

## AABC Europe (Virtual) Chemistry Symposium

### Crystallite Surface Engineering in Polycrystalline High Nickel Cathode Materials

**Dr. Kenan Sahin**

Founder and President, CAMX Power

**January 19, 2021**

CAMX Power  
35 Hartwell Avenue  
Lexington, MA  
02421-3102

[www.camxpower.com](http://www.camxpower.com)

© 2021 CAMX Power LLC

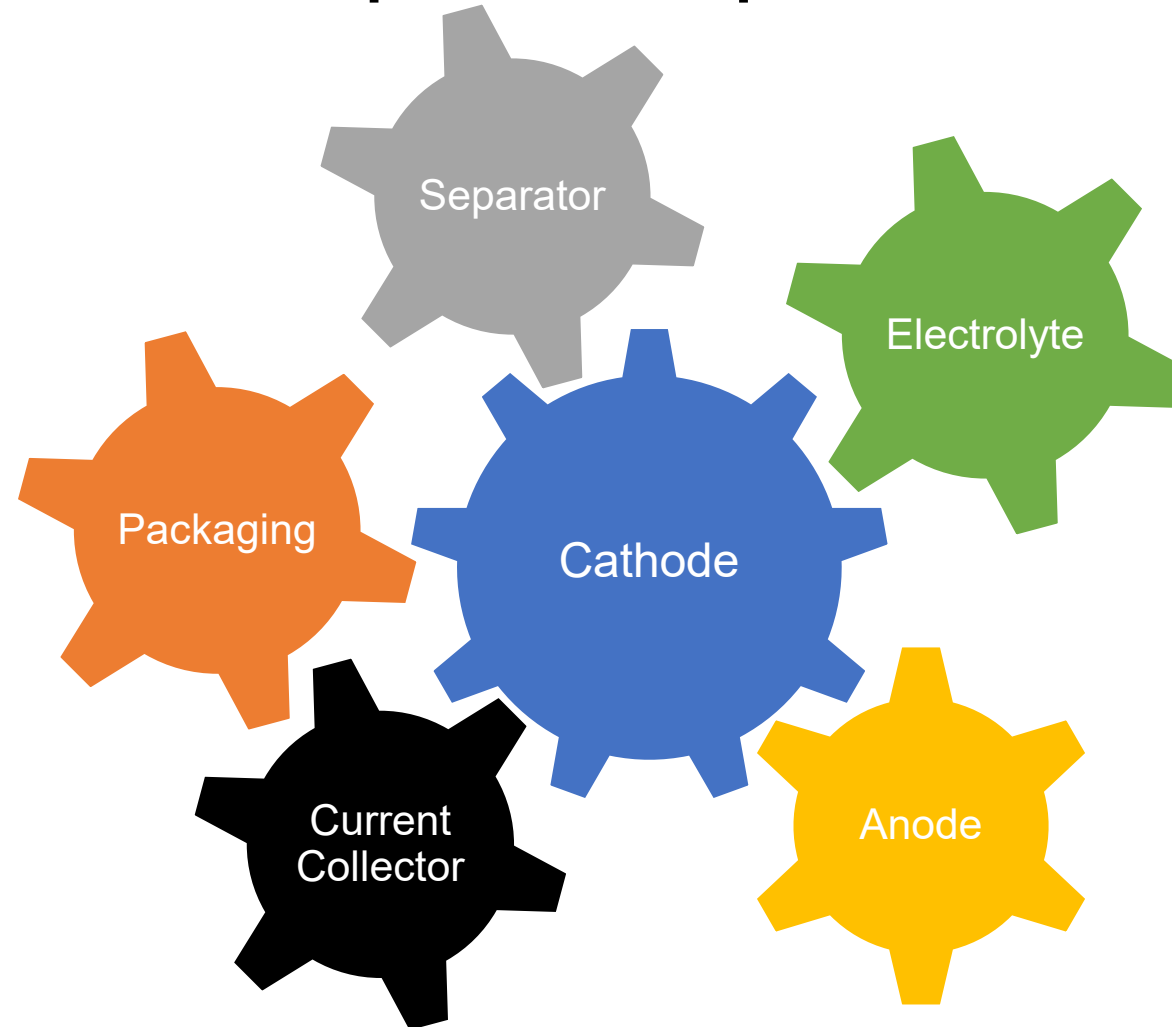
## **Global EV and Battery Cathode Markets**

