

## Editorial



Dear Friends of  
ManuFuture-CH!

It is midyear with no end of the crisis, which has seized most of the industrial sectors with vehemence, in sight. Widespread job reductions, delays of strategic projects and painful cancellations of investments are the consequences. Innovations and the belief in a prompt recovery are often lost in these rough times.

Nevertheless, the upturn will come! perhaps as soon as in 2009 or only in 2011. *What are you doing to be ready with new products, business models or offerings?* As someone once said: "One single

thunderstorm changes the landscape more than 10 years of sunshine." Now it is your great opportunity to form the landscape the way you want it and to win market share innovatively!

This can be done alone, in a partnership or by purchasing know-how. ManuFuture-CH is providing assistance here: by ensuring that experts are available or by arranging partnerships. ManuFuture-CH is not hindered by language or national barriers and is well known as a European innovation platform in the manufacturing domain. The CTI supports these activities with an R&D Consortium. Eurelations AG, Zurich has been our partner since the beginning of the year. Eurelations has long been successful in arranging and managing research projects and is independent. They consult, inform and support companies and universities. As member of ManuFuture-CH, you

have direct access to this offering!

Apart from the CTI offering an additional CHF 20 million for R&D support in 2009 to overcome the crisis, the EU is also working hard to position Europe in the crisis. Related to these activities is the EU recovery plan, with its three focal points: 'Factory of the Future', 'Energy Efficient Buildings' and 'Green Cars'. We would be happy to inform you!

Let's address the crisis together! Together we are strong! Contact us today. We are prepared to help you.

Yours sincerely,



Olivier Carnal,  
President

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## Interview

Elsbet Heinzlmann, Journalist



### Prof. Dr. Claudio Boër

Director Istituto CIM per la Sostenibilità nell'Innovazione Scuola Universitaria Professionale della Svizzera Italiana (SUPSI)

With the CTI-China programme, a new approach was launched to stimulate CTI projects with Chinese partners. The programme - which ran until the end of 2007 - supported 15 projects with a total volume of approx. 25 million CHF from the Swiss part. 125 institutions and enterprises were involved. The Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET) signed a *Memorandum of Understanding* with the Guangdong Science and Technology Department (GDSTD) in order to invite Chinese and Swiss partners to cooperate in the domain of research and development.

**1. The innovation promotion agency CTI wants to help small and medium enterprises (SMEs) with its stabilization measures to strengthen their efforts in innovation in spite of the present economic decline. With which technologies is Ticino one step ahead and in a good position to make use of this offer?** Ticino is a partner in many national and international R&D projects in several fields. It is always leading or, at least, at the same level as top Swiss and European research institutions. This is the case, for instance, in the field of precision manufacturing technologies, environmental technologies from solar energy to water treatment as well as sustainable buildings, design of product and architecture and life science technologies. Most of our industries are SMEs and therefore able to make use of the new CTI offer.

**2. The focus of attention of the CTI promotion is 'Clean Tech', new technologies for energy and environment. What is the state-of-the-art of SUPSI's research and development in these domains?**

SUPSI is leading in the area of solar energy, for example. Recently, the ISAAC Institute (Institute for Applied Sustainability to the Built Environment) of the Department of Civil Engineering was awarded the right to be the national institute to certify the solar cells for all of Switzerland.

At ICIMSI, an institute of DTI (Dipartimento Tecnologie Innovative), a project is in progress, funded by the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), to develop a new kind of solar panels that are efficient and cost-effective compared to what is presently available on the market. In addition, several research projects are in progress to use ICT to lower the consumption of electric energy as well as to optimize its use.

**3. Within the CTI HydroNet project, the SUPSI is developing, with partners from all over Switzerland, a new modular and adaptive solution for water recycling and treatment which has generated interest particularly in China. Is the magic formula for the Ticino industry in the future 'Think local, act global'?**

Yes, of course! It's more than a magic formula - it's probably the only way for SMEs in Ticino - and Switzerland - to compete on the global markets. But we discovered that this magic formula in China works in a different way: "Think China, act local". It means that China is such a huge country and so diversified with its large provinces that it is necessary to think of China strategically, in the long term, but then act, work at the local level with the local municipalities in order to obtain results. This is what happened with HydroNet, an innovative technology for water treatment developed together with a Ticinese SME engineering company, EAWAG and the ICIMSI as project coordinator. The idea is to develop a modular, customizable but integrated water treatment plant that is space saving, cost effective and perfectly adaptable to each local situation of civil and/or industrial waste water. At present we are working with a town in the south of the province of Guangdong on a feasibility project funded by the local authorities that will serve also as a model plant. The CTI finances the Swiss partners and encourages them to cooperate with China in order to internationalize the research results.

