Sicona urges faster funding for onshore battery plants to keep up with the UK & US

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, September 30, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Battery material manufacturer Sicona Battery Technologies is calling for more late-stage growth capital investment into manufacturing for critical minerals and battery materials, in a bid to help Australia capture its part of $16.9 billion of forecast annual battery value-add.



Christiaan Jordaan, Founder and CEO of Sicona Battery Technologies

Sicona believes increased local capital will be critical to the construction of onshore battery materials plants, after recent news of the UK backing a Sicona competitor with £52.6 million and the US offering another a conditional loan of up to US$1.4 billion.

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>
> *Christiaan Jordaan, Founder and CEO of Sicona Battery Technologies*

Both governments are funding the growth of silicon-carbon anode manufacturing, which is the exact category Sicona operates in:

The UK National Wealth Fund's commitment to Nexeon on 31 August completed a £100 million round that also drew the Korea Development Bank and Honda Xcelerator Ventures.

The US Department of War's Office of Strategic Capital signed its commitment with Sila Nanotechnologies on 7 August, to expand silicon-carbon anode manufacturing at Moses Lake, Washington, and build a lithium-ion battery cell plant.

Both the UK and the US funding was put towards the middle of a lithium-ion supply chain that begins in Australia, which produced 45 percent of the world's lithium in 2023 despite making less

than 1 percent of global battery materials or components.

Research also shows that this middle segment of the industry could create 61,400 local jobs alongside the $16.9 billion of value predicted by 2030, but this return depends on Australia building the battery materials plants it has so far left to other countries.

Pleasingly, the ARENA Battery Breakthrough Initiative has already awarded Sicona $45 million towards building its first commercial-scale silicon-carbon anode facility inside BlueScope's Port Kembla precinct.



Christiaan Jordaan, Founder and CEO of Sicona Battery Technology

The $100 million project is expected to lift Sicona’s production 300-fold to 230 tonnes a year and create up to 72 skilled manufacturing jobs in a sector that has seen an estimated 14% decline over the last 20 years with 8700 jobs lost in the year to February 2026. Sicona is currently seeking another $55 million of equity capital to complete the facility.

With the Battery Breakthrough Initiative now closed to new applications, the National Reconstruction Fund (NRF) and its "renewables and low emission technologies" priority area is expected to carry the next stage of Australian battery manufacturing: construction finance.

That funding could stop Australian battery companies from looking overseas for construction finance, as Novonix did in securing a conditional loan of up to US$754.8 million from the US Department of Energy. Sicona's acquisition of US-based Advano this month expanded its patent portfolio to 151 patents across 46 patent families, and strengthened the technology it plans to manufacture at Port Kembla. The acquisition also supports Sicona’s pathway to commercialising its technology in Australia, with its plans for Port Kembla unchanged.

Australia holds the lithium, the technology, and a site that has already passed ARENA's diligence, which puts the country in a position to build this plant onshore if construction funding moves quickly enough, according to Sicona.

Christiaan Jordaan, Founder and CEO of Sicona Battery Technologies, said: “Australia has the foundations in place, with ARENA backing our first commercial plant and a government openly talking about a higher risk appetite and faster decisions, which is exactly what this industry needs. Every company in this category reaches the same point, where grants and venture capital carry you to pilot scale and construction finance has to come from somewhere, and the

countries moving quickest on that step are the ones building the plants.

"We have the technology, we have been through ARENA's diligence, and we have the site at Port Kembla, so Australia is closer to a working silicon-carbon anode plant than most people realise. The opportunity in front of us is to move at the same speed the UK and the US are moving, and to back the projects that are ready to build now."

John Wood, Director at NOAB Ventures, said: "The pattern Sicona is describing shows up right across the portfolio I invest in, where seed and venture money takes a company to the point of building something and construction finance becomes the hard part.

"Australia has built genuine strength in inventing this technology, and the opportunity now is to back it through to manufacturing rather than watching another country fund the factory. Sicona has done the hard part already, and projects at that stage are exactly where faster decisions and a higher risk appetite pay off."

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Please contact sicona@thirdhemisphere.agency for any interview requests

Sicona Battery Technologies (www.siconabattery.com) is an Australian battery technology company improving lithium-ion battery performance through silicon-carbon anode technology designed to increase energy density and improve charge and discharge rate. Its SiCx® technology is designed for compatibility with existing battery manufacturing lines, supporting battery manufacturers and supply chain partners seeking higher-performance anode materials for electric vehicles, defence, power tools, and other lithium-ion battery applications.

Priyanka Dogra
Third Hemisphere

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