

SIN Switzerland navigates difficult waters to enable €3.5m EU H2020 win for a UK-led innovation project



SIN Switzerland supported UK research providers to win €3.5m Horizon 2020 (H2020) funding and additional self-funded Swiss expertise for project CENTAUR (Cost Effective Neural Technique to Alleviate Urban Flood Risk). At the time, Switzerland had just been excluded from full participation in H2020. Despite the uncertainty this created, project partners judged Swiss collaboration as essential.



Water Research: Priority for UK and EU

Waste and water are amongst the EU green innovation priorities. In the UK, water research is linked to application of a number of the “Great Technologies” for which the UK aims to be a world leader. SIN could therefore see both the relevance of the subject area to EU priorities and potential benefits to the UK.

SIN Makes a Difference

SIN's UK water sector knowledge helped both to identify Urban Water Management as a key topic for collaboration and to introduce EAWAG¹, a world-leading water research institute. SIN organised a Water Innovation technology workshop in March 2014, hosted by EAWAG, where UK universities were able to showcase expertise in process engineering to Swiss counterparts. The researchers had the opportunity to exchange knowledge, share competences, visit facilities and identify areas of common interest.

Steering Excellent Science to Success



The SIN workshop also helped clarify some of the political issues and guide researchers through EU funding options. After two successful evaluation rounds, a consortium led by Sheffield University won CENTAUR²: a €3.5m EU Innovation Action research grant, to develop a radically new market-ready approach to Real Time Control of sewer networks, and help reduce local flood risk in urban areas. The three year project started in September 2015, with the UK winning about €1.77m, the largest share. Swiss participants are self-funding, as they are still not eligible for EU funding in this part of H2020.

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¹ <http://www.eawag.ch/en/>

² <http://sheffield.ac.uk/centaur>

