



PHOTONICS PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

PHOTONICS²¹



AGM highlights European photonics leading position

Brussels, Belgium 27th – 28th March 2019

This year's annual gathering, at the Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts, began by highlighting the strong position of European photonics.

In his introduction, Photonics21 Vice President Giorgio Anania showed that light technologies, with their rich technological development and economic success, are indispensable for powering the future European digital economy. Photonics, Anania explained, is an industry that is growing faster than both the global GDP and that of Europe.

European Photonics remain in a healthy and optimistic position, Anania said, with global leadership in core photonics segments (50% global market share in Production Technology, 35% global market share in Measurement & Automated Vision and around 30% global market share in Optical Components as well as Medical Technology & Life Sciences).

To maintain this leading position ahead of fierce competition from China and Korea, and given that optical technologies remain fundamental components to solving many future societal challenges and the digitisation of industry, future European support is of the utmost importance.

Special Guest Speakers

Offering the science perspective to future photonic developments, Professor Gérard Mourou shared his insights in his keynote speech 'extreme light for the benefit of humanity'. The 2018 Nobel Prize winner in Physics told delegates that European photonics had an exciting future, with chirped amplification getting rid of nuclear waste on earth and debris in space, as well as in healthcare applications making nuclear medicine less expensive, more effective and precise, for example in cancer therapy.

Radioactive nuclear energy by-products on earth will one day be transmuted into smaller, manageable, non-dangerous compounds by fission reactions, opening up the possibility for 'clean nuclear energy', and debris floating around in space will be 'zapped' away via future satellites fitted with lasers, Mourou said.

Alongside the Photonics PPP Annual Meeting, Professor Mourou and Photonics21 Board members, Jean Luc Beylat and David Mechin [met Commissioner Carlos Moedas](#) to discuss the future of photonics research and developments.

From a political perspective, the EU Commission underlined the role of Photonics as a Key Enabling Technology for the future of Europe and gave a clear message that it will support the topic in the next framework programme. Deputy Head of Cabinet of Commissioner Gabriel, Carl Buhr, discussed the possibilities that lie ahead for the structuring and administration of photonics funding throughout the next framework.

Buhr acknowledged that long processes are to be expected when discussing important funding frameworks like Horizon Europe, which need to include input from EU member states. This time around, member states request that earmarked budgets for PPPs should shrink to a maximum of 50 % allocation, with a further 50 % remaining open for thematic programmes. Therefore, while financial support for light technologies would not be in question, the funding facilities, Buhr conceded, have not yet been agreed by member states.

With a view from industry, Chairman of the Executive Board of JENOPTIK AG, Stefan Traeger, had a positive message for the current position of light technologies, revealing that "Photonics is one of the few [industries] where Europe is leading on a global scale". While European success was based on consistent, methodical approaches to government-funded research, Traeger stressed the importance of academia-industrial partnerships to maintain a world-leading position.

Roadmap, Mirror Group, Synergies

After thanking the European Commission for its support in the current framework programme, Photonics21 began the official handing over of the new Multiannual Strategic Roadmap, which marked the end of the first day. An essential strategy for European photonics in preparation of *Horizon Europe*, the Roadmap had begun as a consultation process at the 2018 Annual Meeting. The roadmap is the next development from the 2018 Vision Paper "Europe's Age of Light", in which more than 3000 members from over 1700 companies in our Photonics21 expert community were consulted.

On the final day, the activities of the Mirror Group, where member state authorities are represented, and the first joint Eureka-Photonics21 [Mirror Group call for R&D proposals on photonics for advanced manufacturing](#) were outlined by Sebastian Krug. In the future, Photonics21 plans even closer cooperation with other areas, particularly for end users, to speed up time from lab-to-fab on photonics innovation.

A series of speakers from different Public-Private Partnerships, including 5G, European Construction Technology Platform (ECTP), European Technology Platform for High Performance Computing (ETP4HPC), European Cyber Security Organization (ECISO), European Green Vehicles Initiative Association (EGVIA), Electronic Component Systems for European Leadership (ECSEL) and Factories of the Future (FoF), were all invited to create discussions and synergies for potential collaborations.

This year's Workshop Sessions set about defining innovation priorities for the first calls under *Horizon Europe* throughout 2021-2022.

About Photonics21

Photonics21 is the European Technology Platform (ETP) for photonics, a technology encompassing all of the products and processes around the emission, manipulation and detection of light.

Photonics is integral to a wide range of industries that include the medical, healthcare, transport, manufacturing, and telecommunications sectors.

"Photonics21" was set up in December 2005 to bring the community of photonics researchers and industries together. The European Commission defined photonics as one of five European Key Enabling Technologies (KET's) in September 2009. Shortly after, the European Research & Innovation Program "Horizon 2020" invited Photonics21 to become a "Public-Private Partnership" (PPP). The "Photonics 21 Association", a legal entity under Belgium law, became the private contract partner in November 2013 in a Public Private Partnership (PPP) in conjunction with the EU Commission.

Today Photonics21 represents more than 3000 personal members from across Europe and abroad. Our members are experts in the photonics industry, research organisations and universities who actively engage with us to develop a joint photonics strategy for future research and innovation in Europe.

With the global photonics market growing from €350 Billion in 2011 to €447 Billion in 2015, Photonics remains a strong industry. The European photonics industry, estimated to be worth €70 billion, has considerable global leadership positions and employs over 300,000 people directly.

With positive growth forecast, current industry trends like digitalisation, resource efficiency, individual and zero failure production will drive the photonics industry further.

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