

Press release

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Passive House Conference points to the future of construction and retrofitting

"Efficiency is the key to the success of the energy revolution"

Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Energy-efficient and cost-effective: this is how the future of construction and retrofitting will look in the future, as demonstrated at the International Passive House Conference in Frankfurt, Germany. Using examples of completed projects, experts from all over the world revealed the potential of intelligent architecture for climate protection and cost savings. The spectrum of topics ranged from a "historical" new build in an old-town district of Frankfurt itself, to the demands on Passive House buildings in Mexico and Scandinavia.

More than 1000 Passive House experts from around 50 countries attended the Conference, a long-established event in the energy-efficient construction sector. Large delegations came from China, amongst other countries. "We are extremely pleased that interest in Passive House is also increasing in those countries where a lot of construction is taking place," says Dr. Wolfgang Feist, Director of the Passive House Institute. For example, one of the first factory buildings in the world to be built in accordance with the stringent criteria of this energy-efficient standard is being planned in the northern Chinese town of Harbin.

The fact that projects like these are possible is mainly due to the growing availability of high quality, energy-efficient building components. Many of these components were presented at the Exhibition taking place parallel to the Conference on 19 and 20 April, including windows that can withstand the demands of extremely cold climates and windows with particularly light multi-pane glazing. The application of such products in retrofits, combined with renewable energies, will be developed further in the EU project EuroPHit, launched within the framework of the Conference. EuroPHit will see clear criteria defined for each of the steps in the retrofitting process with an eye to integrated design, ensuring that all disciplines involved are more closely linked with one another.

The necessity of widespread implementation of efficiency measures in new builds and retrofits was emphasised at the International Passive House Conference through an architects' initiative called "A new way of building in a time of climate change and energy transition." A relevant memorandum was issued affirming how construction influences not only utilisation

and design of the built environment, it also affects living conditions on earth. All those involved in the construction process must take responsibility for this – even if the necessary actions are not yet required by law or stipulated in regulations.

"Efficiency is the key to the success of the energy revolution," explains building physicist Feist. The reason is simple: energy not consumed in the first place needn't be extracted from sources that are more or less problematic. In Germany, more than one third of total energy demand goes towards the running of buildings. Yet up to 90 % of heating energy can be saved with Passive House. "If we are able to increase the energy efficiency of buildings to Passive House level on a large scale, then sustainable energy supply will become possible, even with rising prosperity worldwide," says Feist.

The Passive House Conference organised by the Passive House Institute has been taking place at various venues for the last 17 years. This is the second time that Frankfurt am Main has hosted the Conference, the first time being in 2009. This also illustrates Frankfurt's leading role in energy-efficient construction; with effective policy support, more than 1000 apartments, as well as numerous schools, kindergartens and other non-residential buildings built to the Passive House Standard have been constructed here so far. The 18th International Passive House Conference is planned for 25 and 26 April in Aachen, Germany.

Further information regarding the International Passive House Conference can be found at: www.passivehouseconference.org

Sign the New Way of Building Memorandum: www.memorandum-NeuesBauen.com/en
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