

Photonics Leadership Group Meeting Minutes

Thursday 26 October 2023, 13:00-15:30,
SEC Glasgow and remotely via on Zoom

www.photonicsuk.org

Attendees in person and online:

Ian Alderton, Alrad; Yann Amouroux, Optica OSA; Simon Andrews, Fraunhofer UK; Jake Biele, Light Trace Photonics; Dom Brady, Fibercore/ Humanetics; Andrew Brown, SPIE Europe; Karin Burger, SPIE Europe; Darren Cadman, Spaceforge; Allan Colquhoun, Leonardo; Phil Cornish, CS Connected; Iwan Davies, IQE; Chris Dorman, Coherent Scotland; Sandra Dressler, Edmund Optics; Daniel Esser, Heriot-Watt University; Glenn George, Bay Photonics; David Gillett, Laser 2000; Mark Goossens, CS Applications Catapult; Clive Grafton-Reed, Rolls-Royce; Benet Hanley, Enigma People Solutions; Tom Harvey, Nat Healthcare Photonics Ctr; Shahida Imani, independent; Rand Ismaeel, University of Southampton; Mark Johnson, AFE; Steven Jones, Cadfem UK; Robert Lamb, Leonardo; Christopher Leburn, University of Glasgow; John Lincoln, Harlin; Anke Lohmann, Anchored In ; David MacLellan, ALLU; Iain Mauchline, InnovateUK; Cameron McEleney, University of Glasgow; Alastair McInroy, Technology Scotland; Cillian McPolin, Digital Catapult; Wyn Meredith, Compound Semiconductor Centre; Bonnie Peterson, SPIE Europe; Michael Robertson, independent; Toby Scrivener, Laser 2000; Katrina Skerratt-Love, GTS; Callum Stirling, University of Southampton; Kayleigh Thomson, GandH; Malcolm Varnham, Trumpf UK; Mike Wale, UCL; Matthew Wasley , KTN; Philip White, DIT; Aidong Xu, Cambridge Consultants;

Direct Apologies: Ric Allott, STFC; Paola de Bono, TWI; Antony Hurden, Grounded Innovation; David Payne, University of Southampton; Graham Reed, University of Southampton; Andy Robertson, Bay Photonics; Andy Sellars, CS Applications Catapult

**Post meeting and editorial input in italics*

1) Previous Minutes and welcomes

Those attending their first PLG meeting formally welcomed

Minutes from previous meeting on 6 June were accepted without revision.

Note previous meeting minutes are accessible at <https://photonicsuk.org/contributors/minutes/> You will need the code "PLGcontribute" to access (case sensitive).

2) External events impacting photonics industry

The recent conflict in Israel/Gaza was noted as impacting select supply chains as key workers as Israeli suppliers are called upon as reservist leaving some supplier short handed.

3) Semiconductor Strategy and Infrastructure update

Progress with the UK semiconductor infrastructure project continues with final report in draft with recommendations in the four pillars of silicon fab, compound semi fab, packaging and design. Noted that community was encouraged to be positive and look at the bigger picture of making a strong case for intervention at a national level rather than get pulled into location or detailed technical specifics. Also noted that of the £1 billion announced for semicon, much of this is pending the next spending review.

Additional support for the existing UK semi industry was indicated in the announcement of the Semicon strategy is also anticipated to be included in the Autumn statement.

In more immediately accessible semicon support Innovate UK will be opening a £12 million semicon funding call on 4 December, with briefing call on the 5 December. Support for circa 12 1 year projects is envisaged at normal intervention rates. The consortia building event on 26 Oct, immediately prior to the PLG meeting was attended by ~70 people with over 20 capability pitches.

A number of bi-lateral international trade activities are ongoing in the semicon area. These build on recent Taiwan visit. These range from full trade mission to collaboration building exchanges. This include a trade mission to Semicon Korea 29/1-2/2/2020. [Expression of interest to participate are open](#)

4) Photonics 21 & Horizon Europe

Whilst the full participation of the UK in Horizon Europe has been agreed the formal paperwork is still working its way through the systems. Any UK organisations successful in EU bids should continue to use the Horizon Europe guarantee scheme from Innovate UK until the end of 2023.

