

## **Comments on the Jury Session**

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## **Outstanding contributions submitted for the upcoming International Passive House Conference**

*Innsbruck, 19 November 2012.* Advisory board sessions for the Passive House conference are taxing - not that the experts that come together here are difficult to deal with, on the contrary, working with the board of advisors is very constructive and productive. The problem simply is that there are about 200 submissions, and most of these papers really are excellent; they describe the experiences that have been gained with projects that have actually been realised, yet only 76 of those abstracts can be presented at the Conference, of which perhaps only 25 to 35 poster presentations will be accepted. Which contributions should be accepted and which of them will be given a chance next year?

This time it was particularly difficult to prepare for the 17th Conference, which is to be held at the end of April 2013. Absolutely outstanding abstracts have been submitted which are proof of the progress the Passive House movement is making in Germany and the rest of the world. The only reason this task was possible was that all the experts had made very good preparations for this decisive session and the fact that stringent rules as well as a high level of discipline were applied and that the jury session was conducted in a target-oriented manner. There are no secrets about our rules, these are always publicised:

- The advisory board member assumes the role of a conference participant, that could be a carpenter from the Eifel region, or a property developer who has travelled all the way from Shanghai, who asks the following questions:
- What usable information does the suggested contribution offer to participants? Does this help him to learn anything about the implementation of his own Passive House project, about planning methods and detail solutions, about experiences gained during construction work and operation? Are there any examples showing how implementation can be facilitated?
- Is the paper about a specific project that has already been realised (that counts!), or does it concern documentation of experiences gained from operating buildings even? Have specific results been presented?

- Have new solutions been presented?
- Does it deal with specified examples of regional implementation strategies? How can municipalities and other local authorities successfully implement energy efficient construction?
- Is the provided information precise, complete and understandable?
- And of course: Does the information provided in the paper meet the standard for scientifically reliable work?
- Has the content of the paper already been implemented in fact (that counts!) or are these just declarations of intent and theoretical considerations? In some cases, the latter may be interesting enough for a presentation - but as already stated, only in some cases of particular relevance.



The conference advisory board in session on 16 Nov 2012 in Darmstadt © Passivhaus Institut

The programme that is now emerging for the 17th Passive House Conference will include a number of special highlights, some of which can already be mentioned here:

- The City of Frankfurt (Main) calls itself the "Passive House City" - whether this is justified can be judged by participants themselves at the end of the Conference. At all events, a whole range of impressive projects by the City of Frankfurt will be awaiting us. The municipal housing association FAAG has been building nothing except Passive Houses for the last five years and the director of the company ABG Frankfurt Holdings will personally present a report of their experiences, which as one may already guess, are extensive, varied and generally excellent.
- Social housing with a rent of € 5/m<sup>2</sup>, and that too as a Passive House? That's already possible in Frankfurt.
- Schools, kindergartens, sports halls, administrative buildings - for the last five years, the City of Frankfurt also has been constructing new buildings solely to the Passive House standard. The Chief of the Energy Department, Dr. Werner Neumann, will report on this.

- Can a new monumental building that is placed under a preservation order still be built as a Passive House? Dr. Burkhard Schulze Darup will show how the City of Frankfurt successfully maintained its decisions in such cases.
- For the new municipal hospital building in Frankfurt which was built as a Passive House, work on a solution for considerably reduced primary energy use, not just for the building envelope, but also for the more energy-intensive hospital technology is being conducted in cooperation with the Passive House Institute.
- There is also some significant news from the outskirts of the city too: the State of Hesse has gained experience with the Passive House standard in important projects for new buildings including an administrative centre in Heppenheim.
- Of course, other cities have also joined the ranks of those with experience with Passive House construction: e.g. Heidelberg with its new Bahnstadt-Areal construction, Freiburg and its first experiences with the refurbishment of a tower block to the Passive House standard, Brussels with the introduction of its mandatory building regulations for the adoption of the Passive House standard starting from 2015, New York with its ambitious objectives for the years ahead.
- Results from metrological measurements are now available and will also be presented: the ascertainment of the actual heat losses of buildings and confirmation of the reliability of the Passive House standard. This is a stark contrast to the great differences usually found between the calculated values and the actual results - in fact, there is an extremely high correlation in the case of Passive Houses. There are three reasons for this: firstly, the PHPP allows honest, unexaggerated calculation; secondly, the recommendations for implementation obviously affect exactly those points which are prone to error and solve exactly those problems; and thirdly, the existence of functioning further training and quality assurance systems.

The points mentioned here constitute only some of the many excellent contributions. The Passive House concept has proved to be so flexible that all construction tasks, all architectural styles and the most diverse of climatic conditions can be mastered. This Conference promises to be very exciting.



From Univ.-Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Feist,  
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**17<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL PASSIVE  
HOUSE CONFERENCE 2013**