

World Nuclear News

Europe launches nuclear academy

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The European Nuclear Energy Leadership Academy (Enela) has been launched. The academy aims to attract university graduates to the nuclear energy sector and to train future leaders in this field.

The founding treaty establishing the academy has been signed by six nuclear energy-related companies: Areva, Axpo, EnBW, EOn Kernkraft, Urenco and Vattenfall. The partners also held their first shareholders meeting at the same time as signing the treaty, which covers the essential strategic, legal and financial aspects of the academy.

Enela was initiated by the industrial stakeholders in the European Nuclear Energy Forum (Enef), set up by the European Commission in 2007 as a platform for a broad stakeholder discussion on opportunities, risks and transparency issues of nuclear energy.

In a joint statement, the founding partners said: "In the wake of Europe's nuclear energy renaissance, the purpose of the academy is to train young graduates and high potential employees with different backgrounds to become leaders or to prepare them to take broader responsibilities in European nuclear energy corporations and institutions."

Enela will be located in Germany at the Garching campus of the Technical University Munich. Jean-Claude Gauthier, senior vice president of Areva NP is designated to be the first director of Enela. The academy's program - which will begin in 2011 - will offer both a comprehensive nuclear energy management program and a leadership cycle based on a theoretical and practical approach focusing on specific European requirements and specifications, with regards to economics, politics, technology, legislation, safety standards and certifications. The academy will also serve as a think-tank, bringing together members of the international nuclear community, comprising employers, prospective employees, as well as political and social opinion leaders.

"This is a very important and unique signal," said Stephan Döhler, executive vice president of Axpo. "The academy addresses the strong need for joining our efforts in attracting and training on an international level the best heads for the European nuclear energy community." Walter Hohlefeldler of EOn Kernkraft added: "Today marks the birth of what could become in the future the one European institution in the field of nuclear energy management and leadership training. Enela welcomes further organizations and institutions to support or join the initiative."

EU energy commissioner Andris Piebalgs welcomed Enela's establishment, saying: "The nuclear sector faces a serious challenge: it needs to keep and develop knowledge on nuclear at an appropriate level. This is a matter of concern not only to the industry, but also for researchers, regulators and the health sector." He added, "Enela, by focussing on leadership skills, can help to close the gap in existing training programs."