**By 2030, ~2.5 million tons of annual cathode production will be required to support the global EV market.**

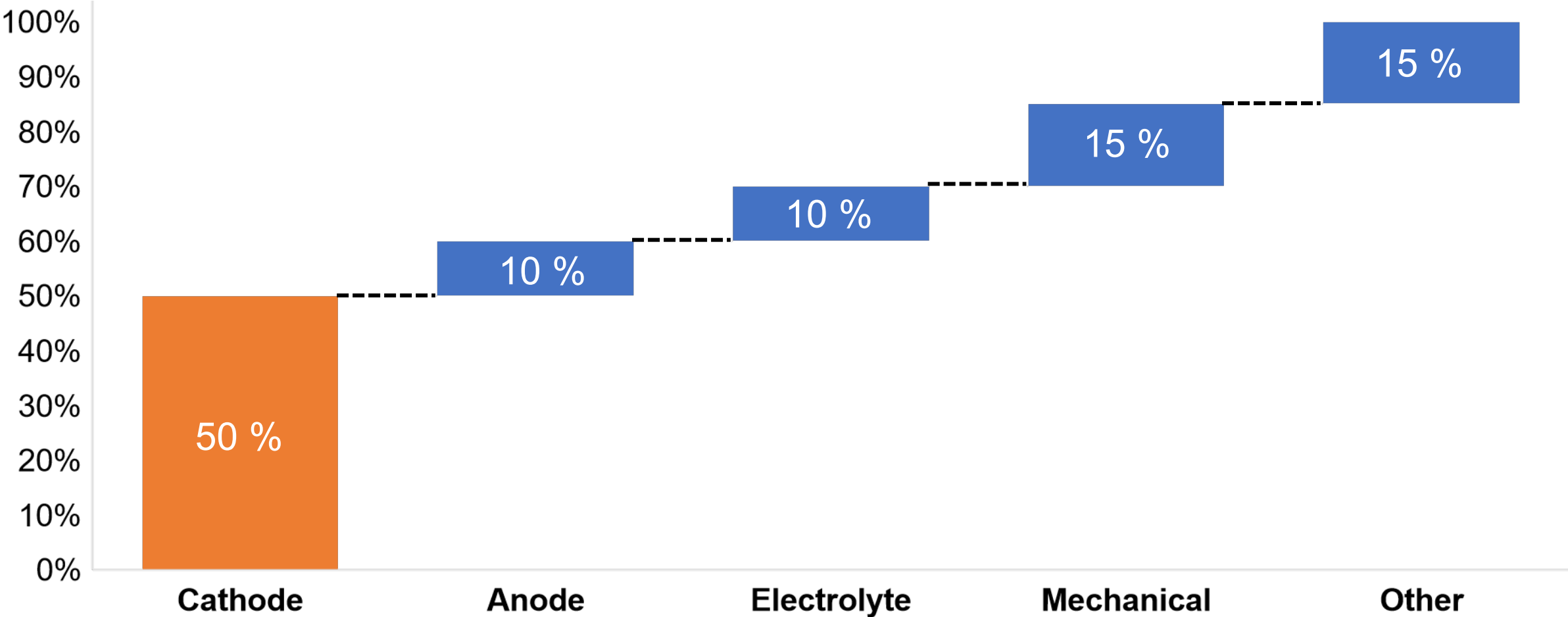
**By 2035, ~5 million tons of annual cathode production will be required.**

**Assuming 10,000 tons per plant, this will require 250 qualified cathode plants by 2030, and an additional 250 by 2035.**

**Compatibility Between Cathode and Cell Components  
is Required for Implementation**



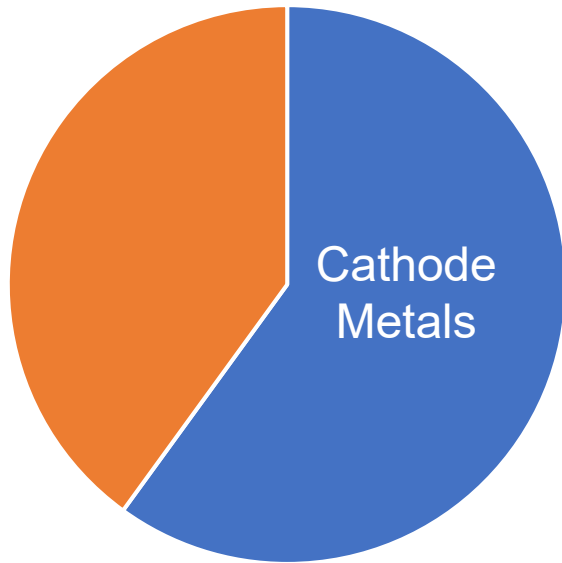
### Contributions to Li-ion Cell Cost



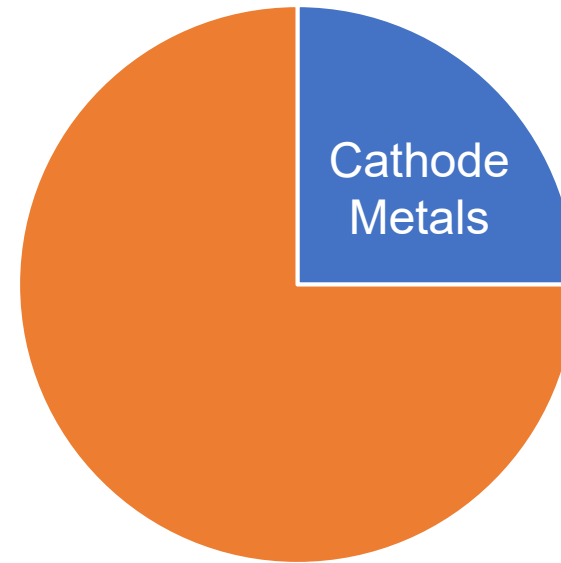
## Crystallite Surface Engineering in Polycrystalline High Nickel Cathode Materials

- 50-65% of cathode cost is metals cost, and metals costs assume ~ 25% of the total cell cost.
- Therefore, scale to achieve low-cost procurement of metals is very important which will favor big suppliers with long term purchase and supply agreements.

**Cathode Cost**



**Cell Cost**



- Currently, large suppliers are constructing plants and setting specifications.
- Already decided chemistry choices likely will not change during the next 10 years.
- **Improving these cathode chemistries without requiring significant modification to existing plants is critical.**
- Given the centrality of cathode chemistry and production, all the other cell components will have to match the cathode, meaning the cathode producers will also impact the other components.

