

## PRESS RELEASE

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**Microelectronic and Optical Systems for Biomedicine**

### **Signing of the foundation declaration for the new Fraunhofer Project Center in Erfurt**

**A new project center for multidisciplinary work in the sector of microelectronic and optical systems for biomedical applications is being created in the German state of Thuringia. Three Fraunhofer Institutes, which cover the disciplines of biosciences, microelectronics, microsystems technology, optics and photonics, will be researching new biomedical applications in close collaboration with industry. In order to set up the project center, the state of Thuringia today signed a joint founding agreement with the Fraunhofer Society.**

Health, demographic change and well-being are key social challenges, which can only be overcome if actors from business, science and society work together closely. Therefore, the respective use and further development of key technologies in areas such as biosciences, microelectronics, optics and photonics are of particular importance. For this reason, three Fraunhofer institutes at the Fraunhofer Project Center "Microelectronic and Optical Systems for Biomedicine" are working together on interdisciplinary approaches—the Fraunhofer Institute for Photonic Microsystems IPMS, a leading research service provider in the field of microelectronics and microsystem technology, the Fraunhofer Institute for Applied Optics and Precision Mechanics IOF, a recognized competence center for optics and photonics, and the Fraunhofer Institute for Cell Therapy and Immunology IZI, a leader in the field of biosciences.

"The Fraunhofer Society has been producing the urgently needed innovative input for the Thuringian economy for a region which is strongly dominated by medium-sized businesses," said Wolfgang Tiefensee, Economics and Science Minister. Already today, there are five Institutes and Institute sections with over 600 employees and an annual budget of 65 million euros actively involved in the state of Thuringia. "With the new project center, the location will also be strengthened as the common interface between Thuringia's core industries of optics, medical technology and microelectronics." For this reason, Thuringia is grateful that the decision on the location of the new project center fell on Erfurt. The state of Thuringia will contribute half of the total cost of the start-up phase until 2022 in the amount of 35 million euros. For this year alone, the Ministry of Economic Affairs has allocated a total of 750,000 euros. "My commitemnt is that,

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#### **Editorial Notes**

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together with the local parties involved, we will do everything we can to make the new center a permanent success for the Fraunhofer Society and the technology location Thuringia."

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Prof. Reimund Neugebauer, President of the Fraunhofer Society, adds: "Societal challenges such as the advancement of biomedicine can only be solved through interdisciplinary approaches. With the new project center, we are setting a clear signal here. The interdisciplinary approach of biosciences, microelectronics, optics and photonics will hereby contribute to the successful further development of biomedical applications and to new medical technology solutions for the benefit of all. All in all, the city of Erfurt with its research infrastructure, the established companies and the link to the universities in Erfurt, Ilmenau and Jena, is an important success factor."

Prof. Hubert Lakner, Managing Director of the Fraunhofer IPMS, adds: "The rapid transfer of research and development results into commercial products within the framework of the project center can only be achieved if components and systems can subsequently be manufactured on an industrial scale. For this reason, we need suitable manufacturing partners, who will accompany the entire development phase right from the onset. The work on the transfer of R&D to industrial technologies and pilot production is an integral part of this project center."

### **Transfer to industrial application**

The project center will initially focus on two selected fields of application: improved medical imaging and visualization as well as biomarker analysis. In the future, the expansion of activities to other fields of application is not out of the question. While taking political strategies such as the growth strategy of the European Union, the high-tech strategy of the Federal Government and the investment strategy of the state of Thuringia into account on the one hand, and current trends in biomedicine on the other, systems for medical technology, analytics, diagnostics, biotechnology, biophotonics, pharmaceuticals, health and aging, and the food industry shall be developed and transferred into industrial applications.

The first five years up until the end of 2022 are intended for the construction phase. The Fraunhofer Society and the state of Thuringia will provide start-up financing in the amount of 20 million euros spread over five years in equal parts. After the construction phase, the project center is to be operated in the Fraunhofer financing model.



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Prof. Reimund Neugebauer, President of the Fraunhofer Society, and Wolfgang Tiefensee, Economics and Science Minister, sign the foundation declaration for the new Fraunhofer Project Center in Erfurt. © Fraunhofer IZI | Picture in color and printing quality: [www.fraunhofer.de/en/press](http://www.fraunhofer.de/en/press)

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