

AQT's new production facility set to bring 1,000 jobs to South Carolina

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Thin-film solar cell developer [AQT Solar](#) is set to establish its second manufacturing facility in Richland County in the US state of South Carolina.

The company anticipates the 184,000 square foot facility will lead to the creation of around 1,000 jobs over the next four years.

Due to be tooled early this year, the facility will help the company meet its order backlog, which stands at 160MW. A portion of its backlog is set to be delivered this year from the company's other manufacturing site in Sunnyvale, California that it set up in late 2010, AQT said.

The plant is slated to begin producing AQT's copper indium solar cells by early 2012 and is earmarked to grow to a capacity of 1GW by the end of 2014. AQT said it will build the facility out in phases; expecting it to reach 40MW in annual production capacity by the end of this year.

AQT said South Carolina's strong market for clean energy together with its favourable business climate made it an attractive choice to house its production facility.

It hopes the large number of universities and technical colleges in the region will provide a trained labour force to fill the jobs created at the new facility.

AQT's CEO Michael Bartholomeusz said, 'This new facility will not only increase the production capacity for AQT in the years to come, but will help drive the clean tech industry in this great state and create thousands of sustainable, high value jobs.'

He thanked South Carolina Department of Commerce, the CentralSC Alliance and Richland County for the support and commitment that the company received in setting up the new plant.

'This announcement in combination with Amazon's recent announcement brings significant new opportunity to the Columbia region. To continue to attract new job opportunities from a variety of industries, we must remain committed to efforts that will keep taxes and regulatory burdens low, and thus our business climate attractive to new investment,' said the state's Secretary of Commerce Joe Taylor.

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