

Watercycle Technologies Announces Completion of Investment Round, Led by Aer Ventures, to Develop Their Direct Lithium Extraction Technology

Manchester, 24 May 2022 – Watercycle Technologies Limited has today announced the completion of its pre-seed funding round led by Aer Ventures. Watercycle Technologies, a spin-out of The University of Manchester, has developed a range of advanced graphene-based membranes and systems to extract lithium and other minerals from brines and water solutions.

Watercycle Technologies has already demonstrated that its solutions can extract lithium from UK-based brines and can recover lithium from lithium batteries during the battery recycling process. This investment will allow the business to further develop their prototype solutions and test them at scale at live extraction and recycling locations.

Successful development of the next stage will allow the business to demonstrate its potential to support the UK and Europe in their aim to be self-sufficient in lithium. The technology also shows the potential to refine the lithium up to battery-grade, which will allow the processing of battery-grade lithium to occur at production sites around the world. Together, these capabilities could significantly improve the environmental footprint of lithium production for EVs.

Dr Sebastian Leaper, CEO of Watercycle Technologies Limited, explains: “Our lives are increasingly dependent on the ebb and flow of lithium ions. They store and transport an ever-greater portion of the energy we need for our devices, cars and power grid and enable us to transition away from fossil fuels. Access to significant quantities of low-cost, low-carbon lithium is fundamental to tackling climate change and we at Watercycle Technologies are striving to make this possible. We are very grateful for the support of Aer Ventures in this journey, as they share our ambition to help build a sustainable, circular economy for future generations to enjoy.”

Chris Rowley, Managing Partner of Aer Ventures, added: “Watercycle Technologies is exactly the type of business we exist to support. With a sustainable vision and a proven technology, the business has the potential to solve one of our major environmental problems – the need for critical minerals to support the transition to Net Zero. With serious commentators such as the IEA estimating the world could require over 50 times more lithium by 2040 than it produced in 2020, the innovation Watercycle Technologies provides has never been more essential and we are pleased to support the business in taking this game changing technology to market.”

Andrew Wilkinson, CEO of The University of Manchester Innovation Factory, said: “This new University of Manchester spinout has amazing potential to significantly reduce the cost and environmental impact of lithium production. It also enables countries with access to lithium-rich brines and recycled batteries, like the UK, to become self-sufficient in this strategically vital raw material. Although initially focussing on the extraction of lithium salts, Watercycle Technologies’ membranes and systems can easily be adapted to extract other high-value materials and be used in applications such as de-salination.”

To find out more about the work of Watercycle Technologies Limited, visit:
www.watercycletechnologies.com.

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NOTES TO EDITOR:

About Watercycle Technologies Limited:

Watercycle Technologies Limited is an innovative, sustainability-driven company committed to reducing the environmental cost of mineral extraction and increasing the availability of clean water. It is developing high-yield, low-cost mineral extraction and water treatment systems to aid the transition towards a circular economy. Its solutions provide a low cost, high yield and environmentally friendly Direct Lithium Extraction (DLE) process suitable for the extraction of lithium from brines and waste / recycling products.

Founded in Manchester the business is based at the Graphene Engineering & Innovation Centre.

More information: www.watercycletechnologies.com



About Aer Ventures:

Aer Ventures is a business accelerator for entrepreneurs focused on making a meaningful positive impact on the resource and environmental challenges facing the world. We believe that innovation allied with capital will drive the transformation needed for a sustainable future. We provide funding and strategic services to emerging businesses that support the circular economy or the drive to Net Zero.

More information: www.aerventures.uk



About The University of Manchester Innovation Factory:

The University of Manchester Innovation Factory is the organisation dedicated to driving the commercialisation of the University's innovation and intellectual property. Our core mission is to use this IP to create positive social, economic and environmental impact. The Innovation Factory works with academic and student inventors to identify research that has the potential to create value. It then translates these into a form where they can be used to benefit society as a whole.

More information: www.uominnovationfactory.com



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