Public and private sector join forces – Re-industrialising Europe the smart way

Neelie Kroes signed Photonics PPP to boost Europe’s innovation capacity and competitiveness

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Brussels, 17 December 2013: The signing of the Photonics PPP by Commission Vice-President Neelie Kroes and Photonics21, the representative organ of the European photonics industry, marks the successful conclusion of a joint effort between the public and the private sectors to help get Europe on the fast track to economic recovery.

“The Photonics PPP is an excellent instrument for stimulating Europe's photonics sector and making the innovation process more inclusive, sustainable and effective through the direct involvement of the entire value chain – from the researcher to the end-user”, says Bernd Schulte, Vice President and Executive Board Member of Photonics21. “As a key enabling technology, photonics plays a pivotal role in the re-industrialisation of Europe, and expanding the industry share of the European economy beyond the current 16% by 2020.” Schulte added.

Giorgio Anania, Photonics21 Vice-President and Executive Board Member, adds, “We welcome this new partnership as a significant boost for Europe’s innovation capacity and competitiveness. Given the tighter fiscal belts in the overall EU’s overall budget, it is now all the more important that different EU funding streams are well-aligned and that every Euro is spent wisely. Smart specialization and smart spending, coupled with massive simplification and greater flexibility, will therefore be at the heart of the Photonics PPP’s efforts to ensure the greatest impact possible on economic growth and job creation”.

The Photonics21 Association - the Private Partner of the Photonics PPP - is now a reality and designed as a lean and effective organization. It will become fully operational in 2014 and is based on the Photonics21 European Technology Platform, which has grown from 60 to more than 2000 members since its launch in 2005. This platform will continue to ensure close cooperation between the EU, industry and academia, and play a major role in facilitating input to research and innovation actions within Horizon 2020.
About Photonics21

In December 2005 the European Technology Platform “Photonics21” was set up as an industry driven platform to unify the community in the area of optical technologies. Today about 2,000 representatives of industry and science from most European countries are involved in it. Leading companies and research units have joined together to further advance Europe’s position in optical technologies. Photonics experts from industry and research are working in seven teams to develop research priorities and recommended procedures for the European Commission as well as strategies and issues to promote European cooperation. Major publications comprise the Photonics21 Strategic Research Agenda “Lighting the way ahead”, the 2020 outlook “Photonics – Our Vision for a Key Enabling Technology” and the recent Multiannual Strategic Roadmap 2014 – 2020 “Towards 2020 – Photonics driving Economic growth in Europe”.

In September 2009, the European Commission defined photonics as one of five European Key Enabling Technologies (KET’s) and set up a High Level Expert Group of Science and Industry Representatives, where Photonics21 was represented, to develop possible policy measures to promote the industrial take-up of KETs by EU industries. In the frame of the European Research & Innovation Program “Horizon 2020” Photonics was invited to become a “Public Private Partnership” (PPP). Effective November 2013 the “Photonics 21 Association” - a legal entity under Belgium law - was formed to become the private contract partner in a contractual Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement with the EU Commission. The respective contract was signed on December 17, 2013 in Brussels

About the Photonics Industry

The global photonics market in 2011 reached a level of €350 billion showing an average yearly growth rate of 6,5 % in real terms and corresponding to a twice as fast as World GDP growth since 2005. Europe’s share of this world market is about 18 %. The European photonics industry has an excellent global position in some of the core areas like Production technology (55 % global share), Optical Components & Systems (40 %), Measurement and Automated Vision (35 %) and Medical Technology /30% of global share). Many market-leading industrial players and more than 5000 highly innovative SMEs as well as excellent research institutes and world class academia form the photonics community represented in Photonics21. In total the photonics sector employs ~ 300,000 employees directly, with subcontractors employing many more. Long-term outlook for 2020 predicts that Photonics will experience continuing nominal growth of 6.5 %, outgrowing the global average annual GDP growth by about 50 %, and resulting in a Photonics market volume of 615 billion Euro by 2020 contributing to wealth and jobs creation.

More Information you can find:

- Neelie Kroes announces Photonics Public Private Partnership
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nTksLAnPlDw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nTksLAnPlDw)