

UCSD Fuels Clean Tech Cluster Through Innovation Challenge

Jacobs School Mechanical Aerospace Engineering



Michael Heller (center), a

UCSD nanoengineering and bioengineering professor, answers questions following his Clean Tech presentation.

San Diego, CA, May 28, 2010 -- Thirteen San Diego professors, students and research scientists who are developing technologies that will fuel the continued growth of the region's "clean tech cluster" presented their new ideas over two days to a panel of eighteen high-tech reviewers. The reviewers are industry experts in the various fields represented in the proposals. The proposals ranged from energy efficient computing techniques to technologies for wind, solar, fuel cells and water treatment. Three of the faculty proposals will receive funding of up to \$50,000 for proof-of-concept studies and prototype development, as well as advisory and mentoring assistance to help commercialize their research for one year after the award is made. Selected projects will be announced by June 4.

This is the second San Diego Clean Tech Innovation and Commercialization Program held at the Jacobs School of Engineering at UC San Diego. The program is a partnership between the City of San Diego, UC San Diego's William J. von Liebig Center for Entrepreneurism, San Diego State University (SDSU), Clean Tech San Diego, and UC San Diego's Sustainable Solutions Institute. The program is designed to accelerate the commercialization of clean technologies out of university labs as part of the city's goal to promote the growth of the local clean tech industry.

Additional sponsors for the 2010 initiative are were Sempra Energy, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, Kaplan Family Trust, and Knobbe Martens Olson & Bear LLP.

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"The Clean Tech Innovation and Commercialization Program is an example of how the San Diego community, its universities, local government and the private sector can join forces to support economic growth in the region around technology sectors," said Rosibel Ochoa, the von Liebig Center's director. "The high quality and greater number of applications that we received this year, already demonstrate the interest of the academic community in translating their discoveries into commercially viable products and services that will benefit the environment. The von Liebig Center provides an supportive environment to help faculty demonstrate how these inventions can be turned into commercial technologies."

According to Jacques Chirazi, program manager of the CleanTech Initiative for the City of San Diego's Economic Growth Services Office, "San Diego has a great track record for creating new industry sectors through our university-industry partnership. We hope to repeat the success stories we've seen in biotechnology, communications and defense in the clean tech arena. This Innovation Challenge is about nurturing the commercialization of great ideas, and we hope a few of the ideas will lead to successful ventures."

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