

Press information

XFEL research facility in Hamburg: HOCHTIEF to build tunnels for EUR 206 m

COMMUNICATIONS

Dr. Bernd Pütter
Opernplatz 2
45128 Essen, Germany
Tel.: +49 201 824-2960
Fax: +49 201 824-4263
bernd.puetter@hochtief.de

Leader of a joint venture - HOCHTIEF with 50 percent share of project

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HOCHTIEF was today awarded the contract to handle the largest part of the European XFEL X-ray laser project in Hamburg. As leader of a joint venture, HOCHTIEF Construction is to realize almost all the tunnel and shaft structures for the project, with a volume of EUR 206 million. The HOCHTIEF share of this is 50 percent. The client is the DESY (Deutsches Elektronen-Synchrotron) research center. The XFEL project is being funded by ten EU countries, Russia and China, the German government and the federal states of Hamburg and Schleswig-Holstein. The new facility, which is the only one of its kind in Europe, is due to go into operation in 2014.

The HOCHTIEF-led joint venture is to realize a widely ramified tunnel system with a total length of almost 5.8 kilometers. This will link the Hamburg district of Bahrenfeld with the municipality of Schenefeld in Schleswig-Holstein. To ensure that the facility operates perfectly, the total deviation of all the tunnel sections together must not exceed ten centimeters. Along the route of the tunnel, HOCHTIEF and its partner will build six shaft structures and underground research facilities at depths of up to 26 meters and areas of up to 4 500 square meters. Work will begin in January and is due to be completed in April 2013.

When it goes into operation, the XFEL system will generate extremely intense X-ray laser beam pulses. These make it possible, for instance, to examine viruses in all their atomic detail, to film chemical reactions or to investigate processes taking place inside planets.