**Using vertical integration and incremental progress as key strategies for materials development,**

**Anticipating high nickel adoption in the market, we have focused on crystallite surface engineering in polycrystalline high nickel cathode materials (NMC, NCA, and LNO).**

**CAMX (previously a division of TIAX) has been engineering the interior of the secondary particles of high nickel cathode materials since 2002.**



# Crystallite Surface Engineering in Polycrystalline High Nickel Cathode Materials

## CAMX Power Vertically Integrated Development Facility Spanning the Li-ion Value Chain

Precursor  
Synthesis

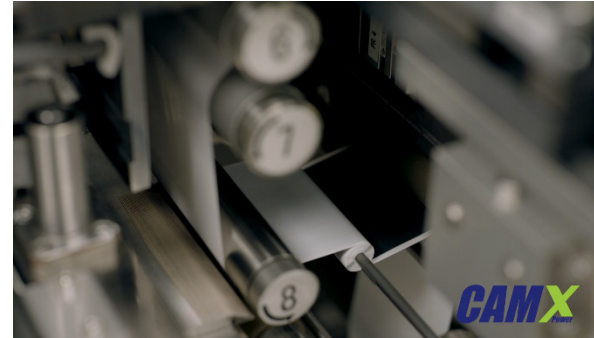
Powder  
Calcination

Electrode  
Coating

Cell  
Fabrication

Battery  
Testing

Pilot Plant  
Scale Up





- Grain boundary engineering applies to the full range of nickel cathode materials and can enable lower cobalt concentrations with superior performance.
- Grain boundary engineering enhances existing, commercial cathode materials to be cheaper, safer, and better performing.
- CAMX's grain boundary enrichment technology, the GEMX™ cathode platform, was globally patented in the key jurisdictions.
- **The GEMX patents are independent of the synthetic route to place cobalt or its combination with additional elements (e.g., Al) in the grain boundary.**

### The GEMX Cathode Platform in the Market

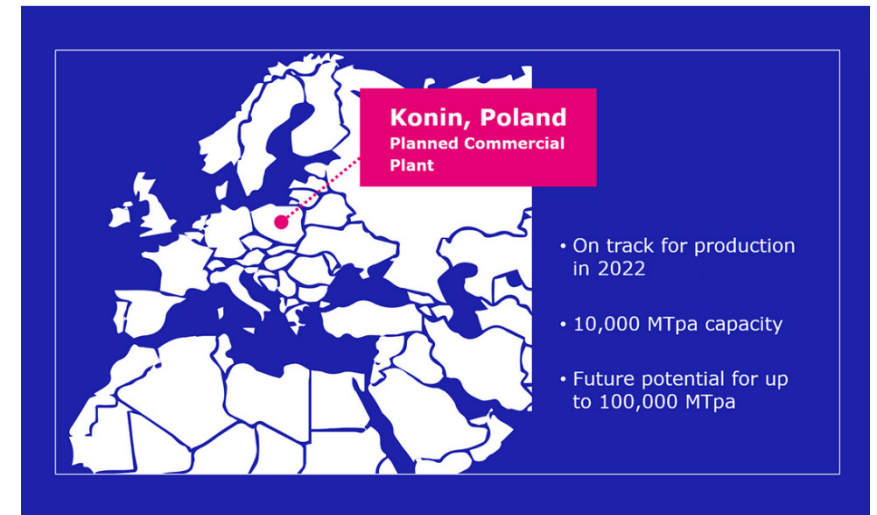
- **RECENTLY SAMSUNG SDI ACQUIRED A NON-EXCLUSIVE, GLOBAL LICENSE TO THE GEMX CATHODE PLATFORM.**
- **Samsung SDI** is already selling cells with GEMX equivalent cathode material in the US and internationally.
- Samsung SDI and a Korean partner are adding a 150,000 ton capacity to an existing 30,000 ton plant in South Korea to be completed by 2023.

## The GEMX Cathode Platform in the Market

- In 2016, Johnson Matthey (JM) licensed a predecessor of the GEMX cathode platform and in less than a year after significant technology transfer from CAMX, built a pilot plant to produce eLNO<sup>®</sup> (JM's branding), which combines the GEMX cathode platform with JM processing technology.
- In 2018, JM licensed the full GEMX cathode platform.

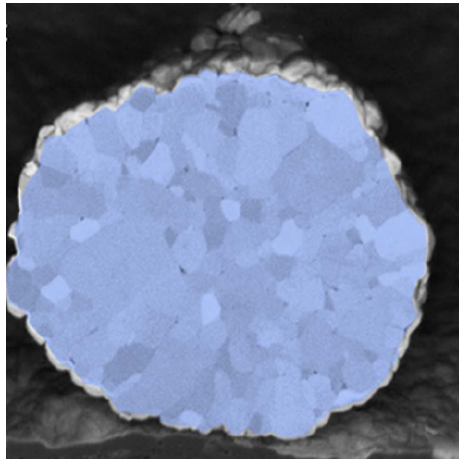
“Given the huge amounts of capital being committed...[£550 million]...management must be far enough advanced in testing to have visibility on pricing and returns. **It's no longer possible to plausibly dismiss eLNO as a mere curiosity.**”

Bloomberg Article (Nov 2020)



