



**Press Release No. 7/99
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Miniature fuel cell presents itself at German Future Award

German President Supports Advanced Technologies

Angelika Heinzl from [Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems \(FhG-ISE\)](#) in Freiburg im Breisgau and her former co-worker Roland Nolte (now with [Opel](#)) were nominated for the German Future Award and took part in the awarding ceremony by the Federal President on 7. December in Berlin. They were honored for their contributions to the progress of fuel cell technology, in particular for the development of a fuel cell in strip membrane design.

Heinzl is the first woman who was nominated for the award which was donated in 1997 by the former Federal President Roman Herzog. Since 1996 she is head of the department "Chemical Energy Conversion and Storage" of ISE. Her institute was a founder member of DWV in 1996.

The fuel cell in strip membrane design permits a particularly flat form of the device such that it would fit e. g. into the battery compartment of a portable computer. A notebook converted like this was shown with great success on the Hannover Industrial Fair in 1998 and elsewhere. Hydrogen from a metal hydride storage could keep the computer running for about ten hours, while even a good accumulator will perform only about one third of this time. At the same time the design allows for the simple serial production from economical materials. Before long the strip cell could replace the battery in many portable electronic devices - a potential billion dollar market. "Purely technically the strip fuel cell could be in the market in one or two years", Heinzl believes. So far there is no big enough industrial partner, however.

Back in 1997 already when the award was presented for the first time a car developer from Daimler-Benz was nominated and represented the fuel cell. This clearly demonstrates the market potential of this technology in all application modes.

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