Longer term it is hoped that previous restrictions on the UK participation in certain quantum and space programmes will be lifted and the UK status in the European joint chips undertaking will be clarified. However all these topics remain pending. For those considering participation in ESA calls around photonics UK organisations are recommended to check the eligibility details closely as UK participation is only possible in a sub-set of activities at present.

The Photonics21 Board of Stakeholder election is currently open. Iwan Davies, IQE is standing for re-election and would welcome the support of any registered voters. (registration to vote is now closed). Note there are currently 17 candidates for 17 spaces on the Board of Stakeholders, but this does not guarantee election as Photonics21 requires a minimum level of industrial representation.

5) Photonex program highlights inc review of visit by HRH Princess Royal

Photonex were proud to welcome a highly successful visit by the Princess Royal on the morning of 25 October. Her agenda included presentation on the state of the UK photonics industry and tours of a number of companies and organisation in the exhibit over a 2 hour period. She showed particular interest in the carer and personal development. Official approval of visit photos has been received, please contact Karin burger for details.

For the future industry input is very much welcomed on the future direction of Photonex and what would bring buyers to the exhibit floor and offer a return on investment for companies participating. SPIE will be forming a steering committee to guide that direction – those interested in participating should contact Bonnie Patterson or Karin Burger at SPIE.

Discussion noted the importance of activities to support the continued flow of people into the industry including leverage the event for local schools engagement. The semicon consortia building event was noted as bringing additional visitors in.

6) Photonics Leadership Ltd AGM

The meeting was noted as quorate

Chris Dorman noted he will be stepping down as PLG chair after ten years following promotion to take over from Mark Sobey in running the majority of the in excess of \$1.5 billion laser activity in Coherent Inc. Chris highlighted the importance of the PLG remaining a voice for industry, looking beyond grants to emphasise the needs of a successful profitable industry in particular in forming policy and ensuring a strong and growing pipeline of talent to fuel its ongoing growth.

The entire group offered there thanks and gratitude to Chris for his contribution over the last decade and deemphasised as ‘most recent past chair’ his input and guidance would very much still be welcomed

a) Review of PLG activities 2022-2023- [full list online](#)

John Lincoln presented highlighted of PLG activities over the past year including:

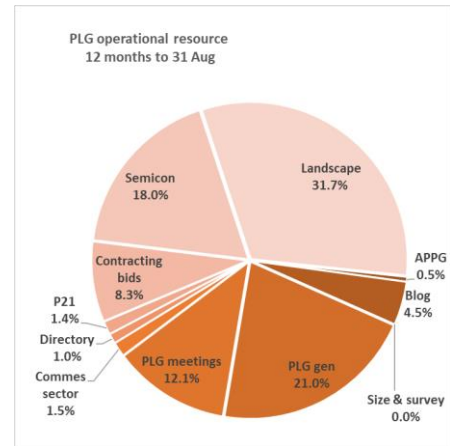
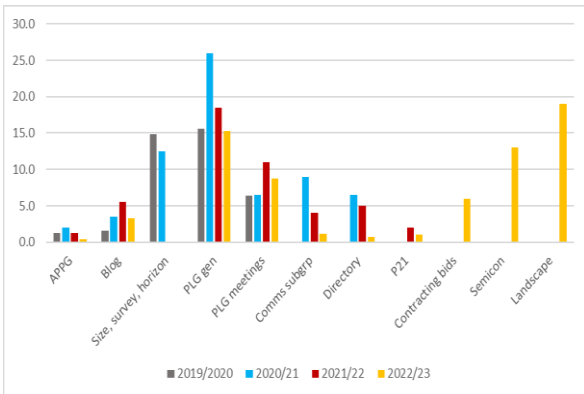
- UK Photonics size, stats & survey update
- UK Photonics 2023 brochure – full update
- 4 PLG Meetings
- Photonics 21 Board of stakeholders participation
- Champion Photonics role in Net Zero
- Westminster Photonics Showcase
- APPG support
- Letters of support
- Press input to Financial Times, trade press
- Panel participation/ chair- CogX, PW...
- Directory
- Vat registration with significant refund#
- Signing of MOU with Korea Association for Photonics Industry Development (KAPID)

