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A Joint Event of HEPTech and HiLASE Brings Together Leading World Scientists and European Industries

Laser shock peening and laser induced damage threshold were the main topics of the academia-industry matching event organized jointly by HEPTech and the Institute of Physics of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic in partnership with HiLASE. The event took place in Prague on 4-5 March 2015 and attracted about 80 participants – representatives of leading world research institutions and European industries.

"The Institute of Physics of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic is the main institution for ELI Beamlines – a key project of the European Commission dealing with fundamental research, for HiLASE – a facility oriented towards the industry, and for CITT (Centre for Innovation and Technology transfer) that offers solutions to industry and does market research", explains Tomas Mocek from HiLASE.

The new HiLASE facility was introduced during the event and engineers and industry representatives were made aware of the possibility to use these laser systems for their own purposes.

Among the participants, there were researchers from the USA and South Africa. What made them take this long way to Europe?

"I see a lot of potential here. A lot of work has been done and still a lot remains to be done. We are a small community and we like what we do. We are not in competition – we rather like working together to achieve our final goal – development of the laser shock peening technology - and we would like to establish collaborations. Despite of all the communication media we have, such events give the added value of the personal touch and provide environment for meeting the industry. I personally, like doing research with practical application, something that is helping people", says Claudia Polese from Johannesburg University in South Africa.

“I am here to talk about things related to laser shock peening, a favourite topic of mine. One of my goals in life is to promote this technology. I go anytime anywhere that makes this possible”, says S.R. Mannava from Cincinnati University in the USA.

Regarding the possible cooperation between academia and industry resulting from this event, Ales Hala, Head of CITT, says, “We have some feedback from industrial companies that want to go more in details in these technologies. Among them are the big players in the aircraft industry, such as Airbus - a promising one. You need to start with one and then the good news spread hopefully quite quickly to get others”.

To maintain contacts with industry CITT sends out regular information and a newsletter to companies once in six months to keep them updated about the new developments in technologies.

“Basically, it is like a normal business procedure. If you want to approach companies you need to behave in the way they understand. You need to make sure who is the final client for you. You want money from the client, i.e. from industry and you want to transfer your knowledge to industrial companies”, explains Hala.

What was unique about this particular event and why did it attract such international interest?

“The most unique thing was that it happened in the Czech Republic, first of all, and second – it was focused on the key technologies we are looking at – the laser shock peening and laser induced damage threshold which are very important for industry. We wanted to link HiLASE with industry under the auspices of HEPTech. The laser shock peening is quite a new technology which is attractive for researchers all over the world. It is not that widespread, so it was a good reason for everybody to come to HiLASE that is going to be the most powerful laser in the world for industrial applications. We had this event for the first time in the newly constructed premises of HiLASE which also makes it unique”, says Hala.

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