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DETEC Press releases

Swiss Federal Office of Energy awards the Swiss energy prize Watt d'Or 2021

Swiss Federal Office of Energy

Bern, 07.01.2021 - This evening, 7 January 2021, the Swiss Federal Office of Energy awards Switzerland's prestigious energy prize to industry, the Watt d'Or, for the fourteenth time. The winners of gold for 2021 are: Adaptricity AG (Energy Technologies category), west Swiss energy supply company Romande Energie together with ABB Switzerland (Renewable Energies category), Hydrospider AG together with Hyundai Hydrogen Mobility AG, H2 Energy AG and the Association H2 Mobilität Schweiz (Energy-efficient Mobility category), Mettiss AG together with Beat Kegel, and Umwelt Arena Schweiz together with architect René Schmid (both Buildings and Spatial Development category). The Watt d'Or trophy – a snow globe – will be presented to the winners by the distinguished jury, chaired for the last time by former Councillor of State Pascale Bruderer. Due to the pandemic situation, the award ceremony will take place on a strictly small scale. However, it will be transmitted today starting from 4:30 p. m. via live stream on internet on www.wattdor.ch.

Innovative Swiss companies and universities are successfully and boldly living the energy future now and putting technology into use. To honour these efforts the Swiss Federal Office of Energy has created the Watt d'Or as the hallmark for excellence in the energy field. The Watt d'Or was first awarded in 2007 with the intention of publicising outstanding products or services in the energy sector. Motivation was thus to be provided for the economy, politics and the public at large to discover for themselves the advantages of innovative energy technologies.

The Watt d'Or is not endowed with any prize money so no funds are awarded. Sixty-four applications for the Watt d'Or 2021 were submitted by the end of July 2020 and evaluated by a team of experts. Twenty-four applications reached the final round of judging. From these the jury led for the last time by chairwoman Pascale Bruderer has selected the winning project in each of the four Watt d'Or categories. In the Buildings and Spatial Development category there are two winners this year.

Winners of the Watt d'Or 2021

Energy Technologies category: Adaptricity AG

Electricity cannot just be wasted - Adaptricity makes the distribution grids fit for the climate-neutral and renewable energy future.

The path towards a climate-neutral Switzerland leads through greater electrification and decentralisation as well as increased digitalisation of the energy supply system. Distribution grids have a major role to play in all this. The higher level transmission grid with the large power plants, but increasingly more solar facilities, electro-charging stations, heat pumps, and finally the sockets at the consumer's home "hang" on to these systems. The classical solution up to now has been to expand the distribution grids. A better, more cost-effective and safer solution is offered by start-up company Adaptricity. With its software solutions, Adaptricity delivers smart answers for the planning and transparent monitoring of grids so making distribution grids fit for a climate-neutral and renewable energy friendly future.

Renewable Energy category: Romande Energie and ABB Schweiz

A power spot in the Alps - this alpine reservoir is also a solar power plant.

High up in the Swiss Alps the atmosphere is rarer, solar radiation is stronger, and in winter the snow reflects the sunlight. Ideal conditions for the production of solar energy, in winter in particular. The west Switzerland based company Romande Energie is using the good alpine conditions to further develop its renewable electricity production and also promote Switzerland's energy strategy. For these reasons the company has created a power spot on the Lac des Toules reservoir in Valais, at an altitude of 1,800 metres above sea level. In addition to energy from hydropower, the reservoir now also provides solar electricity from a floating alpine solar power plant. To realise this facility, which is unique in the world, many technical problems had to be resolved successfully by Romande Energie with the help of ABB Schweiz. Such is the success of the solutions that other energy supply companies both at home and abroad have indicated that they are interested in the project.

Energy-efficient Mobility category: Hydrospider AG, Hyundai Hydrogen Mobility AG, H2 Energy AG, Association pro H2 Mobilität Schweiz

A cycle for renewable hydrogen for heavy goods traffic - a network of committed companies intends to make heavy goods traffic in Switzerland climate-neutral.

Hydrogen will play an important role in worldwide efforts toward a climate-neutral energy supply. That is an undisputed fact today. Many countries, the EU included, are busy defining comprehensive hydrogen strategies. This is not just about the security of CO2-free supply but rather about a market for hydrogen and for other climate-friendly technologies worth billions. Switzerland is playing in the hydrogen "Champions' League" thanks to a worldwide unique initiative. Hydrospider AG, Hyundai Hydrogen Mobility AG, H2 Energy AG, and Assocation pro H2 Mobilität Schweiz are constructing the world's first commercial cycle for renewable hydrogen. This strongly committed network of companies is driving supply and demand for renewable hydrogen in parallel, without any state funding. The business model comprises hydrogen powered trucks, hydrogen filling stations and production and logistics for renewable hydrogen, Today there are about 50 hydrogen powered lorries in Switzerland; there will soon be more than 1,000. Other countries are following the development with great interest.

Buildings and Spatial Development category: Mettiss AG and Beat Kegel

Mr Kegel's flair for physics - Mettiss AG and Beat Kegel have transformed an office block from the 1960s from an energy guzzler into a passive house thanks to intelligent planning.

Most of Switzerland's older buildings waste energy wholesale. Energy refurbishment costs a lot of money, takes a long time, and the complicated services technology confuses building owners. In St. Gallen there is a newly refurbished office building from the sixties which dispels such thoughts completely. Here Beat Kegel's energy concept - "Kegel's Rule" for short - was implemented in cooperation with the St. Gallen property company Mettiss AG. The refurbishment was realised rapidly and cost-effectively and the building now easily meets the passive house standard. This is due to a cost-effective low-technology heating and ventilation system incorporated in prefabricated parapet elements and connector fans in the doors. The new occupant, the University of St. Gallen, is very pleased with the climate in the rooms and the energy costs. "Kegel's Rule" could catch on in the refurbishment of further office buildings as well as in dwelling house construction and new builds.

Buildings and Spatial Development category: Umwelt Arena Schweiz and René Schmid Architekten AG

With heart and mind towards energy self-sufficiency with interconnection - the development at Männedorf is a model ecological and economic project.

In their new development in Männedorf, Walter Schmid, energy pioneer and president of Stiftung Umwelt Arena Schweiz, and his son, architect René Schmid, René Schmid Architekten AG in Zurich, are relying on energy self-sufficiency with interconnection. The development's entire annual energy requirement is produced on site in

photovoltaic plant in the façades and on the roof with the additional help of a wind energy plant. However, the buildings are not completely autarchic for energy because they are connected to the electricity and gas grids. Half of the electricity produced on site is used directly by the tenants. The rest is conducted to a power-to-gas facility, converted to renewable gas, and stored to produce electricity and heat in winter. The interconnected grids handle seasonal storage of energy generated on the buildings. A concept that make possible a completely renewable, CO2-free energy supply and actively contributes to reducing the winter electricity shortfall.

Portraits of the winning projects

Detailed information about the winning projects can be found in the portraits in the attachment.

Photos and videos

Photos of the 2021 award presentation ceremony will be freely available on 7 January 2021 at about 18:30 on Flickr (source indicated ©BFE2021).

Videos of the award presentation ceremony will be freely available on 8 January 2021 from about 15:00 on YouTube.

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#wattdor

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Documents Links

Documents

Portraits of winners of Watt d'Or 2021 (PDF, 3 MB)

Links

www.wattdor.ch Watt d'Or on Flickr Watt d'Or on YouTube

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Swiss Federal Office of Energy

http://www.bfe.admin.ch

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