

# Manufacturing Company Celebrates Winning Coveted Queen's Award for Innovation

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Engineering company, [PAC Group](#), have been named as a winner of the Queen's Award for Enterprise in Innovation – the UK's highest accolade in recognising success in business.

The company, based in Belfast, received the award in recognition of the outstanding innovation and commercial success of their carbon composite Hot Drape Former technology and machines, which are used to manufacture components for the aerospace, automotive, and marine sectors.

The Queen's Awards for Enterprise is an awards programme for UK businesses and other organisations that excel in any of three categories; International Trade, Innovation, and Sustainable Development.

A total of just five companies from Northern Ireland have been awarded Queen's Awards in 2021, with PAC Group being the only NI winner of the Innovation category, and the first Northern Ireland Innovation category winner for three years.

Established in 2018, the electrical and mechanical engineering company have had a remarkable growth journey, doubling their turnover and employee numbers since 2019. In 2020, the company invested almost £500,000 in a new premises in Dargan Crescent, Belfast, and now employ 40 people.



Minister for the Economy Diane Dodds and Business Development Director of PAC Group Darren Leslie outside Stormont. PAC are celebrating winning a Queen's Award for Enterprise for Innovation and becoming accredited as a Platinum Level Innovator with Innova

Darren Leslie, Business Development Director at PAC Group, said: "We are absolutely thrilled to receive a Queen's Award for Enterprise in Innovation. It is a fantastic endorsement for our company to be recognised as world-class, and it is welcome recognition of our team's capabilities and hard work. It also recognises how innovative our carbon composite preforming technology is, which brings significant benefits to industries seeking to lightweight their structures to tackle climate change and in response to the Green Agenda."

The award follows PAC Group's recent prestigious Platinum Level Innovator status from Innovate NI, the highest accolade available in the Department for the Economy Innovation Accreditation Programme, which is delivered by Invest Northern Ireland, local councils, and further education colleges.

Holding 42 patents on the hardware and software, the company's preformer machines have been purchased by companies such as Spirit AeroSystems, the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre in Sheffield, and McLaren Automotive.

Congratulating PAC Group on its achievement, Economy Minister, Diane Dodds, said: "Northern Ireland has long been home to excellence in both advanced manufacturing and research & development. As we emerge from the global pandemic, innovation will be vital to our economic recovery and it is businesses like PAC Group who are leading the charge and using innovation to drive growth in their businesses."

"Winning a Queen's Award for Innovation and achieving Platinum Level Innovator status are major achievements and should be celebrated. To achieve the Platinum Level Innovator Status, the highest achievable innovator status from Innovate NI, is an exceptional achievement. I would like to congratulate the team at PAC Group for its hard-work, commitment and drive, which have helped it to achieve commercial success and created real value in the global aerospace and automotive industries."

In 2019, PAC Group was awarded a contract by Spirit AeroSystems to design and manufacture a 20mx6m quartz infrared preformer for its new Aerospace Innovation Centre in Prestwick, Scotland, which is scheduled to open later this year. It is believed to be the largest preformer in the world, and represents a significant investment on behalf of Spirit to secure a step change in composite fabrication, automation, and assembly technologies of current and future aircraft.

PAC Group previously designed and manufactured an 18mx4m vacuum preformer for Spirit's Wing Manufacturing and Assembly facility in Belfast. The preformer is used by Spirit on its advanced composite wing programme, which received the 2019 MacRobert Award for UK engineering innovation.

The company has become an exemplar of innovation in its industry sector and a pioneer of carbon composite technology.

Elwyn Agnew, Engineering Director at PAC Group said: "In addition to the Queen's Award for Innovation, achieving Platinum Level status from Innovate NI, is a true testament to the innovative capabilities of our team and our preforming technology. We seek to collaborate with customers to help them find cost-effective solutions to their problems. Our team specialise in thinking differently. We are constantly innovating and coming up with new ideas, applications, and solutions to help our customers reduce process cycle time, streamline processes, improve output quality, and improve their bottom line."

"In 2020, we became Industry Partners to the UK Future Composites Manufacturing Research Hub, and we are currently undertaking R&D to make our preformer technology more cost-effective and accessible for a wider range of applications and sectors. Winning a Queen's Award for Innovation, as well as being recognised as a Platinum Level Innovator for our technology, are just fantastic achievements for the PAC team."

Dr Vicky Kell, Invest NI's Director of Innovation, Research & Development, added: "It is important to recognise the positive impact innovative companies have on the Northern Ireland economy. I am on the panel for the Queen's Awards and it was great to see such high calibre of Northern Ireland applications. I would like to congratulate PAC Group on not only its Queen's Award but also on obtaining Platinum Level Innovator status, the highest achievable innovator status from Innovate NI.

"PAC Group is an ambitious company with a proven track record in following the principles of successful innovation from ideation through to commercialisation. It has used our support for R&D, marketing, and skills to achieve continued success with leaders in the aviation, marine, and automotive sectors, staying ahead of its competitors. I hope that other ambitious Northern Ireland companies will be inspired to follow in the footsteps of PAC Group, and Invest NI looks forward to supporting the company's innovation journey for many years to come."

For more information on PAC Group's specialist division, visit PAC Composites, or contact their team today on 02893 364600 or [info@pacgroup.co.uk](mailto:info@pacgroup.co.uk).

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