

PRESS RELEASE

PRESS RELEASEMay 09, 2019 || Page 1 | 3

Senate of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft elects new Executive Board member

Prof. Ralf B. Wehrspohn elected Executive Vice President, Technology Marketing and Business Models

On May 8, 2019, the Senate of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft unanimously elected Prof. Ralf B. Wehrspohn to the position of Executive Vice President, Technology Marketing and Business Models. Prof. Wehrspohn, who will take up his position on the Executive Board on October 1, 2019, is a successful physicist and expert in materials research. He is currently Director of the Fraunhofer Institute for Microstructure of Materials and Systems IMWS in Halle and Professor of Microstructured Material Design at Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg.

In his new post, Prof. Wehrspohn will be responsible for evolving and extending the processes used by Fraunhofer to translate research results into real-world applications. That includes launching cross-institute projects with partners in industry, promoting Fraunhofer's start-up culture and expanding research-based training courses in key fields of technology. Explaining the selection of Prof. Wehrspohn, Prof. Heinz Jörg Fuhrmann, Chairman of the Senate of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, stated: "Ralf Wehrspohn is an outstanding ambassador for application-oriented research and a successful institute director, and we are pleased that he has accepted this position of responsibility on the Board. With his broad expertise, international experience and entrepreneurial mindset, we are convinced that he is ideal for the task at hand and well qualified to advance technology marketing and business models at Fraunhofer and make them future-proof."

The Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft partners with companies to translate original ideas into innovations. Among its core tasks are the marketing of technological innovations and the commercialization of its own research results. "We have a special role to play as the leading organization for the transfer of scientific solutions to industry and, going forward, we must continue to live up to and expand that role," said Prof. Reimund Neugebauer, President of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft. "Germany's success as an innovation hub would be unimaginable without the well-functioning transfer of research findings to industrial applications. That's what the German science community and the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft stand for. I am pleased to welcome Ralf Wehrspohn to the Executive Board, as the new colleague responsible for this key task."

As Prof. Wehrspohn stated: "I explicitly wish to thank the Fraunhofer Senate for this expression of confidence in me. I sincerely look forward to systematically strengthening Fraunhofer's specific expertise in transferring research results to the value chain and,

Editorial Notes

Janis Eitner | Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, München | Communications | Phone +49 89 1205-1333 | presse@zv.fraunhofer.de

hand in hand with the Fraunhofer Institutes, to accelerating the innovation process in Germany and making it a sustainable industrial society."

Ralf B. Wehrspohn studied physics at the University of Oldenburg and completed his doctorate at the École Polytechnique in France at the age of 26. After initially working in industry (at Philips Research in London), he qualified as a professor at the Max Planck Institute of Microstructure Physics in Halle before being offered a chair at the University of Paderborn at age 32. Prof. Wehrspohn later returned to Halle to take up a professorship at Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg and a parallel appointment with the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft. He has been director of the Fraunhofer Institute for Microstructure of Materials and Systems IMWS since 2006 and chair of the Fraunhofer Group for Materials and Components – MATERIALS since 2018. He holds the chair in Microstructured Material Design at Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg. Prof. Wehrspohn's work focuses on nanotechnology and the elucidation of microstructures. In recent years, he has also stepped up his research into the digitalization of materials. His work has garnered him several prizes, including the Heinz Maier-Leibnitz Prize awarded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) and the MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) TR100 Innovation Award.

PRESS RELEASE

May 09, 2019 || Page 2 | 3

[Link: Biography of Prof. Ralf B. Wehrspohn](#)

[Link: Portrait of Prof. Ralf B. Wehrspohn](#)



Prof. Ralf B. Wehrspohn.
© Fraunhofer IMWS

PRESS RELEASE
May 09, 2019 || Page 3 | 3

The **Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft** is the leading organization for applied research in Europe. Its research activities are conducted by 72 institutes and research units at locations throughout Germany. The Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft employs a staff of more than 26,600, who work with an annual research budget totaling 2.6 billion euros. Of this sum, 2.2 billion euros is generated through contract research. Around 70 percent of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft's contract research revenue is derived from contracts with industry and from publicly financed research projects. International collaborations with excellent research partners and innovative companies around the world ensure direct access to regions of the greatest importance to present and future scientific progress and economic development.