

PRESS RELEASE

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Fraunhofer Austria establishes KI4LIFE Innovation Center in Carinthia

Carinthian companies are now to be supported in their digitization drives and artificial intelligence efforts – a field that will be of central relevance for the future – by a high-powered team of economic stakeholders, companies and research institutions.

Since its foundation in the year 2008, Fraunhofer Austria Research GmbH has supported companies of all sizes and active in all lines of industries as an independent partner with know-how and expertise. The company has now opened an innovation center dedicated to "Digitization and Artificial Intelligence" – KI4LIFE for short – in Klagenfurt; this is the fourth business location to join Vienna, Graz and Wattens, where more than 70 employees are currently working on application-oriented solutions. A first team of scientists took up work on 1 October; with their concrete solutions, they will provide support to Carinthian companies in living up to the challenges of digitization. It is planned to increase the staff to 15 full-time employees in the medium-term, while further growth to 30 scientists is envisaged for the long term. The Innovation Center will initially be located in the immediate vicinity of Klagenfurt University, in Universitätsstraße 102, before it will be relocated to Lakeside Park in July 2020.

A close alliance of strong partners has made this center possible. Fraunhofer provides top know-how and a network consisting of 72 institutes and more than 26,000 researchers worldwide. Leading Carinthian companies such as Infineon Austria contribute their expertise, their network and their demands. The Economic Chamber of Carinthia, the Austrian Economic Chamber and the Federation of Austrian Industry create the direct links between the Innovation Center and companies; and the City of Klagenfurt and the Federal State of Carinthia will support the Center. Seven research groups from the Faculty of Technical Sciences of Klagenfurt University are carrying out research in fields closely related to the research focus of the Center and will develop synergies through cooperation. Future cooperation schemes with Joanneum Research and the Carinthian University of Applied Sciences are planned beyond the current consortium. With its application-oriented research, KI4LIFE will create the link between university research and industry.

The work with the university, which includes knowledge exchanges plus cooperation input for demanding industrial projects, is one of the three pillars of the activity profile of KI4LIFE. Another important aspect is contract research in the framework of project activities, and this will also be the economic basis of the Center. The third pillar is analysis and consulting for small and medium-sized enterprises. Well-established tools such as the "Consulting Cheque" will be used for this purpose. Continued qualification of employees, plus training and education in general, play a vital role in the portfolio of the Innovation Center.

Contact:

Dr. Elisabeth Guggenberger
Media Relations
Fraunhofer Austria Research GmbH
Theresianumgasse 27 | 1040 Wien
Phone: +43 676 888 61 617
elisabeth.guggenberger@fraunhofer.at
www.fraunhofer.at

About Fraunhofer Austria

Fraunhofer Austria Research GmbH was founded at the end of 2008 as the first European subsidiary of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft. In the two business units "Production and Logistics Management" and "Advanced Industrial Management" in Vienna, in the business unit "Visual Computing" in Graz and in the Fraunhofer Innovation Center "Digital Transformation of Industry" in Tyrol, around 50 scientists are currently working on application-oriented solutions for the benefit of industry and society. Research for practice is the central task of the Fraunhofer Institutes.