

5 THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A FUTURE SUPPLIER

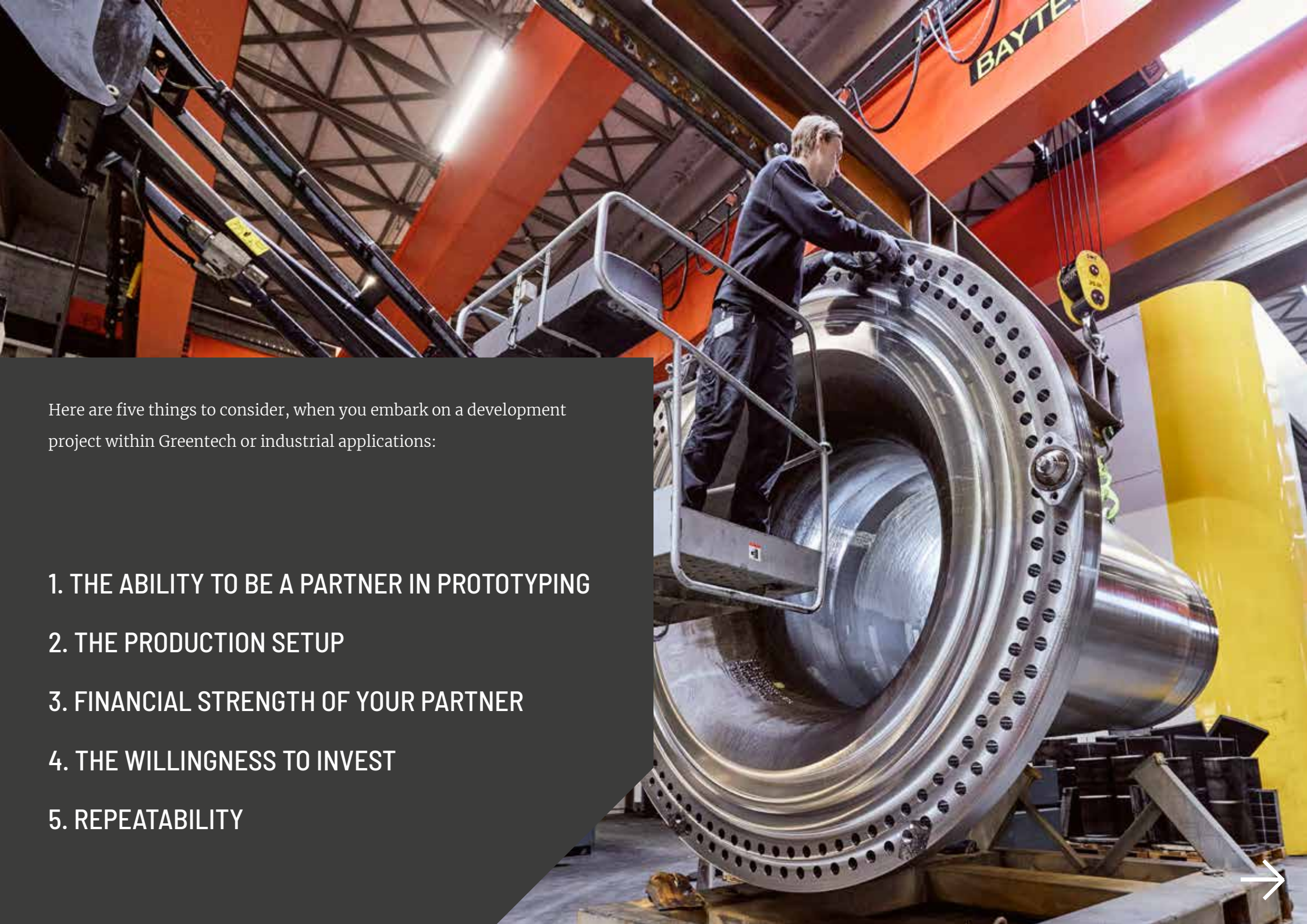
In the world of Greentech, new technologies emerge all the time – with components that have perhaps never been machined before. For inventors and innovators, the idea of having to produce vast quantities of their prototype may seem like something that's far off in a distant future.

We have described 5 vitale things to consider when teaming up with a new supplier.

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Here are five things to consider, when you embark on a development project within Greentech or industrial applications:

1. THE ABILITY TO BE A PARTNER IN PROTOTYPING
2. THE PRODUCTION SETUP
3. FINANCIAL STRENGTH OF YOUR PARTNER
4. THE WILLINGNESS TO INVEST
5. REPEATABILITY



1. THE ABILITY TO BE A PARTNER IN PROTOTYPING

You have your new product or new technology, and you need prototypes of machined parts and components. Perhaps you do some of it yourselves, but it's more likely that you need to find an experienced partner with the knowhow and the setup to look at your prototype or CAD design and say: We can do that for you, and if you change this or that, a future fullscale production will be faster and more cost-effective. So ask your intended partner if they have the manpower and the expertise to assist you in this early phase.



2. THE PRODUCTION SETUP

Take a good look at their production setup: Ask for machine lists, look deeply into their ability to design and produce not just your component, but also the tools and fixtures that will be needed and their ability to perform other tasks, such as surface treatment, documentation and assembly. Also, consider such things as buying locally – at some point in the future, someone is going to ask you about your carbon footprint. Shipping stuff from across the globe may not be in your best interest.



3. FINANCIAL STRENGTH OF YOUR PARTNER

Ramping-up of any production costs big bucks – investments will be needed for more machines, more tools, more staff, when you put down your first order of 100,000 gizmos. If your future partner is not willing or able to invest when the time comes, you could be in trouble – you will perhaps need to perform a costly technology transfer operation to another supplier and will need to begin a new collaboration with all the dangers this entails.



4. THE WILLINGNESS TO INVEST

Ability to invest may not equate a willingness to invest. Make sure to make your end goals clear: In five years, we expect to be able to place orders far exceeding those we place with you now. What will you do then? Make sure to get a valid and honest answer – perhaps even in contract or letter-of-intent form.



5. REPEATABILITY

Scaling is not just a question of buying a new FMS lane or two, whipping out the credit card and buying more raw materials. It's also a question of manpower – does your new partner have the right staff, and can new staff be taught to manufacture your components correctly and quickly? And can you be certain that your supplier has the skill to churn out thousands of identical components over a prolonged period? Take a look at their quality assurance setup and ask to see how they have done the same for others.

These are just some of the factors you need to consider when you embark on your Greentech project. Of course, what matters is proof-of-concept and getting the stuff to work – but somewhere down the line, you will need to think in production terms.

The day may come sooner than you think – and thinking about these things is one of the factors that used to make or break wind turbine producers.

MAKE SURE YOU'RE ONE OF THOSE THAT MAKE IT!



Watch our M·Sys™ manufacturing concept video

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

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