**4. On June 4 the Ticinotransfer presented, in conjunction with 'provocAZIONE 3', the CTI stabilization measures at SUPSI in Manno. The event was also supported by ManuFuture-CH. What kind of help may SMEs expect from this partnership?**

Ticinotransfer is the main institution in Ticino to assist, encourage and apply research results developed by SUPSI researchers for Ticinese SMEs and this is also why it is fully integrated within the DTI. But Ticinotransfer is also the antenna of ManuFuture-CH, the national platform to support the renewal and the strengthening of innovative manufacturing technologies in Switzerland. It is again the application of the magic formula mentioned before: Think Switzerland at the strategic level but act locally in Ticino to find partners to work on R&D and education projects in manufacturing. In this way, SMEs will have the convenience of only one entry point to find with whom and how to fund their own innovation strategy and projects.

[www.manufuture.ch](http://www.manufuture.ch)

[www.supsi.ch](http://www.supsi.ch)

[www.ticinotransfer.ch](http://www.ticinotransfer.ch)

## CTI: Additional funding for innovation

On March 23, 2009, the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET) launched three innovation promotion initiatives, primarily for small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), as part of the second Federal economic stimulus package. This was done to ensure that corporate-driven innovation will not be slowed down by current economic difficulties.



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Top performance is critical when it comes to innovation competition. And yet, private-sector spending for research and development tends to decline precisely in times of economic crisis. "Innovation is what drives all products, services and production methods and is the only means of establishing a globally strong competitive position," explains Dr. Ursula Renold, Director of the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET). "Companies that invest in research and development despite low order books or economic hardship will gain a competitive edge after the recession is over, which will enable them to use the momentum of economic recovery to their advantage."

### Three innovation promotion incentives

In order to prevent a loss of know-how and encourage a greater willingness to invest in innovation, OPET decided to spend CHF 21.5 million for three innovation promotion initiatives. This funding is over and above the initial annual budget of CHF 88 million.

**For the first initiative**, the Federal Administration decided to introduce *more flexible grant funding criteria*. Departing from its usual rule, the Innovation Promotion Agency (CTI) has earmarked CHF 20 million for project-related infrastructures and consumables required by university partners from April 1 to December 31, 2009. This funding is intended to reduce the contribution that business partners are required to make and will help compensate for increases in human resources. CTI's requirement that business partners contribute 50% of CTI project funding remains unchanged, however. ([www.bbt.admin.ch/stabilisierung](http://www.bbt.admin.ch/stabilisierung)).



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Agence pour la promotion de l'innovation CTI

**For the second initiative**, the Federal Administration set aside CHF 1 million for the "Innovation Cheque" pilot project. Worth up to CHF 7,500, innovation cheques are intended for companies partnering with universities and research institutes on a CTI project. Companies receiving an innovation cheque may use the funding to clarify minor questions, carry out research activities or conduct preliminary studies relating to the CTI project. The pilot project has been hugely successful. In the first month, CTI received over 150 grant applications. Given the high quality of these grant applications, around 130 were immediately approved, which means that the total budget allocation for innovation cheques has already been used up. The actual work on the projects will be done by universities and research institutes on behalf of the companies. At the same time, the results will be assessed by independent experts.

**For the third initiative**, events will be organised at the national and regional level on specific themes to help raise awareness among academic circles and SMEs of the advantages to be gained from innovation partnerships, particularly in the area of clean technologies (incl. renewable energies, energy storage and distribution, removal and recycling of raw materials) and intelligent materials.



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"The additional CHF 21.5 million channelled through the three initiatives should free up liquidity and largely sustain employment, which in turn should counter the trend of reduced SME spending on R&D," states Dr. Ingrid Kissling-Näf, OPET Vice-Director and head of CTI. "These initiatives will help SMEs develop innovative ideas that will prepare them for the economic recovery phase."

Vinzenz Batt  
Project leader communication  
Information: [www.kti-cti.ch](http://www.kti-cti.ch)

technica

**SMM**  
SCHWEIZER MASCHINENMARKT

## Upcoming events

**September 3, 2009****4th Rapperswil Plastics Forum**  
Presentations, expert discussions and contacts; [www.iwk.hsr.ch/rakufo](http://www.iwk.hsr.ch/rakufo)**September 22, 2009****TEK/KTI Event**  
Technopark Zürich  
Info + registration: [www.tek-kmu.ch](http://www.tek-kmu.ch)eurelations  
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### Attention: New FP7 calls worth more than € 3 billion

A large volume of **new calls for proposals** will be published by the European Commission on July 30/31. Almost all thematic areas will be covered, including **health, food, biotechnology, nanosciences, materials, new production technologies, energy, environment, etc.** The total budget allocated by the EC for these calls is expected to **exceed € 3 billion**. Deadline for submission of proposals will be between Oct. 2009 and March 2010

**Eurelations** is prepared and has reserved capacities to **serve competent researchers and their networks** with respect to the upcoming calls. Contact eurelations

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