

PRESS RELEASE

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Financial results 2015

Fraunhofer continues to grow

The Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft presented its financial statements for 2015 at the annual meeting in Essen. The total business volume of Europe's largest applied-research organization increased by three percent compared with the previous year to €2.115 billion. Industrial revenue grew by four percent to €641 million, boosted in particular by the expansion of Fraunhofer's international activities.

The Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft has benefited from the continuing high demand in industry and the public sector for research and development services. In 2015, the organization's total business volume – comprising personnel and non-personnel expenses and capital expenditure – increased by three percent year on year to €2.115 billion. Of this sum, €1.835 billion was accounted for by contract research, €127 million by defense research, and €153 million by major infrastructure capital expenditure. The number of employees at the end of 2015 was just over 24,000, or 1.3 percent higher than in the previous year.

“All Fraunhofer Groups have developed at a steady pace and they have all contributed to the positive results achieved in 2015,” said the President of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, Professor Reimund Neugebauer, summing up their performance at the annual meeting in Essen. “This places the institutes in an excellent starting position for the third period of the German government's Joint Initiative for Research and Innovation, which begins in 2016. As in the past, science and industry will be able to rely on Fraunhofer as a partner, catalyst and innovation driver”.

Increase in contract research for industry

More than 70 percent of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft's contract research is financed by means of revenue from contracts with industry and from publicly funded research projects. In 2015, project revenue from these sources increased by three percent to a total of €1.305 billion. Industrial revenue increased by four percent to €641 million. In the public sector, revenue from projects funded by the German federal and state governments amounted to €441 million, on a par with the previous year's level. Revenue from projects funded by the EU Commission likewise remained stable, at €105 million.

Editorial Notes

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Other project revenue totaled €118 million. Fraunhofer financed €530 million of pre-competitive research from the base funding it is granted by the German federal and state governments.

The defense research segment combines the research activities of seven Fraunhofer Institutes in the field of defense and security, whose work is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Defence (BMVg). Their budgeted expenditure increased in 2015 by eight percent to €127 million.

In 2015, Fraunhofer spent a total of €153 million on improvements to its research infrastructure, or around one third less than in the previous year. This decrease is due to the transition between ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) funding periods. Whereas the majority of construction projects co-financed by the ERDF in the expiring funding period had been completed by 2015, many of the projects eligible for co-financing in the current funding period are still at the planning stage.

Continuing growth in international revenue

Revenue from projects with international partners grew by five percent to €291 million (excluding license-fee revenue). "The highest increase in international revenue was generated by projects with partners in Switzerland and China," said Professor Alfred Gossner, Executive Vice President, Finance, Controlling and Information Systems, at the meeting in Essen.

In 2015, Fraunhofer scientists filed a total of 506 patent applications. As a result, for the third successive year, the Thomson Reuters media group ranked Fraunhofer among the Top 100 Global Innovators – a status awarded to only four German organizations in 2015. License-fee revenue rose to a new all-time high of €137 million.

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