

Healthcare industry BW

When engineers learn from brain researchers

The BMBF has decided to fund a “Bernstein Focus on Neurotechnology” in the four German regions of Berlin, Frankfurt, Freiburg/Tübingen and Göttingen with a total of 34 million euros.

German neuroscientists, physicians, physicists and engineers have joined forces in order to investigate how medical prostheses can be controlled by thoughts or how artificial visual systems can be realised in robots. In order to bridge the gap between neuroscientific research to application in information technology, robotics and biomedicine, the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) has launched the “Bernstein Focus on Neurotechnology” inviting researchers from universities, research institutions and companies to submit joint, regional concepts. The BMBF will fund researcher groups in the four regions of Berlin, Frankfurt, Freiburg/Tübingen and Göttingen over a period of five years with a total of 34 million euros. The goal of the funding is to bring together and strengthen neuroscientific and technological capacities.

The regions with a Bernstein Focus are part of the National Network for Computational Neuroscience. This network is funded by the BMBF to strengthen the outstanding expertise in the experimental and theoretical neurosciences in Germany and to increase awareness of this expertise internationally. The network began with the establishment of four “Bernstein Centres for Computational Neuroscience” and was extended at the beginning of 2007 with the establishment of five “Bernstein Groups” and eleven “Bernstein Cooperations”. With the Bernstein Award, the BMBF promotes the very best junior researchers and provides them with the possibility to realise their innovative concepts and giving them the qualifications to take on executive positions in research.

Freiburg/Tübingen

The Freiburg/Tübingen Bernstein Focus has plans to decipher the processes in the brain that make it possible to control technical devices. Based on these findings, the researchers hope to develop and improve medical devices that compensate dysfunctions and failures of the brain. This might, for example, benefit epilepsy or stroke patients (BMBF funding: 10 million euros).

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Further information

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