

Press Release

Freiburg
July 14, 2015
No. 22/15
Page 1

»Solar for All« contest focuses on solar village and mini-grid solutions

Fraunhofer ISE and Canopus Foundation start second edition of the award

Solar power gained from photovoltaics (PV) will soon be the cheapest form of electricity in many regions of the world, as a recent study on long-term scenarios by Fraunhofer ISE on behalf of Agora Energiewende shows. In sunnier regions, for applications in rural areas, one kilowatt hour (kWh) gained from solar energy already today is cheaper than a kWh produced by a diesel system, which is due to the fast growing global market for PV. In this context, the Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems ISE and the Canopus Foundation will put the focus of the second »Solar for All« contest on solar village and mini-grid solutions and their highly recognized potential for rural development. Further information on submission criteria will be released late 2015.

»Solar for All« started with a successful first edition in 2010, then focusing on the promotion of innovative PV power solutions for single user off-grid markets in rural areas. The 250.000 US\$ award had attracted 58 applicants from 29 different countries. The contest 2016 will focus on larger systems such as solar village and mini-grid solutions, a dynamic sector which benefits from falling costs of solar energy technologies and which is gaining increasing global attention.

Due to the rapidly growing PV market, off-grid solar solutions now constitute a cost-effective alternative to conventional fossil fuel and central electricity generation for developing regions such as Southern Asia, Africa and South America. By providing quality guidelines, the global »Solar for All« contest aims at encouraging young technological enterprises and project developers that have recognized the

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No. 22/15
Page 2

high potential of village and mini-grid solutions for rural development. The contest will create international recognition for the most promising projects and thereby will demonstrate the feasibility of economic solutions under realistic conditions, and correct the sometimes unrealistic expectations of investors and industry partners. Two projects will be awarded in the contest 2016.

Showcasing village grids

As part of the »Solar for All« contest, persons of all ages as well as organizations are given the opportunity to create a short video under the title »Showcasing village grids« in which they show their ideas on how to use solar technology effectively to light up rural villages in developing countries. The best short video will be presented at the contest award ceremony and will also receive a prize. More information shortly at: www.sfa-pv.org

Press release and photo: www.ise.fraunhofer.de

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PV mini-grid system in Lao Peoples's Democratic Republic. ©Fraunhofer ISE