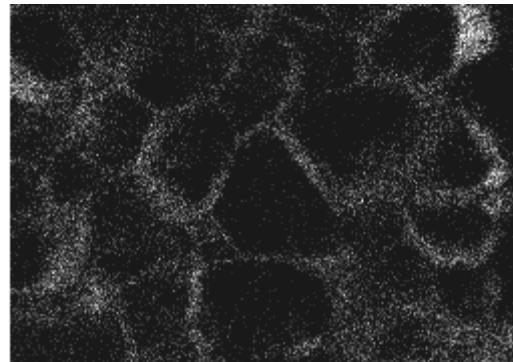
## Cobalt Grain Boundary Enrichment Benefits

Uncycled High-Nickel Cathode Material (Conventional)

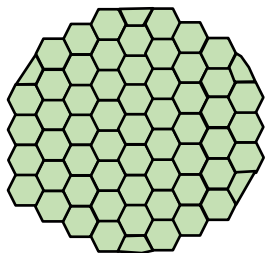


SEM micrograph\*

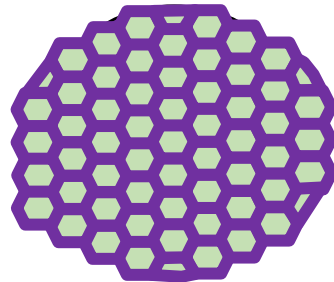
Uncycled Grain Boundary-Enriched High-Nickel Cathode Material (GEMX)



