

Technology Strategy Board

Driving Innovation

10 Feb 2010

£12m to help quicken pace of innovation in wave and tidal technologies

Innovative businesses are being invited by the Government-backed Technology Strategy Board to compete for up to £12m of investment during 2010 to help develop the wave and tidal technologies of the future. Two new collaborative R&D competitions from the board are designed to support innovation that will lead to the cost effective exploitation of UK and global wave and tidal stream resources.

The first £9m call includes an investment of up to £2m from the South West Regional Development Agency (RDA), which is also developing the Wave Hub project off the coast of Cornwall. The competition opens in March and focuses on driving down the cost of energy and improving the reliability of wave and tidal stream energy devices.

It is designed to complement a second £3m call due to open in September that focuses on supporting the deployment of pre-commercial full scale devices installed and operating in the sea. The call will focus on monitoring the performance of devices and ensuring that they are reliable and can be installed and maintained effectively. This is specifically aimed at businesses that are already working towards full scale deployment of their technology.

Iain Gray, Chief Executive of the Technology Strategy Board, said:

“Wave and tidal stream technologies are at an early stage of development and it is expected that they will be a significant part of the renewable energy mix needed in the UK by 2050 if we are to meet our targets for reducing greenhouse gases emissions.

“To fully realise the marine energy potential in the UK, there are a number of technological challenges that must still be tackled, ranging from proving which technological solutions will most successfully harness marine energy, to reducing the cost of the energy produced to make the technology competitive with other renewable energy solutions.”

Both competitions are complementary to the Carbon Trust’s Marine Renewable Proving Fund. Together, these activities aim to advance wave and tidal stream technologies along the innovation chain in a concerted effort to grow business opportunities and achieve the Government’s Renewable Energy targets. **Ends**

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- **Supplementary quote in relation to the first £9m call including up to £2m from the South West RDA:**

Stephen Peacock, Executive Director of Enterprise and Innovation at the South West RDA, said:

"We are delighted to be investing in this new competition with the Technology Strategy Board. It will accelerate the pace of marine renewables development in the UK, and complement the significant investment the South West RDA is making in the sector through our investments in Wave Hub and marine energy research."

- **Wave and tidal stream energy technologies: reducing costs and improving performance. £9m including up to £2m from the South West RDA.** Competition opens on 8th March 2010. This single stage competition will consist of two strands: one relating to enhancing the performance of existing devices, and the other to progressing further novel concept devices. We would expect that this competition will not be confined solely to wave and tidal stream device manufacturers but would also include collaborations that will develop the UK supply chain and skills necessary for the future deployment of these technologies. This competition is the first of a series of integrated activities led by the Technology Strategy Board, focusing on this area of research. The deadline for receipt of application for this competition is on 29th April. [Please click](#) here to view a two page scoping document which provides information about the specific areas within the competition.
- **Wave and tidal stream energy technologies: Underpinning deployment. £3m.** Competition due to open September 2010. This competition will support applied research and experimental development addressing the challenges of verification of performance, device reliability in real environment and installation, operation and maintenance methodologies. The competition is targeted at pre-commercial, full scale wave and tidal stream devices that are looking to progress rapidly towards being eligible for the Government's Marine Renewable Deployment Fund and full scale deployment and those that have benefitted from the Carbon Trust's Marine Renewable Proving Fund. The deadline for receipt of application for this competition is on the 21st October. [Please click](#) here to view a two page scoping document which provides information about the specific areas within the competition.
- Wave and tidal energy offers promising prospects for the UK as highlighted in '[The UK Low Carbon Industrial Strategy](#)' published by Government in July 2009. As outlined in our [Energy Generation and Supply Strategy](#), wave and tidal stream technologies are a priority for the Technology Strategy Board and we aim to help in identifying those technologies that will enable cost effective exploitation of UK and global wave and tidal resources. Together with the Marine Renewable Proving Fund we aim to help to achieve the conditions necessary to access Government's Marine Renewable Deployment Fund, fiscal incentives such as the Renewable Obligation, and private investment.

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- According to the Government Low Carbon Industrial Strategy, in the long term wave and tidal stream technologies have the potential to provide up to 20% of UK electricity needs. Their contribution to the UK 2020 renewable energy targets is estimated to be around 1.3GW. The UK has signed up to the [EU Renewable Energy Directive](#) which includes a UK target of 15 percent of energy from renewables by 2020. This target is equivalent to a seven-fold increase in UK renewable energy consumption from 2008 levels.
- **The Technology Strategy Board** is a business-led executive non-departmental public body, established by the Government. Its role is to promote and support research into, and development and exploitation of, technology and innovation for the benefit of UK business, in order to increase economic growth and improve quality of life. It is sponsored by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). For more information please visit www.innovateuk.org.
- **The South West RDA** leads the development of a sustainable economy, investing to unlock the region's business potential. It is helping companies respond to the economic crisis and charts a course for recovery. South West RDA investment is on the basis of its leadership on the low carbon economic agenda, helping South West England's economy build upon its designation as the UK's first Low Carbon Economic Area (specialising in marine energy). More information can be found at www.southwestrda.org.uk
Wave Hub is the South West RDA's £42 million flagship marine renewables project. It will create a grid-connected 'socket' on the seabed some 10 miles off the north coast of Cornwall to which arrays of wave energy conversion devices can be connected and tested. Wave Hub is funded with £12.5 million from the South West RDA, £20 million from the European Regional Development Fund Convergence Programme and £9.5 million from the UK government. Construction is under way and the first wave energy devices are expected to be deployed in 2011.
- The development of complementary interventions in marine energy by DECC, Carbon Trust and the Technology Strategy Board is part of the Government commitment to engender further collaboration between low-carbon funding bodies to enhance support to renewable energy. This commitment is in the UK Renewable Energy Strategy, which sets out the collective role that the UK has to play in promoting renewable energy, from individuals to communities to businesses:

In this strategy the government made the following commitment:

We will form a more collaborative working arrangement between low-carbon funding bodies to help accelerate technology development. We will build on a strategy developed by the Low-Carbon Innovation Group to better integrate the programmes of support. This Group consists of the Technology Strategy Board, Carbon Trust and Energy Technologies Institute and will be expanded to include the Environmental Transformation Fund, Research Councils and when relevant, Regional Development Agencies and Devolved Administrations.

http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/what_we_do/uk_supply/energy_mix/renewable/res/res.aspx

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- Companies and other organisations seeking further information about these and other funding competitions should visit the Competitions page of the Technology Strategy Board website –www.innovateuk.org - email competitions@tsb.gov.uk, or phone the Competitions Helpline at **0300 321 4357**

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Wave and Tidal calls launch /Feb 2010 /Claire Cunningham.