

A Site for the Next Korean Synchrotron Radiation Facility is Announced

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Architectural drawing of new multipurpose synchrotron radiation facility which is planned to be built at Chungbuk, Korea, <https://www.chungbuk.go.kr/>

On May 8th 2020, the Ministry of Science and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) announced that the city of Cheongju in Chungcheongbuk-do was selected as the hosting city for the 4th generation multipurpose synchrotron radiation construction project. The city of Cheongju received the highest score in total evaluation. Especially, the city outscored other cities in the category of geographical conditions and development potential for future use.

Mr. Jeong Byeong-seon, Vice Minister of Science and ICT, held a briefing at the Ministry of Science and ICT in Sejong City and announced that city of Cheongju in Chungcheongbuk-do, was selected as the final site for the “multipurpose radiator construction project”.

Previously, on May 6th, each candidate city received the evaluation of their proposal for hosting the synchrotron radiation facility in their city, which included presentation of construction plan. According to the evaluation results, Cheongju received a total of 90.54 points out of 100 points, 87.33 points for Naju in Jeollanam-do, 82.59 points for Chuncheon in Gangwon-do, and 76.72 points for Pohang in Gyeongsangbuk-do.

Afterwards, on May 7th, the site selection evaluation committee visited the top two candidate cities, Cheongju and Naju, to confirm that not only the actual conditions of the site were identical to that proposed by each city in their construction plan, but also that the presented geological survey on the construction site by professional group from ICT was correct and accurate. Then, the committee finally recommended the city of Cheongju as the successful candidate.

Vice Minister Jung said, “In this year, the fast acquisition of high-tech original key technology has become more important than ever, from securing the competitiveness of materials, parts, and equipment to the development of vaccines and treatments for COVID-19.”

In addition, he added “In order to meet the increasing demand for multi-purpose synchrotrons light sources that serve as important infrastructure for the development of key technologies in the high-tech industry, the National Science and Technology Advisory Council previously confirmed the long-term roadmap for large accelerators and their operation strategy, which included the construction of a new multi-purpose synchrotron facility.”

He further added, “We decided to adopt a public open competition not only to ensure that the site selection of the new radiation synchrotron is to meet industrial demand and strengthen the national science and technology competitiveness, but also to deliver a fair and transparent result.”

Accordingly, the Ministry of Science and Technology and ICT formed the committee for site selection and evaluation with Myung-cheol Lee, the chairman of the Korean Academy of Science and Technology, as the committee chair and 14 related expert members. The committee conducted numerous preparatory meetings and paper reviews, which included proposal evaluation and on-site checking, and finally selected the city of Cheongju as the best candidate for hosting the new synchrotron facility. If the project is granted from the government without any delay, the construction of the new synchrotron light source will begin before 2022 and its operation will start by 2028.

Vice Minister Jung emphasized, “We will work closely with local governments and related organizations to ensure that the multipurpose radiation synchrotron construction project can be carried out as intended,” He said, “In spite of the recent difficult economic situation, we plan to continue to invest in science and technology for the future. The construction of a multi-purpose radiation synchrotron will provide active support as a policy to increase competitiveness in the future high-tech industry of Korea.”