



Media release

Date 23.05.2013

Embargo

Call for bids for energy competence centres

In its Dispatch on the Coordinated Energy Research in Switzerland Action Plan, the Federal Council announced measures to promote energy research as part of the federal Energy Strategy 2050. One of these measures involves the creation of research networks between higher education institutions, the Swiss Competence Centres for Energy Research (SCCERs), which will pursue research in seven action areas. The call for bids for these centres is being launched today.

Seventy two million francs have been earmarked between 2013 and 2016 to establish the competence centres. During this period the SCCERs will be evaluated on an ongoing basis and will continue to operate into the next ERI dispatch period (2017 to 2020) provided they meet the expectations formulated in their objectives. The SCCERs are the CTI's new approach to addressing the problems posed by the energy revolution, and to encouraging innovation. An additional 46 million francs have been made available for conventional support of research and development projects in the energy field. Institutions not involved in the SCCERs can also apply for this funding. There are still sufficient funds available to support projects in other fields.

The SCCERs will be set up in the following seven areas: efficiency; grids and their components, energy systems; storage; power supply; Economy-environment-law-behaviour, efficient concepts-processes-components in mobility and biomass. They are intended to encourage the innovation required for the Energy Strategy 2050 to be implemented sustainably, both in the technical field and in politics and society, from basic research through applied R&D to the transfer of research results to the market. The SCCERs will achieve this by expanding capacity and pursuing the potentially most effective ideas and approaches. The centres will need to involve partners from industry and the public sector at an early stage in order to do this.

The Commission for Technology and Innovation CTI has been given the task of launching the call for bids and establishing the SCCERs. To this end, it has set up a Steering Committee composed of representatives from the CTI and the Swiss National Science Foundation SNSF and headed by the CTI President Walter Steinlin. Walter Steinmann, Director of the Swiss Federal Office of Energy SFOE, will assist the Steering Committee in a consultative capacity.

The SCCER bids addressed to the Steering Committee will be assessed by an Evaluation Panel composed of specialists from a range of countries and headed by Andreas Umbach, President and Chief Executive Officer of Landis + Gyr AG, Zug. The Evaluation Panel's tasks include evaluating and providing support to the SCCERs on an ongoing basis and drawing up recommendations to the Steering Committee.

Bids must be submitted to the CTI by 9 July 2013. It should be possible to conclude agreements with the first SCCERs by the end of 2013.

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