

PRESS RELEASE

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Subsea Valley awarded European gold label

As one of only five cluster organisations in Norway Subsea Valley is now certified according to the EU's highest quality standard for clusters. This happened less than a year after Subsea Valley received status as Norwegian Centre of Expertise in energy technology. «This makes us a more attractive collaboration partner, also internationally», says Preben Strøm, Managing Director in Subsea Valley.

The certification is formally labelled «Cluster Organisation Management Excellence Label (Quality Label) GOLD», but is typically referred to simply as «GOLD Label». To put it simply, it is a stamp of approval as to how the cluster is operated in terms of structure, management, financing, strategy, objectives and services. It is the «European Secretariat for Cluster Analysis» (ESCA) that administers the certification based on a mandate from the European Commission.

«It can be understood as an ISO certification specially designed for clusters and their way of operating», Preben Strøm explains. «A GOLD Label certification guarantees that Subsea Valley operates with professionalism and in accordance with our strategy to the benefit of our members and partners».

Less than a year ago, Subsea Valley was awarded another «stamp of approval»: In October last year Innovation Norway, SIVA and the Norwegian Research Council gave Subsea Valley status as Norwegian Centre of Expertise (NCE) in energy technology.

Anita Krohn Traaseth, Managing Director of Innovation Norway, is impressed by and proud of Subsea Valley having achieved the highest European quality standard possible, less than a year after the cluster became a NCE.

«Clusters that are certified in accordance with the European system keep a high international level with regards to management and development of the cluster. A gold certification means that Subsea Valley already demonstrates excellent cluster management and has the best of starting points when it comes to securing continuous improvement of structures and routines for value creation», says Krohn Traaseth.

The GOLD Label certification also makes Subsea Valley a more attractive collaboration partner internationally, which fits well with the clusters increased efforts towards European projects.

«The challenges in the field of energy are global and the industry is international. In this context, it is important that we are well equipped to work across borders when that is beneficial», says Preben Strøm.

Clusters that want to obtain an EU certification are measured according to 31 indicators and must meet a minimum quality requirement on every single criterium. In order to be certified as “gold”, clusters have to obtain minimum 80 per cent out of a possible score of a 100. Subsea Valley achieved 93 per cent.

«We are naturally very happy with such a solid score. At the same time we will continue to work systematically to get even better in the areas where ESCA says that is possible. Our job is to help our

members adjust to, benefit from, and contribute to an energy industry in transition and that leaves no time to rest», says Preben Strøm.

More information about EU's cluster initiative and ESCA can be found [here](#).

About Subsea Valley:

Subsea Valley is Norway's largest industry cluster for engineering and technology companies in the energy sector. Our about 200 member companies create a total value added of more than NOK 50 billion per year and employ more than 31 000 professionals.

By offering infrastructure for cooperation, knowledge transfer and new insight, we help our members adapt to, benefit from, and contribute to an energy industry in transition.

In 2017, Norwegian authorities awarded Subsea Valley status as Norwegian Centre of Expertise (NCE) in energy technology. In 2018 the cluster was certified in accordance with the EU's highest quality standard for cluster organisations (Cluster Organisation Management Excellence Label (Quality Label) GOLD).

For more information, contact:

Hedda Bull-Hansen Sarhan
Head of Communications Subsea Valley
Phone: +47 988 42 705
Email: hedda.bull.hansen@subseavalley.com