STEM with EDS map of cobalt



Conventional High-Nickel



GEMX™

Reduced Total Cobalt

Higher Power

Higher Energy

Better Extreme Temperature Performance

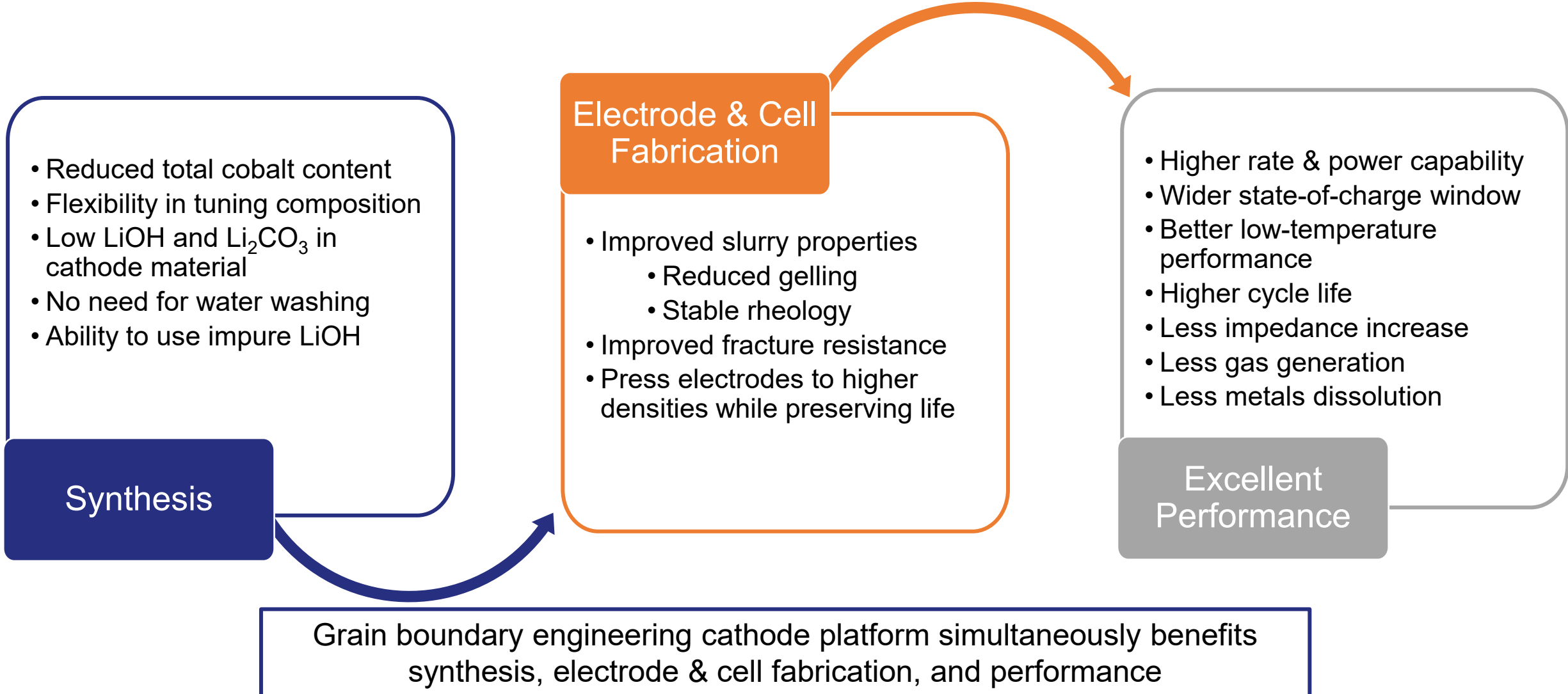
Longer Cycle Life

Lower Impedance Growth

Flexible Synthesis with Minimal Processing Steps

Improved Electrode & Cell Fabrication Properties

## Grain Boundary Engineering Enhances The Manufacturing Chain



**Previously Presented Applications at AABC US 2020 demonstrating the GEMX Cathode Platform:**

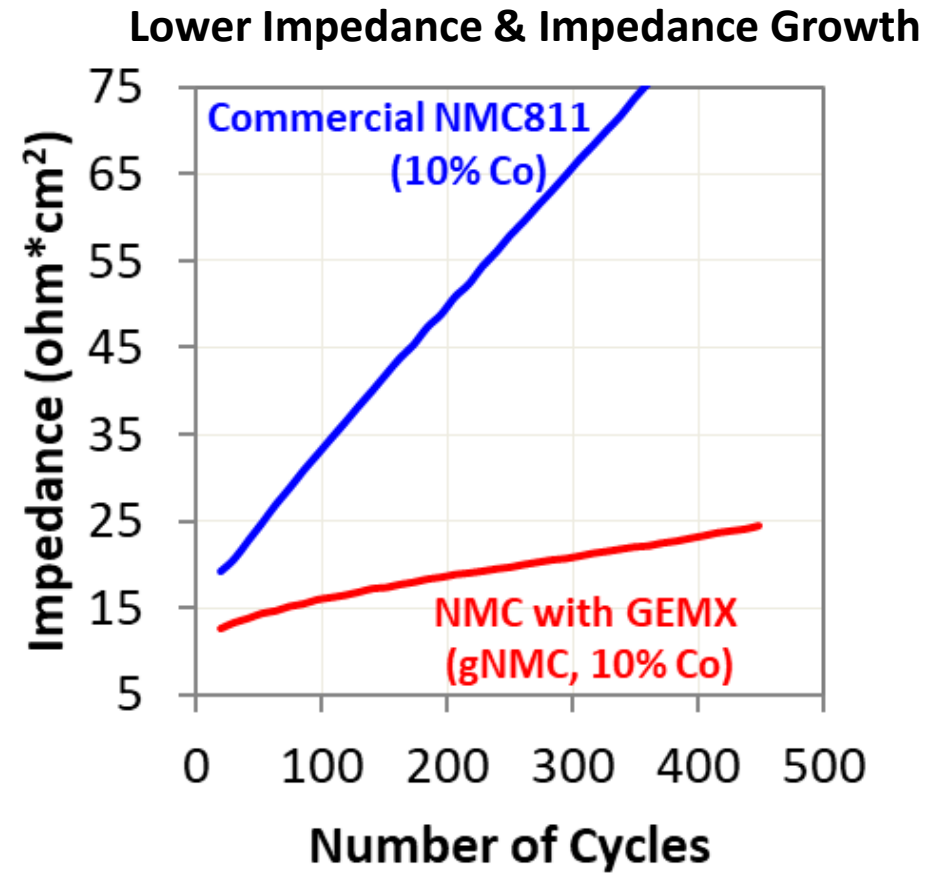
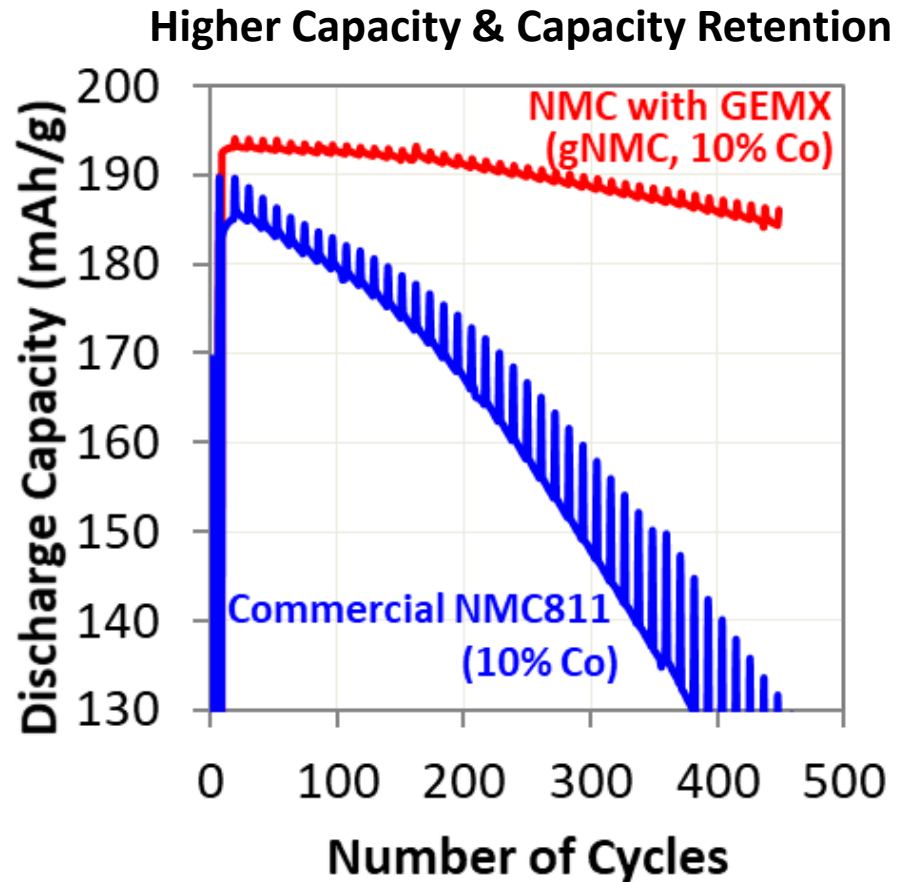
**Application 1:** GEMX-enhanced NMC with 10 mol % total Co content

**Application 2:** GEMX-enhanced NCA with 9 mol % total Co content

**GEMX being a platform technology, many other high-nickel compositions can be synthesized with grain boundary enrichment.**

