

Liebherr and Lero partner to further develop the smart shipping container cranes of the future

*Lero, the Science Foundation Ireland
Research Centre for Software and*

Munster Technological University announce partnership with Liebherr Container Cranes Ltd.

KILLARNEY, KERRY, IRELAND, May 9, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Ireland's Minister for Education,

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*Ireland's Minister of
Education, Norma Foley T.D.*

Norma Foley TD, has launched a substantial four-year research partnership between Liebherr Container Cranes Ltd, [Lero](#), the Science Foundation Ireland Research Centre for Software and Munster Technological University ([MTU](#)). The project will develop and expand Liebherr's existing systems for 'smart cranes' which help to safely and efficiently move millions of shipping containers around the world every day.

Speaking at the launch, Minister Foley said: “This research project brings together two leaders in the field of research and development and shows the importance and the value of industry-academic collaborations. Since its formation in

2005, Lero has established itself as a world leader in software research and continues to underpin Ireland's outstanding software research reputation. This partnership represents a continuation of the decades' long commitment to R&D that Liebherr Container Cranes has shown which, coupled with its apprenticeship and scholarship programmes, set an example for others to follow.”

Liebherr's managing director, Mr Charlie McCarthy, said the partnership would help strengthen Liebherr's market position and will allow Liebherr to remain at the forefront of container crane development.

“Liebherr is an industry leader in the manufacture of container cranes, and we enjoy an enviable reputation for providing cranes of exceptionally high quality. Our ongoing relationship with Lero and the team at MTU enables us to compete on quality and technological innovation building on substantial investment in research and development to help ensure the future success of the

company and our customers,” he added.

Mr McCarthy said that innovation and development continue to be the company's lifeblood, with teams of structural, electrical, software, automation, mechanical and quality engineers developing new products, systems and software that ensure that Liebherr stays at the cutting edge when it comes to technology and product innovation.

Director of Science for the Economy at Science Foundation Ireland ([SFI](#)), Dr Siobhán Roche, welcomed the partnership, saying: “Liebherr's collaboration with Lero, as a world-class research partner, reflects the ambitious vision of the Irish

government to deliver economic and social impact across the regions. Projects like this, which bring researchers and industry together, support mutual knowledge transfer and enhance enterprise and industry, as well as growing our talent base and furthering Ireland's competitive edge.”

Lero researcher, Professor Joseph Walsh, based at the Munster Technological University's Kerry campus, is leading the partnership with Killarney-headquartered Liebherr Container Cranes Ltd and said that six full-time researchers would work in close partnership with Liebherr engineers on the project: “Smart Systems for Next Generation Container Cranes (SmartCrane).”

“Container cranes are one of the most significant investments and operating expenses in ports and intermodal terminals worldwide. The collaboration focuses on technologies such as operational digital twins, advanced data analytics and advanced sensing systems to enhance the design, deployment and operation of cranes around the world,” he added.

Prof. Walsh, whose work encompasses intelligent mechatronics, software, and intelligent sensor systems, said that it is believed that key future enablers for enhanced, fully automated ship to shore container cranes will be heavily reliant on novel software algorithms and methods.

“The research is complex because container cranes are highly advanced systems operating in complex environments. This requires significant research in disciplines such as data analytics and software systems as we strive to further enhance the functionality of Liebherr's state-of-the-



Ireland's Minister of Education Norma Foley launches a 4-year research partnership between Liebherr Container Cranes and Lero, the Science Foundation Ireland Research Centre for Software and Munster Technological University. Minister Foley is pictured here

art automated cranes, each of which is comparable to an entire factory in terms of the complexity of digital systems”.

President of Munster Technological University Professor Maggie Cusack said the longstanding and fruitful partnership between Liebherr, MTU and Lero gives her great confidence that MTU will further enhance its relationship with manufacturing companies who want to get ahead.

“Liebherr Container Cranes Ltd are a world leader in their field. Innovation and deploying the latest technology on their cranes allow them to remain competitive. The close relationship between Liebherr and MTU has seen Liebherr benefit from the highest calibre of research and innovation on offer at MTU.

“We are delighted that we have now extended that cooperation and will continue to work together to drive development in smart cranes into the future. Liebherr’s search for world-class researchers brought them to their neighbours, just over the road – MTU, Tralee. This great partnership is setting a pathway for others to follow,” she added.

Liebherr is one of the leading manufacturers of container cranes globally, many of which are equipped with extensive automation systems and remote-operation capabilities. The Killarney-based company is a key employer in the South-West with over 800 employees and a long-time collaborator with universities through their research, engineering and IT scholarships, and apprenticeship programmes.

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