2023 has also seen the PLG participate for the first time in a number of funded projects including

- UK Photonics Landscape (Innovate UK)
- UK Semiconductor Infrastructure (DSIT / IFM) Ongoing
- Phorwards 21 (EU via Innovate) Starting Nov 2023

These activities are providing an important additional source of income for the PLG. Although noted that balance must be maintained with core activities to continue to serve the overall interests of the industry.

Core operation of the PLG consumed 36 people days in 2023, down 25% on previous year which was in turn down 25% on previous year, following continue efficiency savings and leverage of past time investments (e.g. in setting up the directory) see below. Funded activities consumed a total of 26 days.



b) Finances (subject to vote)

Anke Lohmann, Treasurer, presented a summary of PLG finances for year to end August 2023. Paid services income of £36k, has offset a drop in membership contributions.

Additional services income has been received and is due from the semicon infrastructure project. As of the AGM accounts show at £18.8k balance, with £37k of debits and £35k due from outstanding contracts.

	£		£	£
Opening balance	13,758.36	Spending		Paid
Income	69,861.84	• Subcontracting:	£62,529.06	Owed (£ 46,325.21)
• Membership &		• Advertising & Marketing:	£2348.28	(£283.28)
• Directory	25,610.33	• Accountancy Fees:	£908.64	£0.00
• Services	36,048.00	• Bank Charges:	£155.70	£0.00
• HMRC	5,203.84	• General expense:	£50.60	(£35.00)
Outgoing	(£ 67,118.30)	• IT	£346.69	(£144.38)
		• HMRC	£779.33	(0.00)
		Total Cost Paid:	67,118.30	(£46,787.87)
		Closing Balance Bank AC	£16,501.89	

John Lincoln presented a financial plan for 23/24 including the short fall in member subscriptions from plan. Noted that whilst there were many business uncertainties in 2022/23, it is hoped that the strong growth of the industry will see a return to a larger number of organisations able to make a contribution. The plan excludes changes in contribution levels and outstanding contracts.

Financial Plan 2022/23

	£ per	Units	23 plan	Actual	24 plan
Premium	£500	5	£2,500	1	5
Basic	£95	5	£475	1	5
Upgrades	£300	0	£-		
Directory income			£2,975	£595	£2,975
Contribution income			£42,740	£25,000	£39,250
UKTIN	£6,000	1	£6,000		
other	£8,000	1	£8,000	2	
Contract income			£14,000	£40,000	£20,000
total			£59,715	£65,595	£62,225

- Significant decline in number contributors offset by contract income
- Contributions remains voluntary
- Input from all welcome no matter level of £ support

c) Contribution levels for 23/24 (subject to vote)

Increases to contribution levels were discussed. An increase of 10% was agreed as reflective of the inflationary pressures and in-line with other UK organisation e.g. Photonics Scotland. The exception being the highest Diamond level where it was agreed this should be kept under a £5k potential signatory ceiling and in the lowest entry Bronze level to continue to make this accessible

Year	2022/23	2023/24 proposed
Diamond	£4,990	£4,990
Platinum	£1,990	£2,189
Gold	£1,040	£1,144
Silver	£640	£704
Bronze	£260	£260

All contributions are subject to VAT. As in previous years quotes will go to all regular attendees. These can be converted to invoice on communication of a PO number and can be paid online (*although preferably not due to the 3% cost*)

d) Appointment of officers.

Following Chris Dorman standing down as chair the PLG are extremely grateful to the following for putting themselves up for election.

- Shahida Imani – Chair
- Andrew Roberston – Vice Chair
- Anke Lohmann - Treasurer
- Karin Burger – Secretary
- John Lincoln – Chief Exec

e) Election and AGM votes

Votes were conducted using Microsoft forms with the following results.

