

Press release from
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Broad and enthusiastic support for ESS at fifth and final Round Table

Yesterday the fifth and final Round Table in order to create the conditions for the building of the European Spallation Source (ESS) in Lund ended successfully in Krakow. The Round Table conference resulted in broad and enthusiastic support from the participating countries.

– It is very satisfying to be able to arrive at this stage and to know that at least twelve countries will be participating when the Steering Committee meets for the first time in Copenhagen at the end of October, says Colin Carlile, Director of ESS Scandinavia. Their first task will be to launch the Preconstruction Phase and set in place the new organisation for realizing the decision to build the next generation neutron source in Lund.

Only countries agreeing on locating ESS in Lund and participating in the Design Update will be represented in the Steering Committee. So far twelve countries including Norway and Germany have agreed to participate in the project and several more have entered into discussions on participation.

In the Preconstruction Phase there will be a Design Update resulting in a cost assessment necessary for the final financial agreements made between the participants during next year.

ESS IN SHORT

The European Spallation Source – the next generation facility for materials research and life science

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The European Spallation Source (ESS) will be a multi-disciplinary research laboratory based upon the world's most powerful neutron source. ESS can be likened to a large microscope, where neutrons are used instead of light to study materials – ranging from polymers and pharmaceuticals to membranes and molecules – to gain knowledge about their structure and function. ESS will be up to 100 times better than existing facilities, opening up new possibilities for researchers in for example health, environment, climate, energy and transport sciences and cultural heritage.

ESS is an intergovernmental project resembling CERN in Geneva. After several years of discussions on the siting, it is now clear that the ESS will be built in Lund in southern Scandinavia. The ESS will be constructed, financed and operated by those European governments that have an interest in the ESS.

The Swedish Government has offered to host the ESS and to cover 50 percent of the 1,4 B€ investment costs and 20 percent of the operating costs together with the Nordic and Baltic states. The ESS Scandinavia Secretariat works on a mandate from the Government for the planning of the future international ESS organisation. The Director is Professor Colin Carlile, previous Director of the world-leading Institut Laue-Langevin in Grenoble.

Negotiations on bringing the ESS to Lund are now underway. The Swedish government has appointed Mr. Allan Larsson, former Finance Minister, as Sweden's chief negotiator. Right now the process of obtaining the necessary authorisation is progressing, as well as the technical preparations and the refinement of the design to site conditions in Lund. Building is expected to start around 2012 the first neutrons to be produced in 2018-19 and the facility to be fully operational around 2023.

ESS will support a user community of 5000 researchers and will have great strategic importance for the development of the European Research Area. Lund and the Malmö-Copenhagen region have excellent preconditions to attract leading scientists: several large universities, a broad research-based industry, high-quality infrastructure, an English-speaking population and world-class research capabilities in, among other areas, biotech and nano technology. Near by there will be complementary laboratories, such as the synchrotron MAX IV in Lund and XFEL and PETRAIII in Hamburg.

ESS Scandinavia engages in the climate change strategies of the European Union and the Swedish government, and has adopted the goal that the ESS will be carbon dioxide neutral. This will be achieved by means of an energy conservation strategy, the use of renewable sources of electricity, and the reuse of excess heat through the Lund district heating and cooling system. ESS built in Lund will be the first large-scale scientific facility operating under this principle, and it will be a demonstration project for other future facilities.