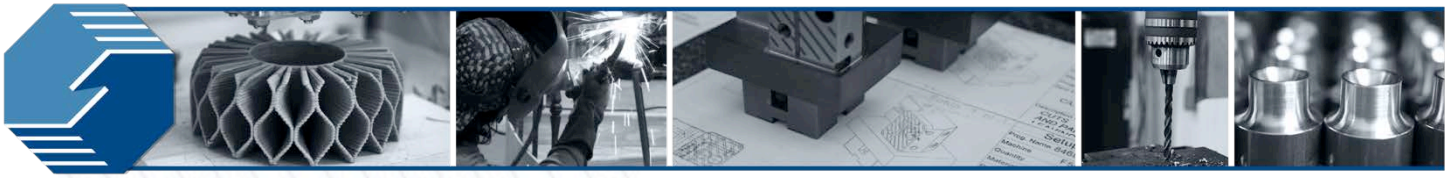

MAKING AN IMPACT ON U.S. MANUFACTURING

MEP Manufacturing Technology Acceleration Center (M-TAC) Pilot Project: Southeast Automotive M-TAC

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The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) serves a vital and diverse role as a nationwide provider of hands-on technical and business assistance supporting the development and competitiveness of manufacturing supply chains.

To help small U.S. manufacturers grow and compete within specific supply chains, MEP is operating a series of Manufacturing Technology Acceleration Center (M-TAC) pilot projects in 2014 and 2015. MEP's M-TAC projects focus on understanding the technological needs and trends of specific supply chains, and in turn providing assistance to small manufacturers to help them adopt, adapt, and integrate appropriate technologies into their business.

The MEP M-TAC projects bring together teams of experts in specific technology and supply chain areas to offer small manufacturers an array of services and deep expertise relating to technology acceleration, transition, and commercialization – within the context of specific supply chains. The M-TAC pilot projects identify where manufacturers most need assistance in adopting or adapting technology. The projects also test and demonstrate business models that will allow small manufacturers to access the technology transition and commercialization services they need to most effectively compete within those supply chain markets.

The **Southeast Automotive M-TAC** project is led by Georgia MEP, and MEP Center partners include the Alabama Technology Network, Innovate MEP Mississippi, South Carolina MEP and Tennessee MEP. The project is working with state Automotive Manufacturer Associations and automotive OEMs in the Southeast U.S. to determine technology needs of the automotive supply chain. Automotive OEMs operating in this region that are targeted for participation include Nissan, Volkswagen, Toyota, Honda, Mercedes Benz, Hyundai, Kia, and BMW.

The **Southeast Automotive M-TAC** project utilizes available MEP tools and services to identify potential R&D capabilities in the nation relative to the identified technology needs, and chronicle opportunities and challenges of effectively connecting small manufacturer automotive suppliers with R& D capabilities and available technologies.

The project is establishing "lessons learned" regarding which tools and models can successfully identify and connect technology to address existing challenges within the southeast auto supply chain at all levels. The project will also result in understanding of how MEP engagement strategies should operate with manufacturers along the different tiers of the automotive supply chain, as well as with appropriate Technology Centers (especially those Centers located in the southeast region, but also located around the country). And because of the multi-MEP Center collaboration, this project will provide best practices regarding how MEP Centers can work together to serve the same regional supply chains.

Additional information about MEP's M-TAC Pilot Projects, including specific info about the Southeast Automotive M-TAC project, can be obtained from NIST MEP by contacting David Stieren at david.stieren@nist.gov.