

## Particle accelerator to be ready in '07

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Nuclear research officials in Geneva, Switzerland, expressed confidence that the Large Hadron Collider particle accelerator would be ready for use in 2007.

Housed in a tunnel beneath the French-Swiss border near Geneva, the LHC is the world's largest and most complex space instrument, said officials of CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research. For example, experiments at the world's highest energy particle accelerator would allow physicists to expand on Newton's description of gravity, CERN said, by exploring why particles have the masses they have.

About 80 percent of the LHC's magnets, the machine's main components, have been installed. Also, a complete sector of the machine was being prepared to be cooled to its operating temperature of 1.9 degrees above absolute zero, which is colder than outer space.

"Although just 1/8 of the LHC, this sector will be the world's largest cryogenic installation when it is cooled down early next year," CERN Director General Robert Aymar told delegates during the 140th meeting of CERN Council in Geneva.

Aymar said other LHC-related projects also are on schedule.

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