ARBEITSKREIS
LASERTECHNIK e.V.

PRESS RELEASE

Aachen, July 8, 2025

Open call for applications for the Innovation Award Laser Technology 2026 – closing date December 1, 2025.

The Innovation Award Laser Technology is an European research and technology prize provided with 10.000 Euro prize money and awarded at 2-yearly intervals jointly by the association Arbeitskreis Lasertechnik e.V. in recognition of outstandingly innovative work in the field of laser technology. The call for proposals is open. Closing date for applications is December 1, 2025. Application instructions and information for online-submission can be downloaded at www.innovation-award-laser.org. The official presentation of the award will take place in Aachen´s town hall on April 22, 2026 at the International Laser Technology Congress AKL'26 (www.lasercongress.org).

Target Group:
The Innovation Award addresses laser manufacturers, laser users and researchers, who have successfully conceived and implemented an innovative idea relating to laser technology, following the project through from application oriented research to ultimate industrial application. The closed scientific and technological projects in question must center on the use of laser light in materials processing and the methods of producing such light, and must furthermore be in their practical implementation of demonstrable commercial value to industry.

Eligible applicants:
The award can be conferred on an individual researcher or on an entire project group. Eligible are only applicants, working in industry or at universities or independent research centers established in Europe. The range of possible fields extends from the development of new laser beam sources and systems for use in laser materials processing to the qualification of innovative laser manufacturing processes for use in an industrial production environment.

Prize money and fellowship title:
The best three applicants will be awarded with the first, second and third prize. The prize-winner will receive furthermore the sum of 10,000 euros and be awarded the title of »AKL fellow«.

Official presentation:
The official presentation of the award will take place at the International Laser Technology Congress AKL'26 (www.lasercongress.org) on April 22, 2026 in Aachen.

Executive Board:
Dipl.-Ing. Ulrich Berners (Chairman)
Prof. Dr. rer. nat. Constantin Häfner
Dr. Markus Kogel-Hollacher (General Secretary)
Dr. Claus Schnitzler

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Jury and selection procedure:
A shortlist of the best candidates will be compiled by an international jury consisting of ten members recruited from industry and the research community. The prize-winner as well as the second and third placed are selected on the basis of the published assessment criteria. Any and all legal recourse is explicity barred.

Closing date for applications:
no later than December 1, 2025 (time of receipt)

Application documents and further information:
www.innovation-award-laser.org

Awarding Institution:

Arbeitskreis Lasertechnik AKL e.V.
Arbeitskreis Lasertechnik AKL e.V. is a registered non-profit association formed in 1990 by a group of companies and private individuals aiming to pool their experience and conduct joint public-relations activities in order to spread the use of laser technology in industry and promote the sharing of scientific ideas. In 2025, around 200 laser experts and enthusiasts are signed up as active members of the AKL e.V. network. The association's activities include disseminating information on innovations in laser technology, organizing conferences and seminars, stimulating the interest of future young scientists, and providing advice to industry and research scientists on questions relating to laser technology.
More information: www.akl-ev.de.

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The prize-winner, second and third placed of the last open calls 2010 to 2024

(Speaker of the finalist group / Speaker´s company / Description of the innovation)

2024

1. Edwin Büchter, cleansort GmbH, Rösrath Germany
„Laser-based Sorting Systems for Resource-Saving Recycling of Recyclable Materials”

2. Dr. Jan-Philipp Weberpals, AUDI AG, Neckarsulm, Germany
„Holistic Approach for Laser Beam Welding for Cell Contacting of Battery Modules with Highest Quality”

3. Gwenn Pallier, Cailabs, Rennes, France
„CANUNDA – Upscaling Laser Processing with Beam-Shaping”

2022

1. Stefan Wolf, PRIMES GmbH, Pfungstadt, Germany
“Scanfieldmonitor (SFM)“

2. Dr. Tim Kunze, Fusion Bionic GmbH, Dresden, Germany
“Innovative Surfaces Using High-Speed Laser-Biomimetics“

3. Thibault Bautze-Scherff, Blackbird Robotersysteme GmbH, Garching bei München, Germany
“Finally united: OCT-Based Process Control and On-The-Fly Remote Laser Welding in One Tool“

