projects and portfolio of the GMI and update the MYPP as needed.

The GMI's most recent round of funding was announced in September 2017. Up to USD$32 million over three years was awarded to GMLC laboratories and their partners to address resilient distribution systems. The funded projects will focus on integrating clean distributed energy resources (DERs) into the grid, implementing real-time system monitoring, developing and testing advanced controls, and designing advanced cyber security technologies to apply to the grid. The results of

these projects are expected to provide data that will help inform the decisions of both public and private investments in continuing grid modernization.

Materials scientists and engineers have played a significant role in making the current electricity grid obsolete while also leading the way to a cleaner and more energy efficient future. Through research that has enabled the deployment of a number of different clean DER technologies and the development of materials-based energy efficiency solutions, materials scientists have inadvertently raised new

challenges for grid modernization. But at the same time, materials researchers are already playing a notable role in many GMI-supported projects to update the grid and accommodate these technologies by developing new materials and methods for energy conversion, transport, and storage. Undoubtedly, grid modernization will be a lengthy and challenging undertaking, but it is reassuring to see materials scientists and the US government working to move toward the reliability and resilience needed to keep the lights on across America.

Jennifer A. Nekuda Malik

EC awards Paris as most innovative European city in 2017

The European Commission (EC) awarded the 2017 European Capital of Innovation (iCapital) Prize of €1,000,000 to Paris, France.

The iCapital award, granted under the EU's research and innovation program Horizon 2020, recognizes Paris for its inclusive innovation strategy. Tallinn (Estonia) and Tel Aviv (Israel) were selected as runners-up, and were both awarded €100,000. The prize money will be used to scale up and further expand the innovation efforts of the cities.

Carlos Moedas, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, said, "Cities are not defined by their size and population, but by the breadth of their vision and the power bestowed upon their citizens. Some cities are not afraid to experiment."

Over the last decade, Paris has built more than 100,000 square meters of incubators, and now hosts the world's largest startup campus. In addition, the city spends 5% of its budget on projects proposed and implemented by citizens. With this strategy, citizens and innovators from the private, nonprofit, and academic sectors have made Paris become a FabCity, according to the EC.

Through the "Reinventing Paris" project, the city facilitated innovation by inviting national and international talents to rebuild many of its significant sites.

In the current phase of the project the city is inviting interdisciplinary teams to submit innovative urban development projects for transforming a number of underground sites in Paris.

Tallinn has been awarded for its initiative to act as a testing ground for potential breakthrough technologies. The municipality fostered the use of self-driving cars, parcel delivery robots, and ride-sharing. Tallinn has also implemented an innovative e-Residency system, which enables local citizens and businesses to work closely together with foreign entrepreneurs.

Tel Aviv has set up a Smart City Urban Lab that links up innovative startups with leading technology companies in order to facilitate breakthrough innovations for solving urban challenges. Education being among Tel Aviv's priorities, part of the prize will be dedicated to strengthening the Smart Education Initiative, developed by the municipality in collaboration with teachers, parents, students, and local tech startups.

The 2017 iCapital award competition was launched in March 2017 for cities with over 100,000 inhabitants from EU Member States and countries associated with Horizon 2020. Thirty-two cities from 17 countries applied to this year's competition. The winner and the two runners-up have been selected

from 10 finalists on the basis of new initiatives launched since January 1, 2016. The winners were chosen by a panel of independent experts coming from universities and the business sector. The evaluators were selected from the Horizon 2020 expert database.

The award criteria focused on cities that are willing to be test beds for new citizen-driven initiatives to find solutions for their relevant societal challenges.

The competition first took place in 2014. That year, the prize (€500,000) was awarded to Barcelona (Spain). Among the city's innovations were sustainable city growth initiatives on smart lighting, mobility (e-vehicle), and residual energy (heating and cooling networks).

Last year, Amsterdam (The Netherlands) received the award (€950,000) for "embracing a bottom-up approach based on smart growth, startups, livability, and digital social innovation." The runners-up were Paris "for its strategy based on open innovation, connectivity and ingenuity aiming at becoming a world hub for startup," and Turino (Italy) "for its open innovation models supporting social innovation startups and creating new market opportunities for urban innovations."

The awards are granted under Horizon 2020, the EU's research and innovation framework program with a budget of €77 billion over seven years (2014–2020). The competition for the 2018 iCapital is due to be launched in the first quarter of 2018.   □

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