

Turku - Fraunhofer CML's new berth in Northern Europe

Fraunhofer Center for Maritime Logistics and Services CML



One technology focus of FIP-S2@Novia is maritime simulation. (© Heidi Pelander)

A new research platform established by Novia University of Applied Sciences and Fraunhofer CML develops intelligent maritime solutions for the needs of the Finnish Maritime Cluster in cooperation with TechCampus Turku and companies in the field.

Hamburg, June 17, 2021. The applied research and product development of the Finnish Maritime Cluster will be diversified with the start-up of the new intelligent maritime **Fraunhofer Innovation Platform for Smart Shipping at Novia University of Applied Sciences FIP-S2@Novia** on Aboa Mare, Novia's maritime campus, in June. Mirva Salokorpi from Novia, one of the two directors of FIP-S2@Novia, is enthusiastic about this new development in the Finnish innovation field. "Fraunhofer CML is one of the leading maritime research centres in Europe and globally. They have extensive networks, a large number of business partners and the ability to make strong applications for EU funding." Fraunhofer CML is part of the Fraunhofer Gesellschaft. It is the strongest applied research organisation in Europe, with more than 75 institutes specialising in various fields of technology in Germany and a global cooperation network.

The other director of FIP-S2@Novia, Hans-Christoph Burmeister from Fraunhofer CML, has cooperated with Novia for years. He is impressed with Finland's strong and innovative maritime cluster and the willingness of companies to invest in research and product development. "In addition, the Finnish government and authorities have a positive attitude towards the development of autonomous shipping, for example, which makes the country interesting to us." The new research platform combines Fraunhofer CML's technology expertise with Novia's seafaring experience. According to Salokorpi, only a few research organisations in the world can take into account both the user and the technology to such an extensive degree.

Testing, product development and simulations

The new research platform will focus on research, product development and testing related to intelligent maritime technologies. Its focuses also include maritime simulations, a field in which both Novia and Fraunhofer CML have strong expertise. "In cooperation with Fraunhofer CML, we are developing the European Maritime Simulator Network EMSN for training and research. We will use the network for research projects," Salokorpi explains. Digital twins are the third theme of FIP-S2@Novia. Digital twins are virtual copies of a ship or part of a ship that can be used to examine the operation of various systems, for example, or energy consumption.

The research platform cooperates with the University of Turku, Åbo Akademi University and Turku University of Applied Sciences. Burmeister from Fraunhofer CML is pleased to see that all the universities in the region want to be involved. "A local research and product development ecosystem for autonomous shipping plays a role in the new Fraunhofer Innovation Platform."

Applied research in cooperation with companies

Salokorpi emphasises that the new platform focuses on applied research and cooperates with companies within the Finnish Maritime Cluster. She is aware of a number of companies that want to start cooperation immediately. Meyer Turku is one of these companies. According to Mika Heiskanen, Head of Production, cooperation in research and product development with various operators is important in ensuring that Meyer and its partners will continue to meet the requirements of the cruise industry.

“The only way to ensure that we are at the forefront of technology expertise is to promote our industry by networking openly.” Heiskanen believes that Meyer’s future cooperation with the research platform will be related to the automation of cruise ships and the digitisation of products. He thinks that the local platform can also offer opportunities for the companies of the Finnish Maritime Cluster to cooperate with other institutes of the Fraunhofer Gesellschaft.

Towards a long-term research cooperation

The new research platform will start operation under a five-year agreement. According to Burmeister, the platform’s level of success in establishing its position in the field of applied research will be assessed towards the end of the agreement. He hopes that there will be a team of 10–15 researchers working for FIP-S2@Novia in five years’ time.

According to Salokorpi, the five-year goals of FIP-S2@Novia include the accumulation of an extensive project portfolio, visibility in Europe and active cooperation with companies within the Finnish Maritime Cluster. She hopes that the platform will establish itself in Turku in the long term. “There is a clear need for this. There is no reason to believe that enthusiasm for technological development in the maritime industry will subside.” The arrival of the Fraunhofer Gesellschaft in Finland is a joint effort of the City of Turku and the local universities under TechCampus Turku. The project took two years of preparation.



One of the people behind the project is Juhani Soini, Vice Rector of Turku University of Applied Sciences. He says this is major news in Finnish innovation policy as a whole. “The platform will diversify applied research and networks in the public sector.” According to Niko Kynnäräinen, Director of Business and Economic Development at the City of Turku, the long negotiations show that Fraunhofer does not establish new research cooperations on light grounds. “Fraunhofer is a global leader in research, and is involved in major hubs for expertise around the world. This will place Turku on the world map.”

The international intertwined finish and German maritime industry was also the motivation for Prof. Dr. Carlos Jahn, Head of Fraunhofer CML in Hamburg. “FIP-S2@Novia allows us to mirror these connections also in the research domain and thus to establish Fraunhofer as a holistic maritime digitalization partner in Norther Europe”.

Fraunhofer CML



The Fraunhofer Center for Maritime Logistics and Services CML develops innovative solutions for the maritime sector and the maritime supply chain. We support companies and institutions from shipping, port management and logistics in initiating and implementing future-oriented technologies and processes.

Contact: Hans-Christoph Burmeister, Fraunhofer CML, Tel. +49 40 42878 6131, hans-christoph.burmeister@cml.fraunhofer.de

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Novia UAS is a modern high class University of Applied Sciences (UAS) with campuses located in four cities in Finland. We offer high quality practice-



oriented higher education at both Bachelor's and Master's levels as well as further education in Swedish and English.

Contact: Mirva Salokorpi, Novia University of Applied Sciences, Tel. +358 44 762 3532, Mirva.Salokorpi@novia.fi

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Fraunhofer Center for Maritime Logistics and Services
CML
Am Schwarzenberg-Campus 4, Gebäude D
21073 Hamburg
Germany

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Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft
zur Förderung der angewandten Forschung e.V.
Hansastraße 27 c
80686 München
Internet: www.fraunhofer.de
E-Mail: [info\(at\)zv.fraunhofer.de](mailto:info(at)zv.fraunhofer.de)

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