Journal of
Synchrotron Radiation
ISSN 1600-5775

current events

This section carries events of interest to the synchrotron radiation community. Work for this section should be sent directly to the Current-Events Editors Friso van der Veen (friso.vanderveen@psi.ch) or Paul Zschack (pzschack@bnl.gov).

Diamond develops new facility for structural biology at European XFEL

UK scientists have formed a consortium, SFX, to build and operate a facility for structural biology experiments at the European X-ray Free Electron Laser (XFEL), in Hamburg, Germany. The international consortium SFX, which stands for Serial Femtosecond Crystallography, will enable researchers to analyse the structure of many biomolecules, such as proteins, cells or membranes. Using the short and intense pulses of light from XFEL, the SFX facility will capture snapshots of the arrangement of atoms within the biomolecules. Temporal structural changes within the biomolecules can thus be followed. The SFX consortium is chaired by James Naismith of the University of St Andrews and funded by the Wellcome Trust, the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) and the Medical Research Council (MRC), along with a number of European partners. The UK hub for scientists using SFX at the European XFEL will be based at Diamond, which will enable users of the SFX facility to properly prepare for their experiments in Hamburg.

Elettra opens a new IAEA facility

Elettra is opening to users a new X-ray fluorescence (XRF) facility constructed and operated jointly by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Elettra. The new facility was launched at the IAEA First Meeting of the Coordinated Research Project (CRP) on Experiments with Synchrotron Radiation for Modern Environmental and Industrial Applications, held on 21–25 July 2014. The research projects at the IAEA endstation at the XRF facility of Elettra comprise studies of structured materials for energy storage and conversion technologies, biosensing technologies and nanomedicine design, environmental monitoring, biology, cultural heritage and preventive conservation, food products safety and study of fundamental X-ray interactions and parameters.

Participants at the IAEA Meeting, Elettra, 21–25 July 2014.

New Director of the NSRRC

Shangjr (Felix) Gwo, Professor of Physics at National Tsing Hua University, has been appointed as the new Director of the National Synchrotron Radiation Research Center (NSRRC), Taiwan, effective 1 August 2014. Gwo is an experimental physicist and an experienced user of the NSRRC. In 2010 he was elected as the chair of the NSRRC User Executive Committee. His research focuses on scanning probe microscopy/spectroscopy, nanostructure physics, surface physics and molecular beam epitaxy of nitride semiconductors. He was named as one of the Ten Outstanding Youths in Taiwan in 2001 as well as the Outstanding Researchers from National Science Council in 2000 and 2004. Last year he was recognized as a 2013 Fellow of the American Physical Society. Director Gwo will lead the NSRRC in continuous development, innovation and international collaboration.

Diamond Light Source appoint new Chairman

Diamond Light Source has appointed Professor Sir Adrian Smith as its new Chairman. Sir Adrian, who takes over from Lord Alec Broers, is a distinguished statistician with current and former positions in government and a number of national institutions. From 2008 to 2012, Sir Adrian served as Director General for Science and Research at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), which followed on from his appointment in 1998 as Principal of Queen Mary University, London. Currently, Professor Smith holds the positions of Vice-Chancellor of the University of London and Deputy Chair of the UK Statistics Authority.

Sir Adrian commented, 'I am delighted to have this opportunity to contribute to the next phase of development of Diamond, maintaining and enhancing its position as a leading-edge scientific facility and ensuring that the knowledge generated at the facility is widely

Professor Sir Adrian Smith, Diamond's new Chairman (Image courtesy of Diamond Light Source.)

disseminated in academe and industry, and fully exploited for the wider public good'.

ESRF Council approves Phase II of the Upgrade Programme and Russia accesses the ESRF Convention

On 23 and 24 June 2014 the ESRF Council approved Phase II of the ESRF Upgrade Programme. Submitted to the council was a technical design study for a multibend achromat lattice of $\sim$150 pm rad emittance, roughly 30 times lower than is provided by the current lattice. The new lattice replaces the existing storage ring and preserves its circumference and beamline positions. Phase II also includes four new beamlines, scientific instrumentation for a new detector programme and IT for handling big data.

During the council meeting, the Protocol of Accession of the Russian Federation to the ESRF Convention was signed by Russia, represented by Mr V. Kaganov (Deputy Minister of Education and Science), and the member countries.

Appointment of SSRL Director

On 18 August 2014, SLAC Director Chi-Chang Kao announced the appointment of Kelly Gaffney, a faculty member in the SLAC Photon Science Department and a member of the Stanford–SLAC joint PULSE Institute, as the Director of the Stanford Synchrotron Radiation Lightsource. Kelly will officially start in his new position immediately.

A chemist by training, Kelly is one of the world's leading experts in using femtosecond X-ray pulses to study how chemical bonds are created and modified. Kelly focuses on how material, chemical or biological changes occur on very fast time scales, but the approach is one that can be used generally to study a wide range of processes with facilities such as SSRL and the Linac Coherent Light Source (LCLS), also at SLAC. Kelly will use his expertise to expand research programmes at SSRL, strengthen the connection with Stanford University, and develop a long-term upgrade strategy for the facility.

Kelly Gaffney, SSRL Director.