## Application 1: GEMX-enhanced NMC with 10 mol % total Co content

**gNMC™** with 10 mol % Co exhibits superior performance compared to **commercial NMC811**

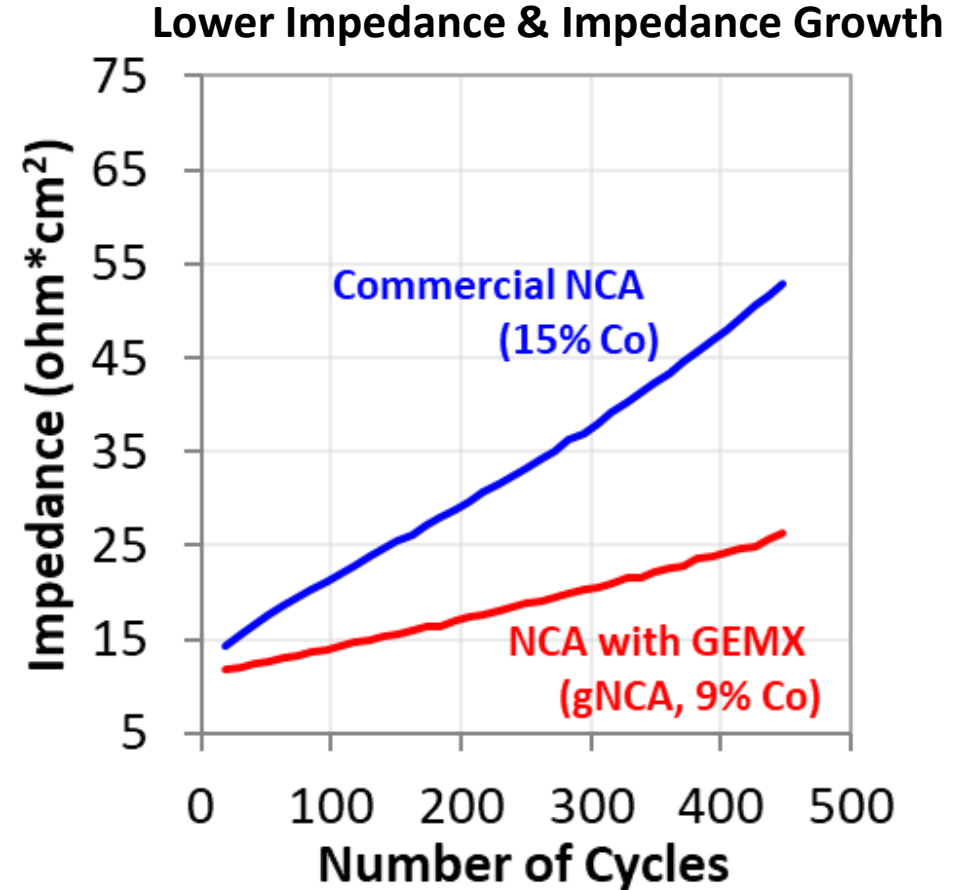
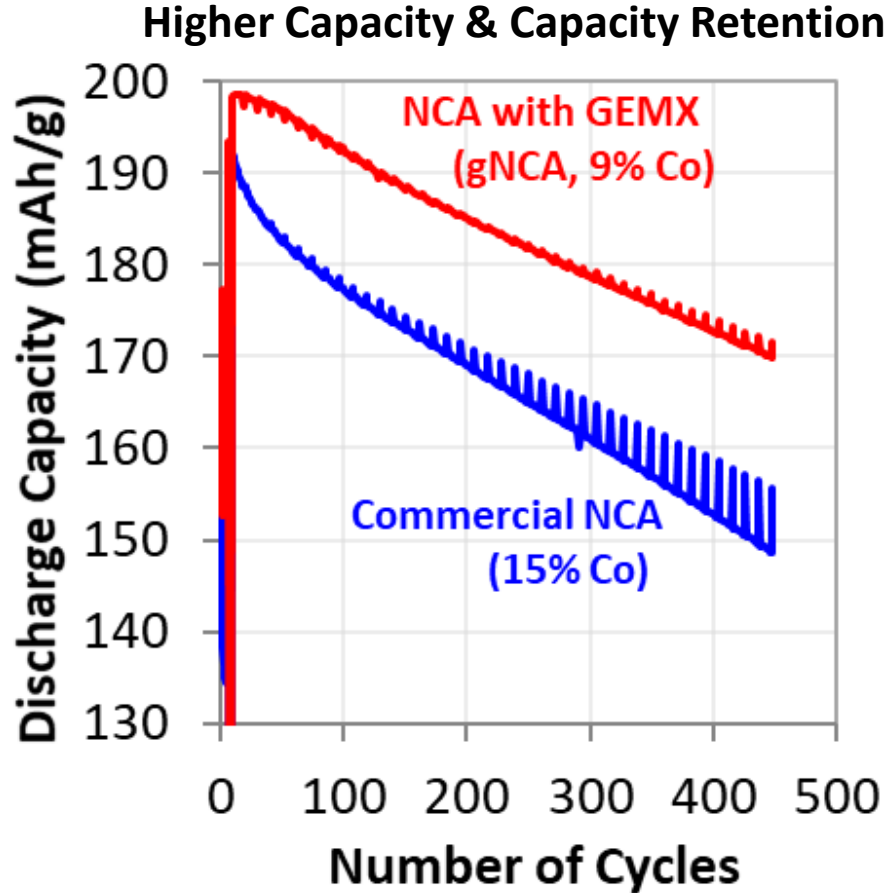


Data shown for full coin cells with graphite anode ( $\sim 2 \text{ mAh/cm}^2$  cathode loading) cycled at  $45^\circ\text{C}$  from 2.7 – 4.2 V under a rapid aging test protocol with average C-rate  $> 1$ . Discharge capacity is normalized to mass of active cathode material.



