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Fraunhofer IIS: Smart Sensing and Electronics division under new management

Nuremberg/Munich: On January 1, 2021, Dr. Denise Müller-Friedrich and Dr. Jens-Uwe Garbas took on joint responsibility for the Smart Sensing and Electronics research division at the Fraunhofer Institute for Integrated Circuits IIS. They succeed Josef Sauerer, who had been in charge since 2016.

Josef Sauerer, former director of the Smart Sensing and Electronics division, will retire at the end of March 2021. Institute Director Prof. Albert Heuberger praises his outstanding commitment: "Josef Sauerer has been at Fraunhofer IIS since the very beginning. For over 35 years, he has been instrumental in shaping our core competence of microelectronics and has played a major part in establishing Germany as a leader in microelectronics.

Six years ago, Sauerer began setting up the Smart Sensing and Electronics research division, which today employs some 125 people and has an annual budget of approximately 23 million euros. Working in partnership with science and industry, the division focuses on the strategic research areas of *microelectronic circuits*, *smart medicine*, *artificial intelligence* and *next-generation computing*. It works tirelessly both on solutions for the markets of today and tomorrow and on the building blocks of a sustainable and livable society undergoing a digital transformation.

The division now has two directors, Dr. Denise Müller-Friedrich and Dr. Jens-Uwe Garbas, who have been sharing leadership responsibilities since January 1, 2021. Prof. Heuberger is excited about working with the two new directors: "As a dual leadership team, they complement one another both in temperament and professional qualifications and will guide the division to a successful future."

Dr. Jens Garbas is an electronics engineer and joined Fraunhofer IIS after completing his doctorate in 2010. His responsibilities at the institute included strategy and business unit development for image sensor technology and artificial intelligence. Most recently, he established a new business unit for cognitive sensor technologies. In addition to his duties as director, his main focus will be on overall strategy and human resource management. Garbas: "Smart Sensing and Electronics has an extremely broad range of expertise and value propositions. We supply science and industry with first-class solutions encompassing everything from sensors for medical applications to developing AI software for image processing and IC design geared towards mass production. My

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goal is to further enhance synergies between business units while building on the strengths of our existing research areas. I will place particular importance on strategic innovation and new partnerships.”

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Dr. Denise Müller-Friedrich received her doctorate in chemistry from the University of Bayreuth. She held a number of posts in scientific institutions before beginning her career in industry in 2014, most recently serving as Head of Sales and Strategic Marketing at the Seuffer Group. In 2017, she became an advisor at Fraunhofer IIS, responsible for parts of the Smart Sensing and Electronics division. Her main duties within the dual leadership team are organizational development, strategic and business processes, and finance. Müller-Friedrich: “Our research is driven by our vision for developing smart sensors, microelectronics and software that improve everyday life. We want to build on our years of technical and strategic success, launch new initiatives and conduct research that offers people maximum benefit. I look forward to contributing my professional experience, developing innovative ideas together with my team and shaping a sustainable future for the division.”



On January 1, 2021, Dr. Jens-Uwe Garbas (left) and Dr. Denise Müller-Friedrich took on joint responsibility for the Smart Sensing and Electronics research division. Photo: Fraunhofer IIS/ Paul Pulkert

The Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, headquartered in Germany, is the world's leading applied research organization. Its research activities are conducted by 74 institutes and research units at locations throughout Germany. The Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft employs a staff of some 28,000, who work with an annual research budget totaling 2.8 billion euros.

The **Fraunhofer Institute for Integrated Circuits IIS**, headquartered in Erlangen, Germany, is a world leader in research on microelectronic and IT system solutions and services. Today, it is the largest institute of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft. Research at Fraunhofer IIS revolves around two guiding topics:

In the area of "**Audio and Media Technologies**," the institute has been shaping the digitalization of media for more than 30 years now. Fraunhofer IIS was instrumental in the development of mp3 and AAC and played a significant role in the digitalization of the cinema. Current developments are opening up whole new sound worlds and are being used in virtual reality, automotive sound systems, mobile telephony, streaming and broadcasting.

In the context of "**cognitive sensor technologies**," the institute researches technologies for sensor technology, data transmission technology, data analysis methods and the exploitation of data as part of data-driven services and their accompanying business models. This adds a cognitive component to the function of the conventional "smart" sensor.

More than 1100 employees conduct contract research for industry, the service sector and public authorities. Founded in 1985, Fraunhofer IIS now has 14 locations in 11 cities: Erlangen (headquarters), Nürnberg, Fürth and Dresden, as well as Bamberg, Weischedel, Coburg, Würzburg, Ilmenau, Deggendorf and Passau. The budget of 169.9 million euros a year is mainly financed by contract research projects; 26 percent of the budget is made up of German federal and state funds.

For more information visit www.iis.fraunhofer.de