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## 25th institute anniversary: Fraunhofer IOF opens new fiber technology center in Jena

**The new fiber technology center at Fraunhofer IOF in Jena was inaugurated on July 3rd, 2017, in cooperation with partners from economics and science, including the Leibniz-Institute for Photonic Technologies. At the same time the institute celebrated its 25th anniversary. Among prominent guests were Thuringia's Prime Minister, Mr. Bodo Ramelow, Thuringian Minister of Economics, Science and Digital Society, Wolfgang Tiefensee, and the chair of the STIFT (Foundation for Technology, Innovation and Research) Prof. Werner Bornkessel.**

A quarter of a century has passed ever since the Fraunhofer-Institute for Applied Optics and Precision Engineering IOF was founded in Jena. The institute is one of 19 institutes that were established after the reunification by the Fraunhofer Society in the new federal states. In 1992, the Fraunhofer IOF, with 60 employees and an initial equipment of DM 2.7 million, started in a research building in the center of Jena, also known as "The Owl".

Ever since, the institute has continued to develop positively - more than 2400 projects have been carried out during this time and numerous outstanding results have been achieved. A prominent example of the current development is the fiber technology center, which was newly erected on the site of Fraunhofer IOF, which was officially opened on July 3rd, 2017. In addition to special laboratories for the production of active and passive micro- and nanostructured optical fibers, one of the most powerful fiber drawing towers in the world was developed. There will be fibers for the next generation of high-performance lasers in the future, which will be used, among other things, for machine tools and in industrial production.

Prof. Andreas Tünnermann, director of the Fraunhofer IOF, referred to the economic importance of fiber technologies for the Jena region in his opening speech: »With the support of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the Free State of Thuringia and the Fraunhofer Society, we have made Jena one of the world's leading locations for optical fibers in recent years. The technology center, opened today, with its unique infrastructure will help us to become even better.«

The Leibniz-Institute for Photonic Technologies (Leibniz-IPHT) uses its own drawing line in the research center to produce optical fibers for applications in sensor technology, biophotonics and basic physical research. According to Professor Jürgen Popp, the new facility offers ideal conditions thanks to the clean room atmosphere in order to produce

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optically higher-quality and even more powerful fibers in the future. The possibilities of application of the fibers could thus be enormously expanded.

The construction of the new fiber technology center was made possible by the Foundation for Technology, Innovation and Research - for short STIFT. A total amount of € 13. million was invested in the completion of research. »The construction of the fiber technology center was one of the most challenging building activities of the STIFT. With this center, a future-oriented research infrastructure is being created, which makes numerous cooperations possible«, says Prof. Werner Bornkessel, chairman of the STIFT, at the opening event.

Furthermore, the fiber technology center was financed by investments of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), the state of Thuringia, the EFRE (the European Fund for Regional Projects), the Leibniz-IPHT and the Fraunhofer IOF. The fiber technology center will go into operation in autumn of 2017 when all construction work is completed and the laboratories are fully operational.

## About our partners

### Leibniz-Institute for Photonic Technologies

Photonics, the light-based key technology of the 21st century, is at the center of the research activities of the Leibniz- Institute for Photonic Technologies (Leibniz IPHT). In line with the motto »Photonics for Life«, his scientists are investigating photonic and biophotonic processes and systems for questions in the fields of medicine, life sciences and environmental sciences.

### Institute for Applied Physics (Friedrich Schiller University Jena)

The Institute for Applied Physics (IAP) at Friedrich Schiller University Jena has a long-standing tradition and extensive competences in the design, manufacture and application of active and passive optical elements, both for optical and optoelectronic devices. Cooperations with companies guarantee practical relevance and feasibility.

### STIFT

The statutory purpose of the STIFT is to selflessly promote science, research and technology. Within the scope of the development of Thuringia's innovation potential, STIFT designs, implements and supports technology centers. In addition to the application center Mikrosystemtechnik Erfurt, the Center for Intelligent Building CIB.Weimar, the STUDIOPARK KinderMedienZentrum Erfurt as well as the bauhaus FACTORY Weimar, STIFT is building the fiber technology center at the Jena site.