

Imaging companies in Europe shoulder-to-shoulder with life scientists

Imaging companies in Europe get closer to scientists by founding an open Board linked to the upcoming European research infrastructure Euro-BioImaging

Leading imaging companies Leica, Nikon, Zeiss, FEI, Olympus, SVI and Photometrics announced last week that for the first time they jointly founded an open Industry Board linked to the upcoming European research infrastructure for imaging “Euro-BioImaging”. The mission of the Board is to facilitate interaction between imaging industry and its academic users, enabling timely understanding of the users’ needs. This has potential to directly boost innovation in biomedical sciences and strengthen the position of companies which can respond faster to new developments on the market.

As a pan-European research infrastructure, Euro-BioImaging will be composed of imaging facilities, called Nodes, distributed throughout Europe. These facilities will open their doors to all life science researchers, granting access to state-of-the-art imaging instruments and hosting training activities.

“Imaging companies are very motivated to establish closer interaction with users and to contribute to training activities, ensuring the best use of instruments”, said Christoph Thumser (Leica), representing all companies as the first Chair of the Board. It is common understanding in the Industry Board that all other companies from the field of Bio-Imaging and Medical Imaging are welcome to join the Board.

All companies of the Industry Board agree, that the Euro-BioImaging Nodes are excellent test sites for novel instruments and technologies - their highly-skilled technical staff can evaluate robustness and technical operation of the instruments while working on a wide range of samples and research applications from visiting Euro-BioImaging users.

Plans for establishment of Euro-BioImaging came from the scientific community in Europe but are now adapted by governments of 17 European countries and EMBL, all of which are interested in its implementation and construction. It is expected that the first generation of Nodes is selected next year by countries, soon opening access to researchers.

Jan Ellenberg from EMBL, the scientific coordinator of Euro-BioImaging’s preparatory phase emphasized that “it is very important that researchers and imaging facility staff have a clear communication line to a wide range of companies in the field, because their ability to do research depends on the availability of suitable products, be it lenses, lasers or dyes, or large instruments like the most advanced super resolution or electron microscopes”.

“Only if this communication can efficiently function in both directions, researchers will have necessary tools and material to do cutting edge research.

The Board is therefore a very important tool for boosting innovation in biomedical research," Jan Ellenberg said.

With the formation of the official Board, companies have created a platform to officially interact with Euro-BioImaging, its users and technology providers. The Board is now actively inviting other Bio- and Medical- imaging companies to join this open initiative and participate in the imaging revolution in Europe.