

Toyota Opens the Door and Invites the Industry to the Hydrogen Future

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LAS VEGAS, (Jan. 5, 2015) – Toyota is opening the door to the hydrogen future, making available thousands of hydrogen fuel cell patents royalty free. Announced today at the 2015 Consumer Electronics Show, this Toyota initiative will spur development and introduction of innovative fuel cell technologies around the world.

Toyota will invite royalty-free use of approximately 5,680 fuel cell related patents held globally, including critical technologies developed for the new Toyota Mirai. The list includes approximately 1,970 patents related to fuel cell stacks, 290 associated with high-pressure hydrogen tanks, 3,350 related to fuel cell system software control and 70 patents related to hydrogen production and supply.

“At Toyota, we believe that when good ideas are shared, great things can happen,” said Bob Carter, Senior Vice President of Automotive Operations at Toyota Motor Sales, USA Inc. “The first generation hydrogen fuel cell vehicles, launched between 2015 and 2020, will be critical, requiring a concerted effort and unconventional collaboration between automakers, government regulators, academia and energy providers. By eliminating traditional corporate boundaries, we can speed the development of new technologies and move into the future of mobility more quickly, effectively and economically.”

Toyota has a long history of opening its intellectual properties through collaboration, and was instrumental in facilitating the widespread adoption of hybrid vehicles by licensing related patents. Today’s announcement represents the first time that Toyota has made its patents available free of charge and reflects the company’s aggressive support for developing a hydrogen-based society.

This Toyota initiative builds on previous commitments, including substantial financial support for the development of a hydrogen fueling infrastructure in California and the northeastern United States. In May 2014, Toyota announced a \$7.3 million loan to FirstElement Fuels to support the operations and maintenance of 19 hydrogen fueling stations across California. In November 2014, Toyota announced a collaboration with Air Liquide to develop and supply a phased network of 12 state-of-the-art hydrogen stations targeted for New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island.

The hydrogen fuel cell patents will be made available to automakers who will produce and sell fuel cell vehicles, as well as to fuel cell parts suppliers and energy companies who establish and operate fueling stations, through the initial market introduction period, anticipated to last until 2020. Companies working to develop and introduce fuel cell busses and industrial equipment, such as forklifts, are also covered. Requests from parts suppliers and companies looking to adapt fuel cell technology outside of the transportation sector will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Today’s announcement covers only fuel cell-related patents wholly owned by Toyota. Patents related to fuel cell vehicles will be available for royalty-free licenses until the end of 2020. Patents for hydrogen production and supply will remain open for an unlimited duration. As part of licensing agreements, Toyota will request, but will not require, that other companies share their fuel cell-related patents with Toyota for similar royalty-free use.

Companies interested in Toyota’s fuel cell-related patents will negotiate individual contracts with Toyota. Additional details, including licensing terms and application process, are available upon request.