



PRESS RELEASE

FIRST ADOLF GOETZBERGER AWARD: DR. HERIBERT SCHMIDT HONORED AS A PIONEER IN INVERTER TECHNOLOGY

Bad Staffelstein, March 11, 2025 – Recognizing progress: The inaugural Adolf Goetzberger Award honors Dr. Heribert Schmidt for a groundbreaking innovation that has significantly advanced the solar industry. With this award, the Adolf Goetzberger Foundation recognizes the inventor of the HERIC® inverter topology, a key technology that has improved the efficiency and reliability of solar systems worldwide. The award and the foundation are named after Prof. Dr. Adolf Goetzberger, a pioneer of solar energy in Germany and the founder of the Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems (ISE). The prestigious award ceremony took place on March 11, 2025, as part of the 40th PV Symposium at Kloster Banz – a venue long associated with fostering dialogue between research and industry in the solar sector.

"Dr. Heribert Schmidt's pioneering work exemplifies the bridge between research and practice that Prof. Dr. Adolf Goetzberger pursued throughout his life. With this award, we aim to highlight such achievements and inspire future innovations," said Dr. Winfried Hoffmann, chairman of the jury.

An Innovation with Global Impact

The HERIC® inverter topology (Highly Efficient & Reliable Inverter Concept), developed by Dr. Heribert Schmidt, has delivered immense benefits to both the solar industry and society. By reducing electrical losses by more than half compared to the previously dominant full-bridge topology – the so-called H4 topology – it not only increases energy yield but also enhances the efficiency and reliability of inverters. This innovation laid the foundation for a new class of inverters, the so-called H6 topologies, now deployed in millions of solar systems worldwide. The HERIC® patent is considered the most successful individual patent of the Fraunhofer Society and serves as a prime example of successful technology transfer from research to industrial application – a principle Adolf Goetzberger strongly advocated.

A Lifetime Dedicated to Photovoltaics

After earning his doctorate at RWTH Aachen University, Dr. Heribert Schmidt began his career in 1988 at the Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems ISE, where he worked as a developer, project manager, and group leader until his retirement. In addition to his research activities, he shared his expertise for over two decades as a lecturer at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT).

His deep commitment to the industry and his knack for practical solutions earned him the affectionate nickname "Daniel Düsentrrieb of ISE" – a creative mind whose ideas often made all the difference.

An Award for Visionary Thinkers

"Dr. Heribert Schmidt has demonstrated that true innovation is not only born in theory but must be measured by its impact on society," stated Thomas Nordmann, chairman of the foundation's board of trustees and a Swiss solar energy pioneer.

The choice to present the award at the 40th PV Symposium, held from March 11 to 13 at Kloster Banz in Bad Staffelstein, further underscores this philosophy. Since its inception, the symposium has served as a platform for knowledge exchange between researchers and solar companies, promoting the implementation of new system technology concepts in practice.



About the Adolf Goetzberger Foundation

The Adolf Goetzberger Foundation is dedicated to promoting science and research, environmental protection, and climate action, with a particular focus on solar energy. It fulfills this mission through the annual presentation of an award. Members of the foundation's board of trustees include Prof. Dr. Andreas Bett, Markus Elsässer, Ursula Goetzberger, Dr. Winfried Hoffmann, and Thomas Nordmann.

For more information:

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