Federal Ministry
of Education
and Research

IGNITING IDEAS!
The High-Tech Strategy for Germany

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For the first time, the German Federal Government has presented a national strategy for innovation policy which was developed in a joint effort by all federal government departments. The High-Tech Strategy for Germany marks a paradigm shift in research and innovation policy. Many good ideas are being developed in Germany but too few of them are turned to commercial account. We therefore need a climate where ideas can be "ignited", where research results can be translated into products, processes and services. We want to turn Germany into the most research-friendly nation in the world.

Until 2009, the German Federal Government will make available a total of approximately 15 billion euro for cutting-edge technologies and technology-spanning programmes with the aim of strengthening innovation. This will contribute substantially to achieving the goal of increasing the investments in research and development to three percent of the gross domestic product by 2010, as was agreed in the Lisbon Strategy. The Federal Government's High-Tech Strategy establishes the following innovation policy priorities:

1. Developing lead markets

+ **Defining clear objectives and fields of action:** In its High-Tech Strategy, the Federal Government has defined objectives for 17 cutting-edge fields. These include, for example, health research, security research and energy research. There is a clear timetable for initiatives in each of these fields. Both research funding and the prevailing conditions are taken into account.

+ **Establishing a clear profile:** For the first time, an analysis of strengths and weaknesses clearly shows where Germany stands in the various cutting-edge fields and where further action is needed. The central task is to open up new markets for products and services and to develop existing markets into lead markets. Within the cutting-edge fields, the High-Tech Strategy focusses on areas which are of outstanding national interest and which have economic and scientific potential.

+ **Designing roadmap processes with industry and science:** Coordination between politics, science and industry is necessary for enhancing Germany's competitiveness on international markets. It is a task for innovation policy to shape and steer this process, to support it and to provide for suitable conditions. Strategic partnerships are of particular importance in this respect.

2. Improving the cooperation between science and industry

+ **Pooling the strengths of industry and science:** With our High-Tech Strategy we forge links between industry and science. Collaborations and joint projects will receive greater support than ever before, for example through the introduction of a new type of research grant, the funding of leading-edge clusters and by spotlighting the best examples of cooperation between industry and science.

+ **Investing in minds:** The systems of initial and continuing vocational training will be developed further in keeping with future needs, and support for the highly talented and for young researchers will be extended. The Pact for Higher Education 2020 aims to ensure that a growing number of students will find favourable conditions for study and research.

+ **Actively shaping European research and innovation policy:** The national innovation system forms part of the European Research Area. The Federal Government therefore aims to link its innovation policy to European initiatives. This will also be an objective of the German EU Council Presidency during the first half of 2007.

3. Accelerating direct application of research findings

+ **Shortening the time to market:** Standards enable the successful marketing of products throughout the world. The High-Tech Strategy will assist industry in establishing such standards more quickly, thus increasing the competitiveness of industrial products. Furthermore, public procurement will be designed as a driver of innovation.

+ **Improving conditions for high-tech start-ups and innovative SMEs:** Young entrepreneurs will be assisted in entering the market, companies will receive support in establishing contacts with the scientific community and in translating their own research findings into products, and the funding policy for small and medium-sized enterprises will be streamlined. General conditions will also be improved.

The Federal Government's High-Tech Strategy initiates an interdepartmental process for the entire legislative period. The Industry-Science Research Alliance, which includes representatives from industry and the scientific community, will support the implementation and further development of the High-Tech Strategy together with the competent government departments. The process of implementing the High-Tech Strategy will be regularly reviewed. A first review by the Federal Government will take place in September 2007.

Further information: http://www.ideen-zuenden.de
http://www.bmbf.de

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