

PRESS RELEASE

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Andreas Tünnermann honored with Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany

Director of Fraunhofer IOF honored for scientific and social commitment

Weimar (Germany)

Andreas Tünnermann, Director of the Fraunhofer Institute for Applied Optics and Precision Engineering IOF and the Institute for Applied Physics at Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena, has been awarded the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany for his scientific and social commitment.

The Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany is the highest recognition awarded by the Federal Republic of Germany for services to the common good. It is awarded for political, economic-social and intellectual achievements. On behalf of Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, the insignia was officially presented today by Thuringia's Minister President Bodo Ramelow at the Weimarahalle in Weimar.

"Prof. Dr. Tünnermann is not only an outstanding researcher, but also a role model for future generations of scientists," explained the Minister President. "He has made a significant contribution to making Germany a leading location for research and innovation in the field of photonics and quantum technologies. And he has improved the framework conditions for securing and further developing one of the most important centers of the optical industry in Germany."

For Andreas Tünnermann, the award is a very special recognition: "It is a great honor and an extraordinary sign of appreciation for me to be recognized with such a high award. With this special honor, I also see numerous people recognized who have inspired and supported me in the development and implementation of ideas in research and teaching. My sincere thanks go to them."

The order was presented in recognition of his overall achievements in research and science, including his success in acquiring third-party funding, academic publications, and supervised theses. Prof. Tünnermann's successes in the development of international degree programs and his commitment to political consulting and scientific network development in Germany as a research location were also taken into account.

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Internationally renowned researcher and science manager

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Andreas Tünnermann discovered his passion for lasers while studying physics in Hanover. He quickly became head of the development department at the Laser Zentrum Hannover after completing his doctorate in 1992. It was the start of a career that he continued in Thuringia from 1998. Here in Jena, he acquired the title of Professor of Applied Physics and with it the directorship of the Institute of Applied Physics at the Friedrich-Schiller-Universität in Jena. In 2003, he became also director of the Fraunhofer Institute for Applied Optics and Precision Engineering IOF.

Andreas Tünnermann's work is characterized by innovation and groundbreaking research. Numerous pioneering projects were initiated under his leadership. The main focus was on practical applications in the fields of medicine, communication and industry.

Particular milestones in his career were the founding and establishment of the Abbe School of Photonics and the Max Planck School of Photonics. Here, young talents from all over the world receive a first-class education and research opportunities in the field of photonics. Prof. Tünnermann has thus paved the way for a large number of young researchers to enter science: to date, he has supervised a total of six habilitations, almost 120 doctorates and over 100 diploma, bachelor's and master's theses.

Quantum communication as a secure form of data exchange in the digital society of the future is another field that Andreas Tünnermann is striving to establish. With his research, he is making a significant contribution to helping this technology achieve a breakthrough. His expertise has therefore been incorporated into the agenda for photonics and quantum systems of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

As a member of the Federal Chancellery's Expert Council on Quantum Computing and the Scientific and Technical Council of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, Andreas Tünnermann continues to champion the complex scientific cause and has actively contributed to making Germany a leading location for research and innovation in the field of photonics and quantum technologies.

Andreas Tünnermann was awarded the Order of Merit of the Free State of Thuringia in 2011. He was also awarded the ERC Advanced Grant by the European Research Council in 2015 and the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Prize by the German Research Foundation in 2005.

Prof. Tünnermann celebrated his 60th birthday in 2023. You can read a review of his career also here in a two-part [interview](#).

FRAUNHOFER INSTITUTE FOR APPLIED OPTICS AND PRECISION ENGINEERING IOF**About Fraunhofer IOF**

The Fraunhofer Institute for Applied Optics and Precision Engineering IOF in Jena conducts application-oriented research in the field of photonics and develops innovative optical systems for controlling light - from its generation and manipulation to its application. The institute's range of services covers the entire photonic process chain from opto-mechanical and opto-electronic system design to the production of customer-specific solutions and prototypes. At Fraunhofer IOF, about 500 employees work on the annual research volume of 40 million euros.

For more information about Fraunhofer IOF, please visit: www.iof.fraunhofer.de

Press photos

Press photos of the ceremony are available for download from the Thuringian State Chancellery at the following link: <https://s.fhg.de/TSK-Dropbox>

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