

The grant, which was approved in May, is open to businesses in the local area to work together with academics from the University of Northampton to boost growth and the development of ideas.

The project team consists of Tom Johnson, Versalift UK Engineering Manager and Mohammed Ghaleeh, Lecturer at Northampton University.

Versalift mount a range of lift platforms to vehicles which are used to keep operators safe when working safely at height. Typical users include telecommunications companies such as British Telecom, local councils carrying out highway electrical maintenance together with contractors working in roofing, CCTV, security, signage and facilities management.

Project Details

In order for the lift platform to work safely at height, stability calculations are produced based on the weight and spare payload of the vehicle after driver, passenger and full tank of fuel. Currently, these stability calculations are carried out manually, which is time consuming for the Company.

The project aim will be to create an automated process to carry out the stability and weight calculations based on user-defined input that will pre-select the lift and vehicle specification. If successful, the project would potentially save 20% of Versalift's project engineering resource, allowing them to generate sales drawings more quickly and reduce time from sales quotation to order.

The Benefits of Collaboration

The Project will be the start of a working relationship, benefiting both parties with knowledge transfer.

Northampton University will benefit from the project as it enables students to practise mechanical design on a practical, real-life scenario. Students have the opportunity to develop working relationships and potentially spend time on site; this relationship can result in Industrial Year placements and summer internships.

For Versalift, the vehicle lift platform conversion sector is small, and it can be difficult to hire design engineers who not only have the academic capability, but fully understand the legislation and standards. Through this relationship, Versalift is developing a talent pipeline that would benefit both parties. Versalift would benefit from the academic advice of Northampton's PHD students and lecturers.

In a nutshell, this is an exciting opportunity that would have a quantifiable return on investment for both parties.

Versalift United Kingdom - Background

Versalift are the world's largest vehicle-mounted platform manufacturer. Versalift UK celebrates 25 years of operation in the UK and Ireland having sold and supported over 7000 platforms. It employs 75 people at its Burton Latimer Headquarters where it has production facilities, sales, engineering, training and business administration.

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Photo caption:



Supporting Big Ideas - L to R, Tom Johnson (VUK Engineering Manager),
Mohammed Ghaleeh (Lecturer), Connor Copsey (Student), James Heminsley (VUK
Design Engineer).