## Application 2: GEMX-enhanced NCA with 9 mol % total Co content

**gNCA™** with 9 mol % Co exhibits superior performance compared to **commercial NCA** with 15 mol % Co



Data shown for full coin cells with graphite anode ( $\sim 2$  mAh/cm<sup>2</sup> cathode loading) cycled at 45°C from 2.7 – 4.2 V under a rapid aging test protocol with average C-rate > 1. Discharge capacity is normalized to mass of active cathode material.

- During the past few years, CAMX power has extended its crystallite surface engineering to aluminum enrichment in the grain boundary alone or with cobalt enrichment.
- **Patents in the United States are granted** (global patents in other key jurisdictions are pending).

## **Benefits of Aluminum and Cobalt in the Grain Boundary:**

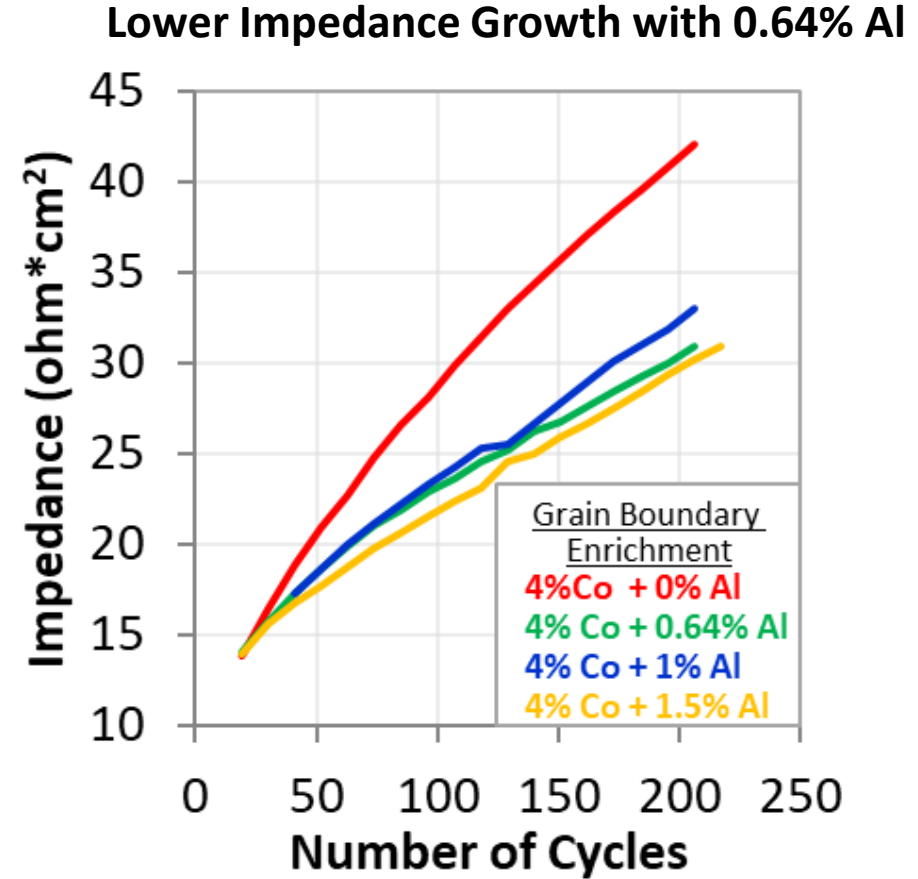
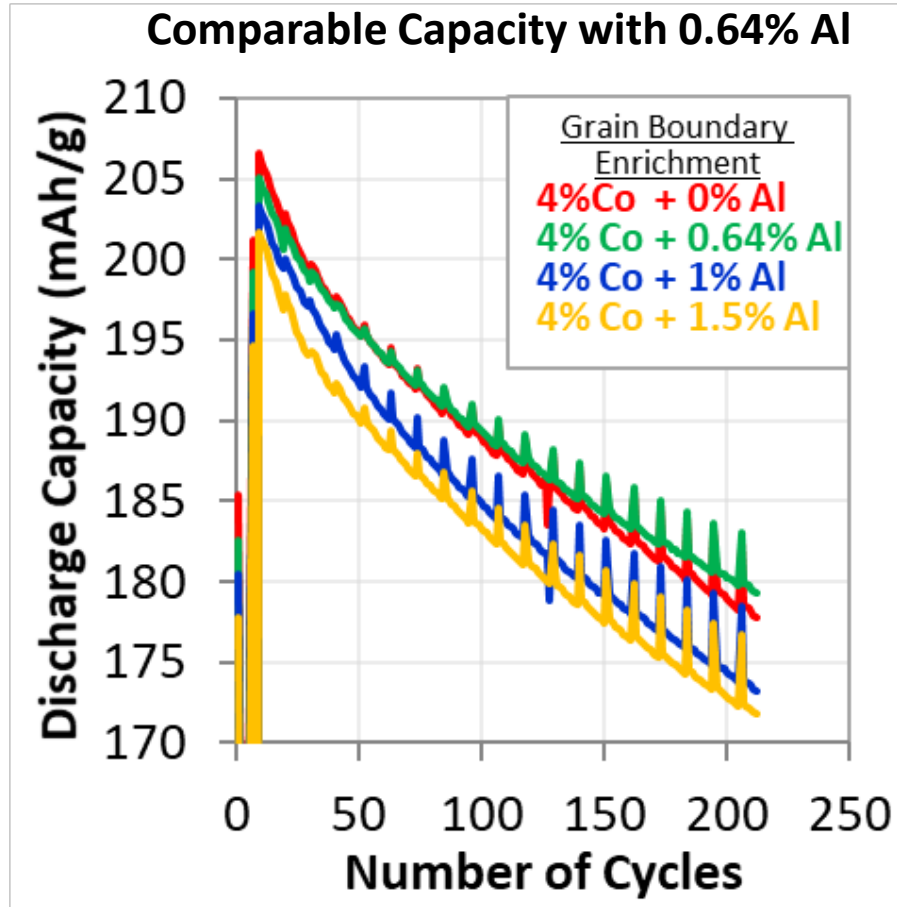
**Application 3: GEMX-enhanced NCMA with 6.7 mol % total Co content**