Motion		Agree	Disagree	Abstain
1	Confirmation that remote meeting will be taken as a full and valid AGM of the Photonics Leadership Group and Photonics Leadership Ltd	23	0	0
2	Approval of 2022/23 PLG accounts	22	0	1
3	Approval of 2023/24 activity and financial plan	23	0	0
4	Agreement of requested contribution levels for 2023-2024	22	0	1
5	Appointment of Shahida Imani as PLG Chair	22	0	1
6	Appointment of Andrew Robertson as PLG Vice-Chair	23	0	0
7	Reappointment of John Lincoln as PLG Chief Executive	23	0	0
8	Reappointment of Anke Lohmann as PLG Treasurer	22	0	1
9	Reappointment of Karin Burger as PLG Secretary	22	0	1
10	Continuation of Simon Andrews and Ric Allott as Photonics Leadership Ltd Directors	22	0	1

22 of the 23 voting confirmed eligibility to vote at the AGM by attendance at two or more of the last six PLG meetings or attendance at two or more PLG meetings in the in last two years by myself or someone from my organisation

All motions were there considered passed

The meeting welcome Shahida to the Chair and Andrew to Vice-chair.

Thanks were offered to all returning officers for their inputs

7) Updates from communities and programs (round table)

a) PLG Future Photonics leaders group

All welcome to the PLG and for visiting Photonex for their first full face-to-face meeting as a group.

The Future leaders group will soon release a survey to gather information on barriers, enablers training sort and career aspiration of those early in their photonics careers. PLG members are encouraged to promote responses from all early in their photonics careers including those in industry and academia.

b) Photonics Scotland

Profile of Photonics in Scotland continues to increase, now at its highest for many years, with photonics mentioned in the national economic strategy and national innovation strategy. Notable increase in engagement with Scottish government and Scottish development international

Number of Scottish Universities recently won £4.6million from the UK wide EPSRC place based impact acceleration account (<https://www.ukri.org/news/41-million-to-enhance-uk-research-and-innovation-clusters/>). Scottish Enterprise recently approved continued support for Technology Scotland and Photonics Scotland.

Annual Photonics Scotland survey is out – responses welcome please.

c) AILU

AILU's Annual Job Shop Business Meeting, November 22, West Brom

Early career research due to meeting in person 6 December in Manchester

AI and Machine Learning event moved to 8 Feb in Coventry.

Further details on all at <https://www.ailu.org.uk/events/>

d) Photonics Connected,

Update pending recovery from Wales tech week.

Louise Jones, key driver behind photonics connected, promoted to the Innovate manager for Wales

e) UKQuantum,

Tom Newby DSIT new head of Quantum was introduced to UK Quantum members earlier in week.

John Lincoln has open communication lines with Jon Leigh-Smith, his equivalent at UK quantum

f) Innovate KTN

Range of 'Photonics 4' events scheduled and in planning including

- **Photonics for Environment and Sustainability**, online, 15th November, <https://iuk.ktn-uk.org/events/photonics-for-environment-and-sustainability/>, technical talks including from Rand Ismaeel of Future Photonics Leaders, pitches, funding info. Looking at environmental monitoring and circularity/life cycle assessments of photonics components and materials
- **Photonics for Space**, in person, Leicester Space Centre, provisional date Tuesday 12th March. Technical talks, pitches, tabletop exhibits. Looking at communications, supply opportunities for optical and radio telescopes space power. Looking for a diverse range of speakers, travel expenses may be possible for early career speakers.
- Contact matthew.wasley@iuk.ktn-uk.org for info.

g) APPG

Additional parliamentarian in the APPG is needed. Please contact your MP particularly is on the labour side of the trenches to make contact with Carol

h) P21

Drafting of proposals for areas to focus calls on in 2025-2027 complete due to go to BoS for validation shortly and confirmation by December

Smart Photonics call currently Open along with number of ESA calls involving photonics.

8) Next PLG Meeting

Will be fully remote on teams in Feb 2024

9) AOB

Great many thanks to SPIE and Photonex for hosting the PLG meeting and providing lunch