

Press release from  
ESS Scandinavia

## **ESS Scandinavia's Prague Round Table: All preconditions exist for a swift decision on ESS**

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**ESS Scandinavia's fourth Round-Table, today concluded in Prague, was dominated by good news. There is now broad acceptance that the ESS site decision will be taken before the summer.**

The European Spallation Source will be the world's leading centre for materials research and life science with neutrons. ESS Scandinavia proposes that it is built in Lund in southern Scandinavia.

ESS Scandinavia's fourth Round-Table, held at the Charles University in Prague, was held in order to inform about the progress of the Scandinavian ESS bid and to discuss future directions. Several important new items were presented at the conference:

### **Update of the Scandinavian financial offer – Sweden gives a 50% binding guarantee.**

As presented by the Swedish Minister for Research and Higher Education Lars Leijonborg yesterday, the Swedish government gives a binding guarantee of 50 percent of the ESS construction costs. This includes the already committed Swedish contribution of 30 percent, the Danish contribution of 12,5 percent announced two weeks ago, future contributions from other Nordic and Baltic countries, and participation by a business consortium. It includes a cash contribution of at least 40 percent, to allow the build-up of a strong central project team. Sweden expects other European countries to finance the remaining 50 percent, welcoming in-kind contributions.

### **Clarification of the site decision-making process**

There is now broad agreement between European countries on how the ESS decision-making process will progress. The Czech government, currently holding the EU Presidency, has taken the initiative to set up an ESS Core Group of European countries that have an interest in building and operating the ESS. Two meetings of the Core Group are planned, in the fringes of the EU Competitiveness Council: the 4–5 May in Prague and the 28–29 May in Brussels. The aim is to reach conclusions on the site by the second meeting.

The decision-making process will be based on the findings of the ESS Site Review Group, that presented its evaluation of the three competing ESS sites in September 2008. The Site Review Group drew the conclusions that Lund provides excellent conditions to attract international scientists, scientific and industrial environments that are very amenable to ESS. It also concluded that

the MAXIV neighbourhood will be an advantage, and that ESS Lund is well prepared to proceed towards construction without delay.

### **Support from Norway**

Norway now formally supports that the ESS is built in Lund. This was also announced by Minister Lars Leijonborg on Monday.

### **MAXIV synchrotron funding finalized**

A consortium agreement has been signed in order to fund the construction of the MAX IV high brilliance synchrotron laboratory in Lund. Construction work will start in 2010. MAX IV will be one of the world's most brilliant synchrotron facilities, constituting the perfect scientific complement to the ESS. Together, the ESS and the MAXIV will be a world-leading centre of excellence for materials research and life science.

- I am very glad that there is now extensive support for when and how the ESS decision will be taken. Europe has a unique opportunity to take a far-sighted decision on one of the largest planned European research facilities. All preconditions exist today for a swift decision on the site before the summer, says Colin Carlile, Director of the ESS Scandinavia Secretariat.
- A decision on ESS will pave the way for the pan-European ESS design review. It will also mean that European decision-makers can move ahead on other large-scale European research projects, essential for the future growth and welfare of the continent.

The Round-Table was attended by 29 participants from 16 European countries, as well as the Nordic Investment Bank.

The Round-Table was jointly chaired by Denmark and Sweden. Recently the Danish and Swedish governments signed an agreement to co-host the ESS, if it is built in Lund.

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### ESS in short

#### **The European Spallation Source – a super-microscope for materials research and life science**

The European Spallation Source (ESS) will be a multi-disciplinary research laboratory based upon the world's most powerful neutron source. Neutron beams can be likened to large microscopes, where materials – ranging from polymers and pharmaceuticals to membranes and molecules – are studied to gain knowledge about their structure and function. The high precision instruments of the ESS will enable in-depth analyses under realistic conditions. The ESS will open up brand new possibilities for researchers in for example health, environment, climate, energy and transport sciences and archaeology.

ESS is an intergovernmental project that resembles CERN in Geneva. A number of countries have offered to host it. The decision on where to build the ESS is of current interest. It will be taken when those European governments that have an interest in building and running the ESS have created a coalition and entered into an agreement with the preferred host country. ESS Scandinavia - a consortium of leading universities, research institutions and regional bodies in Scandinavia - proposes that the ESS be located in Lund, Sweden.

In February 2007 the Swedish government offered to host the ESS and to cover about 30 percent of the 1,4 B€ investment costs and 10 percent of the operating costs. In June 2007 Lund University was commissioned by the government to establish a Secretariat for the planning, the building-up of competence and the recruitment of researchers in order to prepare for the construction of the ESS. Professor Colin Carlile, previous Director of the world-leading Institut Laue-Langevin in Grenoble, was appointed as Director.

Negotiations on bringing the ESS to Lund are now underway. The Swedish government has appointed Mr. Allan Larsson, chairman of the Lund University board of directors and 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 will be produced in 2018-19 and the facility will 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 planned synchrotron MAX IV in Lund and XFEL and PETRA in Hamburg.

ESS Scandinavia will engage 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.