 DOI 10.1515/aot-2013-0035 — Adv. Opt. Techn. 2013; 2(4): 281–283

Community

Conference Notes

114th Annual Meeting of the DGaO (Review)

Braunschweig, Germany, 21–25 May, 2013

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für angewandte Optik DGaO (German Association for Applied Optics) met this year at the splendid grounds of the Physikalisch technische Bundesanstalt PTB in Braunschweig. PTB is the national metrology institute of Germany. Their campus in Braunschweig is a park-like setting with many old trees and research buildings in between. A guided tour on the first day gave the conference delegates a nice impression of the research on precision measurement that is done at PTB.

This year 274 people registered for the conference, 29 exhibitors supported the fair price policy of the DGaO with their sponsoring. There were 76 oral presentations and 56 posters. The actual conference started on Wednesday with a plenary talk by the conference chair Egbert Buhr on the SI-units Meter, Second and Candela. The congress program was well balanced between presentations and networking events.

Among the presentations, some plenary talks in the Symposium on natural constants were truly outstanding. First there was the talk of a veteran from particle physics and quantum chromodynamics research, Harald Fritzsch. He took us for a journey through space and time, i.e., through the history of research on natural constants. Throughout his 45 years as a physicist he worked on the

Figure 1 Karsten Danzmann from the Max Planck Institute for Gravitational Physics (Albert Einstein Institute) gives the Fraunhofer lecture on Gravitational Waves.

question how stable such constants are. As a result, he sees a chance for very faint changes in the order over 10^{-15} – which is not finally confirmed yet.

The subsequent presentations from PTB researchers Stenger and Bettin showed how the definition and measurement from SI units changes from sample based techniques towards derivations from natural constants. A system built with just one unit, namely seconds, was shown as sufficient for physical measurements, but also qualified as quite cumbersome.

Among the networking events, the poster sessions enjoyed particular attention; the discussions there went far beyond the presented results. Two other well attended events were the excursion and the conference dinner. The excursion to the wind mill museum Gifhorn gave new insights into an old technology, whereas the evening beach party gave us insights to current weather phenomena in middle Europe – it was unusually cold and rainy. The conference dinner on Friday evening was an occasion for several official events, such as the poster price award ceremony and the annual Fraunhofer lecture, this year given by Karsten Danzmann, Direktor at the Max Planck Institute for Gravitational Physics (Albert Einstein Institute) in Hannover (Figure 1).

The next and 115th meeting of the DGaO will be held in Karlsruhe, from 10 to 14 June, 2014.

www.dgao.de

Open call for applications for the Innovation Award Laser Technology 2014

The Innovation Award Laser Technology is a European research and technology prize provided with 10 000 Euro prize money and awarded at 2-yearly intervals jointly by the associations Arbeitskreis Lasertechnik e.V. and the European Laser Institute ELI in recognition of outstanding innovative work in the field of laser technology. The call for proposals is open. Closing date for applications is January 17, 2014. Application instructions and information for online submission can be downloaded at www.innovation-award-laser.org. The official presentation of the award will take place in Aachen's town hall on May 7, 2014 at the International Laser Technology Congress AKL'14

(www.lasercongress.org).

Eligible applicants

The Innovation Award addresses laser manufacturers, laser users and researchers, who have successfully conceived and implemented an innovative idea relating to laser technology, following the project through from application oriented research to ultimate industrial application. The closed scientific and technological projects in question must center on the use of laser light in materials processing and the methods of producing such light, and must furthermore be in their practical implementation of demonstrable commercial value to industry.

The award can be conferred on an individual researcher or on an entire project group. Eligible are only applicants, working in industry or at universities or independent research centers established in Europe. The range of possible fields extends from the development of new laser beam sources and systems for use in laser materials processing to the qualification of innovative laser manufacturing processes for use in an industrial production environment.

Prize money and fellowship title

The three best applicants will be awarded with the 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes. The prize winner will receive furthermore the sum of 10 000 euros, and be awarded the title of »AKL fellow« and »ELI fellow«.

Closing date for applications

Applications will be accepted no later than January 17, 2014 (time of receipt).

Awarding Institutions

a) **Arbeitskreis Lasertechnik AKL e.V.** is a registered non-profit association formed in 1990 by a group of companies and private individuals aiming to pool their experience and conduct joint public relations activities in order to spread the use of laser technology in industry and promote the sharing of scientific ideas. In 2013, around 120 laser experts and enthusiasts are signed up as active members of the AKL network. The association's activities include disseminating information on innovations in laser technology,

organizing conferences and seminars, compiling educational material dealing with laser technology, stimulating the interest of future young scientists, and providing advice to industry and research scientists on questions relating to laser technology.

More information: www.akl-ev.de

b) European Laser Institute ELI e.V.: Optical technology is taking an increasing hold on all domains of industry and science. The European Laser Institute (ELI) has created an efficient platform bringing together the necessary competence and knowledge on optical technologies. By promoting technology transfer within Europe, ELI aims to enhance the international lead of European industry and research in the field of laser technology and photonics. By working in close collaboration with existing national and international organizations, the ELI network of industrial and academic research institutions helps to influence R&D policy on a national and European level.

More information: www.europeanlaserinstitute.org

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