



PRESS RELEASE

5 December 2007

EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES TO BE STIMULATED BY £19 MILLION INVESTMENT IN NEW INNOVATION AND KNOWLEDGE CENTRES

The Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council and the Technology Strategy Board, together with the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council, are to invest in two new Innovation and Knowledge Centres, providing a major boost to the early commercial exploitation of emerging technologies.

The Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) and the Technology Strategy Board, together with the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) are seeking bids from leading universities who wish to host two new Innovation and Knowledge Centres (IKCs). The IKCs will promote the early commercialisation of world class research, by combining within a single integrated centre the best research with the best business development, market analysis & commercialisation skills and partnerships to accelerate its exploitation.

The new Innovation and Knowledge Centres will each receive financial support of about £9.5 million, spread over 5 years. The EPSRC (together with the BBSRC where appropriate) and Technology Strategy Board will contribute £7 million and £2.5 million respectively, with further funding coming from universities, industry and other sponsors.

Universities have been invited to express an interest in hosting one of the centres. After a thorough assessment and selection process it is anticipated the new centres will be announced in September 2008.

The announcement follows the establishment of two pilot IKCs by EPSRC in November 2005 – one at Cambridge University in Advanced Manufacturing Technologies for Photonics and Electronics, and one at the Optic Technium centre in North Wales in Ultra Precision and Structured Surfaces, involving Cranfield, UCL and Cambridge universities. These centres were recently reviewed by a panel of experts and are already demonstrating significant impact in numerous sectors through the synergistic engagement of cutting edge science and technology facilities and know-how with the business sector.

EPSRC's Chief Executive, Professor David Delpy, said: "We are delighted that the Technology Strategy Board is to join with us to help establish these



two vital new centres. The prime goal of IKCs is to accelerate and promote business exploitation of an emerging research and technology field. The centres will combine world class research with the skills and partnerships to accelerate commercial exploitation.”

Commenting on the decision to fund the new centres, the Technology Strategy Board’s Chief Executive, Iain Gray, said “This is an excellent example of how the Technology Strategy Board and the Research Councils can work together for the benefit of UK society and business. Exploiting emerging technologies is key to the UK increasing future global competitiveness. The Technology Strategy Board’s involvement in these new centres will help to provide the critical commercial skills and support needed to realise the potential of exciting new emerging technologies coming through from research.”

Only leading edge research groups, who have identified emerging technologies and who have the scientific strength to ensure these can be developed into major commercial opportunities, will be successful. The IKCs will provide support for 5 years of intensive early stage development and commercialisation, which will bring technologies close to market.

Notes to Editors

The Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

The Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) is the UK’s main agency for funding research in engineering and the physical sciences. The EPSRC invests around £740 million a year in research and postgraduate training, to help the nation handle the next generation of technological change. The areas covered range from information technology to structural engineering, and mathematics to materials science. This research forms the basis for future economic development in the UK and improvements for everyone’s health, lifestyle and culture. EPSRC also actively promotes public awareness of science and engineering. EPSRC works alongside other Research Councils with responsibility for other areas of research. The Research Councils work collectively on issues of common concern via Research Councils UK. Website address for more information on EPSRC: www.epsrc.ac.uk/

The Technology Strategy Board

The Technology Strategy Board is a business-led executive non-departmental public body, established by the government. Its mission 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 the quality of life. It is sponsored by the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS).

For more information about the Technology Strategy Board please visit www.dius.gov.uk.

Issued by

Nick Sheppard
Media Relations Manager
Technology Strategy Board
North Star House
North Star Avenue
Swindon SN2 1FF
Switch: +44 (0)1793 442700
Direct: +44 (0)1793 442772
Mobile: +44 (0)7824 599644
e-mail: nick.sheppard@tsb.gov.uk

and

Jane Reck
Press Officer
Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)
Polaris House
North Star Avenue
Swindon SN2 1ET
Tel : 01793 444312
Fax: 01793 444005
E-mail: jane.reck@epsrc.ac.uk