2020

1. Dr. Boris Regaard, TRUMPF Werkzeugmaschinen GmbH & Co. KG, Ditzingen, Germany
“Active Speed Control – Camera Based Sensor System for Closed-Loop Feed Regulation in Laser Cutting“

2. Dr. Oliver Meier, LASER on demand GmbH, Burgdorf, Germany
“New Laser Solution for Defusing Unexploded (UXO) by the Use of a Disposable 3D Printed Tool Head“

3. Dr. Maik Frede, neoLASE GmbH, Hannover, Germany
“Unlimited Flexibility for Short Pulse Laser Applications“

2018

1. Dr. Axel Luft, Laserline GmbH, Mülheim-Kärlich, Germany
“Multi Spot Modules to Improve Joining Processes due to Tailored Spot Geometries”

2. Dr. Gerald Jenke, Saueressig GmbH + Co. KG, Vreden, Germany
“Multi Parallel Ultrafast Laser Ablation for Large Scale Ultraprecision Manufacturing”

3. M.Sc. Eng. Alejandro Bárcena, Talens Systems S.L. Etxe-Tar Group, Elgoibar, Spain:
“ RAIO DSS: A High Flexibility Dynamic Beam Control System for Laser Heat Treatment and Related High Power Laser Applications“

2016

1. Dr. Armand Pruijmboom, Philips GmbH Photonics Aachen, Aachen, Germany
“VCSEL arrays: A novel high-power laser technology for „digital thermal processing“

2. Dr. Jan-Philipp Weberpals, AUDI AG, Neckarsulm, Germany
“Laser Beam Remote Welding of Aluminium for Automotive Lightweight Design“

3. Dr. Ralph Delmdahl, Coherent LaserSystems GmbH & Co. KG, Göttingen, Germany
“UVblade – Flexible Display Manufacturing by the Meter”

2014

1. Dr. Ralf Preu, Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems ISE, Freiburg, Germany
“Laser Fired Contact (LFC) technology for the production of highly efficient silicon solar cells”

2. Dr. Markus Kogel-Hollacher, Precitec Optronik GmbH, Neu-Isenburg, Germany
“Penetration Depth and Topography Measurement in Laser Materials Processing using Low Coherence Interferometry“

3. Dr. Yves Bellouard, Eindhoven University of Technology, Netherlands
“FEMTOPRINT: A femtosecond laser printer for three-dimensional micro- and nano-manufacturing of glass“

2012
1. Dr. Stephan Brüning, Schepers GmbH & Co. KG, Vreden, Germany
“3D micro-structuring of large scale metal surfaces for embossing and printing applications with high power ultrashort pulse-lasers”

2. Dipl.-Ing. Rainer Pätzel, Coherent GmbH, Göttingen, Germany
“Excimer lasers for Active-Matrix-LCD and Active-Matrix-OLED based flat panel displays“

3. Dr. Markus Kogel-Hollacher, Precitec Optronik GmbH, Rodgau, Germany
“3D-capable co-axial laser brazing head with integrated seam tracking“

2010
1. Dr. rer. nat. Keming Du, EdgeWave GmbH, Würselen, Germany
“Gütegeschaltete INNOSLAB Laser für die hoch qualitative Mikrobearbeitung“

2. Dipl.-Ing. Jürgen Dupré, Rolls-Royce Deutschland Ltd. & Co. KG, Dahlewitz, Germany
“Instandsetzungsverfahren für Flugzeugtriebwerk-Komponenten mittels Laserauftragschweißen“

3. Dipl.-Ing. Hermann Lembeck, Meyer Werft Laserzentrum GmbH, Papenburg, Germany
“Laser-Hybridschweißen dicker Stahlbleche mit Scheibenlaser im Schiffbau“

More details about the teams and the content of the honoured innovations:
www.innovation-award-laser.org

Photo:
Finalists of the Innovation Award Laser Technology 2024
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