PRESS RELEASE

New tracing app model ensures data protection, quality and epidemiologically relevant assessments

Fraunhofer provides key components to develop app aimed to contain the coronavirus pandemic

The protective measures taken in recent weeks have helped blunt the first wave of COVID-19 infections. A tracing app paired with a selective epidemiological assessment remains a key digital component of the campaign to control and contain the current coronavirus pandemic. The Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft is sharing its developments towards a tracing app at the federal level to contribute to a decentralized solution. These components will enable users to volunteer their data for researchers to investigate the pandemic directly.

"The unflagging efforts of the German government, the welcome discourse across society at home and abroad, and the intensive preparatory work of leading German research organizations such as Fraunhofer and Helmholtz have had an impact," says Fraunhofer President Prof. Reimund Neugebauer, commenting on the situation. "Under the auspices of the federal government, we can now pursue an app for Germany that relies on decentralized data storage and enables users to share epidemiologically relevant research data with the Robert Koch Institute (RKI), voluntarily and in full compliance with data privacy laws. The major players on the market for mobile phone operating systems are now reinforcing the data protection on their platforms for tracing apps. We are collaborating closely and keeping up the dialog with the German Chancellery, the Federal Ministry of Health, the RKI, the Helmholtz Association and partners in the communications industry, including Deutsche Telekom and SAP, in pursuit of a holistic solution. I am confident that the approach recommended by all stakeholders will ensure the most effective combination of data privacy, quality assurance and epidemiological assessment and thus constitute the best possible solution for German and European needs in the fight against the coronavirus. The app provides digital tools to quickly and expediently augment the domestic healthcare system's standing procedures."