

Photonics Partnership Annual Meeting 2023 highlights the importance of photonics in key enabling technologies

With over 200 high-ranking representatives from industry, science and politics the Photonics Partnership Annual Meeting 2023 took place in Brussels on 26 and 27 April. The Annual Meeting is one of the most important events for the European photonics industry.

Aschke Lutz, President Photonics21, opened the event by handing over the new [Photonics21 Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda 2023-2030 \(SRIA\)](#) to Thomas Skordas from the European Commission. Over 1,000 participants from over 30 countries worked together in several workshop sessions outlining a path towards strategic autonomy.

Thomas Skordas, Deputy Director-General in the Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CONNECT), continued by giving a keynote speech on Photonics in the EU Research and Policy Initiatives. He pointed out that photonics plays a key role in a fast-evolving world and motivated the participants to influence European photonics.

Gabriel Crean, CEO Lux Consulting Group, stressed the importance of [photonics for Europe's autonomy in key strategic value chains](#). In the face of strong headwinds, he called for more partnerships, more public and private support and less restrictions to foster strategic autonomy.

Mike Wale, Photonics21 Executive Board member & Professor at UCL and Full Professor Emeritus at TU/e, presented a [White Paper on Integrated Photonics](#). The joint focus group featured a mixture of experts from both Photonics21 and EPoSS. The paper first considers the present needs of industry and society. It reviews current trends in R&D&I of integrated photonics, considering various key future markets individually, followed by a SWOT analysis of Europe's current standing in the field. It concludes by identifying four key R&D&I priorities and offering programming recommendations based on these.

Ewit Roos, Managing Director PhotonDelta, appealed in his keynote speech about the Chips Act to collectively work on a European resilient supply chain and to act together in Europe if the EU aims to be a world leader in advanced semiconductor technology.

The **Photonics21 Innovation Award 2023** was given to **Nagarajan Subramaniam** with a prize money of €5,000 honouring his excellent research in the diagnosis of ongoing Tuberculosis epidemic. Photonics21 President Lutz Aschke and Roberta Ramponi, Photonics21 Chair of the Selection Committee and Professor at Politecnico di Milano, handed over the Innovation Award to the winner.

The successful first day ended with nice networking dinner.

Kick-off for new R&I Priorities 2025-2027

Werner Steinhögl, Head of Sector DG CNECT, European Commission opened the second day of the Annual Meeting by giving an overview over the Second Strategic Plan of Horizon Europe. There are numerous



synergies between photonics and Horizon Europe. For example, collaboration with the Chips JU on integrated photonics and with Quantum initiatives is encouraged.

The workshop sessions on the second day of the Photonics Partnership Annual Meeting marked the beginning of the new R&I priority setting process 2025-2027. The identified R&I priorities are processed in two work programmes by the European Commission (work programme 2025 and work programme 2026-2027). The participants engaged in seven workshops to discuss potential call topics for the first half of the R&I priority setting process.

The workshop sessions also heard contributions from selected Photonics Public Private Partnership projects which has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme. [NEBULA](#), [OCTAPUS](#), [PULSE](#), [AMBROSIA](#), [AMPLITUDE](#), [SPOTLIGHT](#), [CoRaLi-DAR](#), [Hydrooptics](#), [GRACED](#), [PHOTONFOOD](#), [INSPIRE](#), [GRAPH-X](#), [BROMEDIR](#), [PhotonHub](#) all gave interesting updates on their progress.

The final proposals of the R&I call topics for the work programme 2025 are to be submitted to the European Commission in early 2024.