



To Photonics21Secretariat
via eMail: secretariat@photonics21.org

Dear Photonics21 Secretariat

We herewith submit the nomination of the following Photonics21 Board of Stakeholder candidate
Photonics cluster OPTITEC / Ziga VALIC (Deputy Director EU & International Affairs)

**- Letter of Nomination -
Photonics21 Board of Stakeholders
Election 2020**

Photonics21 Board of Stakeholders - Letter of Nomination

1. Full legal name of the affiliation nominated as BoS Member (candidate's organisation):

Pôle de compétitivité photonique et imagerie OPTITEC

2. Full contact details of the affiliation (street, postal code, country) nominated as BoS Member and invoice address

OPTITEC - C/o LAM
38, rue Joliot-Curie
13388 Marseille cedex 13
France

Invoice address is the same.

3. Name of the suggested BoS Representative (the personal candidate)

Mr Ziga VALIC, Deputy Director EU & International Affairs

4. Information about the BoS candidate and the BoS representative

a) Description of the activities and information about the expected contribution and value added the nominated BoS member (candidates organization) will bring to the BoS¹

Photonics cluster OPTITEC associates 220 members, including 135 companies and 40 academic entities in the field of photonics, imagery and artificial intelligence in the south of France (*Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur* (PACA) and *Occitanie* regions, representing an annual turnover of 1,3BN€ and 10 000 employees.

As French "*Pôle de compétitivité*", OPTITEC is supported by the French Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Defense. Its main task is to support the development of partnerships and joint R&D projects. Since 2006, it had awarded a national label to more than 290 joint projects amounting to 550M€ and 140M€ of subsidies.

Activities at the European level, notably framework R&D programme Horizon 2020 and its successor Horizon Europe are at the heart of cluster's activities. To this day, OPTITEC remains the only European photonics cluster facilitating photonics SMEs' access to the European funding directly via its Brussels office and actively participates in European projects.

The cluster previously acted as a coordinator of H2020 [EPRISE project \(Empowering Photonics through Regional Innovation Strategies in Europe\)](#) and COSME project [European Key-enabling Technologies for Dual-Use](#), FP7 OASIS (*Open the Access to Life Sciences Infrastructures for SMEs - OASIS*) and a partner of FP7 LightJumps projects.

¹ The candidate is aware and accepts that according to the Photonics21 Terms of Reference a service agreement and a service fee invoice is to be signed / paid with the Photonics21 association.

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In the framework of BoS, OPTITEC's contribution will be to:

- Increase the involvement of photonics SMEs in Photonics21 WGs, notably in the field of smart cities, intelligent mobility, health technologies, agriculture and security - five priority markets directly addressed by OPTITEC. It will continue providing feedback and sharing the best practices on SMEs participation in the upcoming Horizon Europe programme.
- Continue to foster the links between Photonics21 and European regional authorities in order to encourage synergies between different funds (for ex. H2020/ERDF) for the benefit of the European photonics community and regional ecosystems.
- Continue to support, via its Brussels office and by participating in the national photonics platform Photonics France, better coordination of regional/national photonics strategies in Europe and sustained lobbying efforts for positioning European photonics as one of priorities of Horizon Europe programme.

b) Description of the activities and information about expected contribution and value added the BoS Representative (candidate / person) will bring to the BoS.

Mr Ziga Valic holds a position of Deputy Director EU & International Affairs with OPTITEC and works for the cluster since February 2016.

He holds a B.A. in International Relations from University of Ljubljana (Slovenia) and a LL.M. in Law of Space Activities and Telecommunications from University of Paris-Sud (Paris XI, France). Prior to joining OPTITEC and helping to set-up its EU office in Brussels, he worked at Thales Alenia Space France and the European Commission.

With academic background in international relations and law and benefitting from professional experience in public and private sector in Brussels, Ziga's contribution to the BoS will focus on fostering relations between academic research and businesses, especially SMEs, and promoting collaboration opportunities between PPP Photonics21 and other EU partnerships.

He will also actively support the promotion of European photonics sector and related activities with European regions, acting as managing authorities for European Structural and Investment Funds (EFSI). Showcasing the added value of European photonics sector and securing funding and political support of regional and national authorities in Europe is particularly important in view of increasing competition from the US and Asia.