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SCRA chosen to implement Energy Department's H-Prize

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SCBIZ Daily Staff



CHARLESTON -- The S.C. Research Authority, a leader in applied research and commercialization, has been selected as an administrator of the H-Prize, a U.S. Department of Energy Hydrogen Program initiative that awards cash prizes to advance the research, development, demonstration and commercial applications of hydrogen energy technologies.

Section 654 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 authorized the "H-Prize" competition. In the act, the secretary of Energy was directed to implement a competition that awards cash prizes to innovators who surmount critical barriers while helping to create a widespread hydrogen economy.

The act would provide up to four \$1 million prizes biennially for the most significant breakthroughs in hydrogen storage, production, use and distribution.

The legislation requires that a private, not-for-profit entity administer the H-Prize program. The Energy Department issued a solicitation in April for organizations interested in the program. The SCRA joined a team led by the Hydrogen Education Foundation in partnership with the Technology Transition Corp.

The duties of administering the program, in conjunction with the secretary of Energy, include:

- Developing criteria for selecting prize winners.
- Determining the appropriate amount and funding sources for each prize to be awarded.
- Providing advice and consultation on the selection of judges.
- Raising funds from private entities and individuals to pay for administrative costs and to contribute to cash prizes, including prize naming rights.
- Promoting the prize competitions and their results.

The SCRA's contribution to the team's application process focused on the company's ability to manage and execute hydrogen and fuel cell programs, including the Greater Columbia Fuel Cell Challenge, and — in view of the expertise of SCRA affiliate SC Launch — in raising private funds to support knowledge economy initiatives within South Carolina.

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