

Press release

2nd round of the excellence cluster competition launched by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF): MicroTEC Südwest has convinced the jury!

Freiburg, 26th January 2010. The winners in the second round of the excellence cluster competition launched by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) are officially selected. Prof. Dr. Andreas Barner, spokesman of the management of the Boehringer Ingelheim GmbH and Prof. Dr. Annette Schavan, Federal Research Minister, have announced the five winners. MicroTEC Südwest has convinced the top-flight jury and experts.

The announcement of the winners of the excellence cluster competition confirms the top-position of the cluster MicroTEC Südwest. In the first round of the competition, MicroTEC Südwest had a place among the finalists. Unfortunately, it missed the podium. On its second attempt, the cross-sectoral technology cluster has been able to prove its development dynamics, its unique concentration of competencies and its sustainable strategy regarding markets of the future. Having won the competition, the cluster is now making its way to an international top-position in the field of microsystems technology. The German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) sponsors half the amount of the total project volume of about 80 million euros.

The state of Baden-Württemberg supports the infrastructural measures to strengthen the cluster and its management. 116 cluster associates and partners are actively involved in the 33 joint projects planned.

On account of the funding of MicroTEC Südwest, there is a big chance for Germany to extend one of the most significant key technologies throughout Europe and beyond. Moreover, these key technologies can be applied to the most essential industries of Germany:

- automotive
- life sciences / medical technology
- mechanical engineering / production engineering
- automation engineering / sensor technology

In addition, the cluster MicroTEC Südwest is an important technology supplier for other clusters, especially for those which participated in the excellence cluster competition.

In the medium term, there will be chances for intelligent microsystem solutions due to significant changes in the field of “mobility” and “health” markets.

Hence, MicroTEC Südwest concentrates its strengths on the two beacons “robust and efficient sensors” with the international market leader Robert Bosch and “in-vitro-diagnostics” with the international market leader Roche Diagnostics:

- With reference to the beacon “robust and efficient sensors” innovative sensor applications for the car industry are developed. These high-performance sensors have become indispensable for the development of clean and resource-saving drive technology and the early recognition of human beings in driver assistant systems. The sensors make a major contribution to reduce energy consumption and emissions. Otherwise, they increase safety in road traffic.

- „In-vitro-diagnostics“ (IVD) is becoming more and more important due to an improvement of the quality of life of patients, medical quality and cost effectiveness. It is estimated that a 1% increase of expenses for in-vitro-diagnostic leads to savings of about 5% in the healthcare system. In Germany, this could save more than 10 billion euros per year.

Scientific findings will be applied to other industries of the cluster. As the most important branch of industry with reference to manufacturing industry in Germany mechanical engineering has great potential to use microsystem solutions permanently. The fact that MicroTEC Südwest has been selected to be a winner of the excellence cluster competition confirms the brilliant cooperation among the cluster associates and the team that worked on the main request and the cluster strategy. The state of Baden-Württemberg has been supporting the cluster all along.

Next steps:

Now, there is much work to do – but it will be worthwhile. The applications submitted have to be worked out and handed in again as a developed and detailed plan. Subsequently, we can start with the most exciting period – in operational terms: the development of MicroTEC Südwest to an international leading cluster.

For further information please visit our website www.microtec-suedwest.de.

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Logo of the cluster MicroTEC Südwest