



PHOTONICS PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

PHOTONICS²¹

Photonics21 President Dr Lutz Aschke meets Director General DG CONNECT Lucilla Sioli

On 23 March the newly elected Photonics21 President Lutz Aschke, Managing Director of the Mahr Group, met Lucilla Sioli, Director of Directorate A in DG Connect to discuss the activities of the Horizon Europe Photonics Partnership, of which Photonics21 is the private partner.

Photonics Partnership priorities for the Horizon Work Programme 2023/24

Topics discussed comprised the [photonics partnership strategic call priorities for](#) Work Programme 23/24 which are the result of a broad Photonics21 consultation of about 1500 experts across Europe from September to November 2021. Moreover, [Lutz Aschke](#) and [Lucilla Sioli](#) discussed how Photonics21 can even more broadly engage with other areas of Horizon Europe to make full use of photonics as key enabling technology and to better solve the challenges Europe is currently facing in areas such as cancer, smart cities, soil health, agri-food or climate change.

Dedicated activities are currently under way to team-up with these communities and to involve them in the future Photonics21 Strategic Research Agenda process. The kick-off of this process is at the [Photonics Partnership Annual Meeting 2022 on June 30 and July 1, 2022](#).

Photonics to contribute to the European Chips Act

Another central topic of the meeting was the recently published European Chips Act, with which the EU Commission wants to double the European share to 20 % of the worldwide chip production. Lucilla Sioli emphasised that photonics will have an important role to play and asked the partnership to closely cooperate with the new Chips Joint Undertaking (renamed from the current Key Digital Technology Joint Undertaking). Two upcoming workshops on silicon photonics are a first concrete action for the Photonics21 community to get involved in this new endeavour. [Registration is already open!](#)

Financing Photonics Start-ups and SMEs

Moreover, Lutz Aschke raised the issue of financing deep tech photonics companies in Europe. Lucilla Sioli said that the EU Commission is currently closely working on this issue with the European Investment Bank and that there would be actions announced in the very near future. She also referred to the new possibilities of the European Innovation Councils (EIC) to fund early-stage start-ups.

More news to come at the Photonics Partnership Annual Meeting 2022. Herman Hauser, serial entrepreneur, co-founder of [Amadeus Capital Partners](#) and [EIC](#) Board member will be keynote speaker at this event.

Lucilla Sioli and Lutz Aschke agreed that the close exchange between the EU Commission and Photonics21 is vital for the successful implementation of the photonics partnership.