

PRESS RELEASE

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Support for hardware start-ups

Start-ups, partners and other interested parties from the industry and hardware sector came together this week for a special kind of workshop: a tech safari with various stand-alone stations allowing participants to experience the journey from idea to product.

Start-A-Factory at the Fraunhofer Institute for Reliability and Microintegration IZM has already been compared to a range of existing start-up offers, including MakerSpace, co-working offices, and the Fraunhofer Accelerator. However, none of these comparisons does the concept justice. Start-A-Factory (SAF for short) combines device infrastructure with a working environment designed to meet the specific requirements of hardware start-ups. Embedded in a network of Fraunhofer IZM specialists and other partners, the SAF environment employs project-based partnerships and state-of-the-art systems, enabling development teams to go quickly from initial idea to professional prototype.

Now that all the elements are in place and ready for use, the creators have organised a walk-around event. In addition to workshops showcasing the individual stages of microelectronic hardware development, the key notes were a special highlight. Mike Richardson, Founder and Technical Advisor – but also a container user himself at SAF – explained to the audience what the nerds of the future will look like. “The special thing about a tech dork is the mix of a nerd and a communicative and social person.”

SAF also illustrates that conducting research and establishing a start-up in the hardware sector need not be boring. The six containers, which resemble an industrial production facility, will be made available as work spaces for teams of developers who wish to develop hardware and – most importantly – prototypes as part of a joint project. An impressive range of equipment, from pick-and-place machines to 3D printers, offers developers the opportunity to turn their ideas into products.

The guests and partners on site were thrilled with SAF. Participants enjoyed a lively exchange as part of a relaxed get-together at the grill, discussing their journey of technological discovery in addition to the versatility of this special infrastructure environment and the possibilities it will offer start-ups, SMEs and other teams of developers. New partners and container users are already lining up for future partnerships.

Press

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FRAUNHOFER INSTITUTE FOR RELIABILITY UND MICROINTEGRATION IZM



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Start-A-Factory is now ready to go and is opening the workshop season with partners and friends — and with new and interested parties too. | © Fraunhofer IZM | Print quality: www.izm.fraunhofer.de

Research of practical utility lies at the heart of all activities pursued by the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft. At present, it maintains 72 institutes and research units. The majority of the 26,600 staff are qualified scientists and engineers, who work with an annual research budget of 2.6 billion euros. Of this sum, 2.2 billion euros is generated through contract research. More than 70 percent of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft's contract research revenue is derived from contracts with industry and from publicly financed research projects. Almost 30 percent is contributed by the German federal and state governments in the form of base funding, enabling the institutes to work ahead on solutions to problems that will not become acutely relevant to industry and society until five or ten years from now.

Fraunhofer IZM specializes in industry-oriented applied research. With four technology clusters, Fraunhofer IZM covers the entire spectrum of technologies and services necessary for developing reliable electronics and integrating new technology into applications. Our customers are as varied as the applications for electronics. We take on development projects for the automotive industry, healthcare and industrial electronics and even textile companies. Fraunhofer IZM has two sites in Germany. Apart from its headquarters near Berlin Mitte, the institute is also represented in Dresden, a strategically important centers for electronic development and manufacturing.

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