

France's Renault teams up with electric car pioneer

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An Autolib electric bluecar plugged at a charging station in Paris on December 2, 2011.

French automaker Renault and the Bolloré family group that runs a successful pay-as-you go electric car network in Paris, are teaming up to develop technology.

In a statement, the groups said they had agreed to develop car sharing systems for [electric cars](#) and cooperate on the manufacturing of the Bolloré Bluecar that has become a common sight in Paris since the launch of the Autolib rental scheme in 2011.

French Industry Minister Arnaud Montebourg said the tie-up, first reported by Le Figaro newspaper, was "necessary", and would allow Renault to take advantage of the Bolloré-developed battery that has proved its merit.

The Autolib service deploys all-electric cars for public use on a paid subscription basis, based around a citywide network of parking and charging stations.

The successful scheme currently has 34,000

subscribers, 1,800 vehicles and around 4,000 charging points in the French capital and its suburbs, and has been extended to other cities such as Lyon and Bordeaux.

There were nearly 6,000 electric cars registered in France last year, of which a third were Autolib' vehicles, according to the Bolloré group.

Earlier this week, the Bolloré group said it had filed an espionage complaint after two employees of a firm employed by BMW were spotted three times tampering with charging points and Autolib vehicles parked in Paris.

BMW denied any wrongdoing.

Electric-powered vehicles have yet to take off as a universal mode of transport, but are nonetheless largely expected to be a major seller for [automakers](#) in the near future.

Electric cars are the go-to highlight at the 65th edition of the IAA auto show currently underway in the western German city of Frankfurt.

On Thursday, German Chancellor Angela Merkel climbed into Volkswagen's electric e-Golf as she visited the show on an election campaign stop.

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