**Aluminum and Cobalt can be independently enriched in the grain boundary to tune performance and provide a pathway to further reducing Cobalt.**

# Crystallite Surface Engineering in Polycrystalline High Nickel Cathode Materials

## Application 3: GEMX-enhanced NMCA (gNMCA™) with 6.7 mol % total Co content

Enrichment of the grain boundaries with Cobalt and Aluminum improves impedance growth without sacrificing capacity

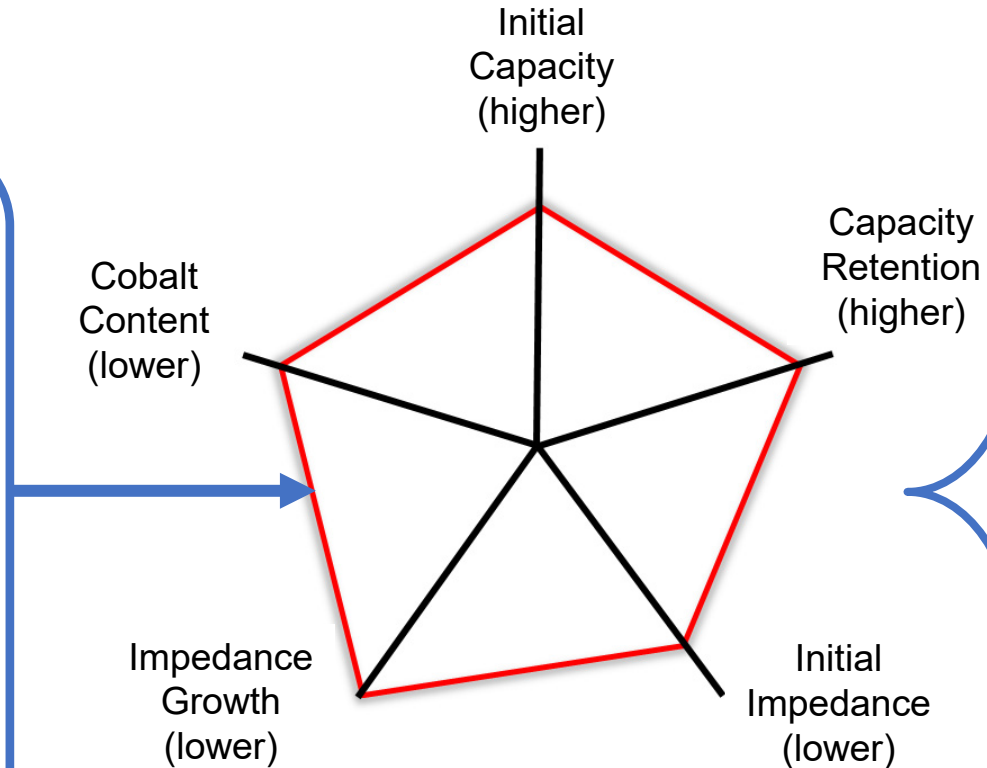


Data shown for full coin cells with graphite anode ( $\sim 2$  mAh/cm<sup>2</sup> cathode loading) cycled at 45°C from 2.7 – 4.2 V under a rapid aging test protocol with average C-rate > 1. Discharge capacity is normalized to mass of active cathode material.

## Objective: Meet Customer Requirements With Minimal Cost

### Customer Requirements

- Energy Density
- Power Density
  - Fast Charging
- Cycle Life
- Calendar Life
- Operating Temperature Range
- Safety
- ... (Others)



### Tunable Parameters

- Elemental ratios (NCA, NMC, LNO)
- Processing cost and step reductions
- Feedstock cost (LiOH, Li<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>, Ni, Co, etc)
- **Grain boundary structure and composition**
  - Co grain boundary enrichment
  - Al grain boundary enrichment
- ... (Others)

## Crystallite Surface Engineering in Polycrystalline High Nickel Cathode Materials

- CAMX's vertically integrated development facility can serve as a **launching pad** for new entrants into cathode production or existing companies to extend their offers.
- CAMX can serve as a **pre-engineering facility** to develop specifications for grain boundary enriched cathode materials.
- With cathode chemistry at the center, CAMX can serve as an **assessment facility** for other cell components.



**Thank You for Your Attention!**

**For more information please visit [camxpower.com](http://camxpower.com)**

**Please email [info@camxpower.com](mailto:info@camxpower.com) with any questions**