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Tactiq collaborate in new cancer imaging project with groundbreaking technology.

Tactiq has a key role in a new UK collaboration which has been awarded a £325k grant from the UK's Technology Strategy Board, to support the development of a groundbreaking Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT) imaging technology that hopes to revolutionise cancer diagnosis and treatment.

The collaboration is between Tactiq, optical imaging company Michelson Diagnostics, University of Cardiff, Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, National Physical Laboratory and semiconductor specialist Kamelian. Tactiq are an ISO13485 embedded systems development consultancy with specialist knowledge and experience developing medical imaging systems.

The funded project, titled 'OMICRON', will last two years, and will focus on development of an in-vivo imaging probe, using OCT, to obtain high resolution sub-surface images of cancerous tissue, operating at the new, untried wavelength of 1µm.

Leading OCT researcher Professor Wolfgang Drexler, Director of Research at the University of Cardiff Dept. of Optometry and Vision Science, said "We believe that images acquired at 1µm wavelength will offer improved contrast and resolution that will help clinicians to distinguish between healthy and cancerous tissue".

Clinicians frequently take biopsy samples of tissue for laboratory analysis by pathologists when diagnosing, assessing, treating and monitoring cancer. This can be inefficient, expensive and time-consuming. The biopsy may be poorly targeted on the tumour, and results from the analysis can take weeks to come back.

Dr Nick Stone, Head of Biophotonics at Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, added "OCT scanning has the exciting potential of both guiding and reducing the dependence on biopsies, which could speed up cancer diagnosis and treatment, reducing the pressure on overloaded pathology departments, and improve outcomes from cancer surgery".

Vincent Ellis, Sales and Marketing Manager of Tactiq said "We are very proud to be part of this world class collaboration developing this ground breaking technology into products which will have a major positive impact on cancer patient diagnosis and treatment."

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Tactiq are an ISO13485 embedded systems product development consultancy offering systems, software, electronics and user interface development services for demanding applications to clients ranging from small technology companies to global blue chip corporations. One area of specialist knowledge is in medical imaging systems ranging from gamma ray to visible light. Tactiq's expertise and partnership approach dramatically reduce the risk of clients' product innovation.

Web: www.tactiq.co.uk

Michelson Diagnostics Ltd
Michelson Diagnostics Ltd is the UK's leading independent manufacturer and developer of Optical Coherence Tomography medical imaging equipment. Founded in 2006, it is based in SE London, UK. The company's highly innovative optical probe technology offers the best available sub-surface OCT images for cancer surgery guidance, surveillance and diagnostic applications.

Web: www.michelsondiagnostics.co.uk

Cardiff University – Biomedical Imaging Group
Wolfgang Drexler is a Link Chair Professor of Biomedical Imaging and Head of the Biomedical Imaging Group at the School of Optometry and Vision Sciences at Cardiff University, Wales, UK. This group's research plans involve multidisciplinary research collaborations across a wide range of disciplines to develop in vivo three-dimensional sub-cellular, molecular and functional imaging technology that is of significant diagnostic value.

Web:www.cf.ac.uk/optom/contactsandpeople/academicstaff/drexler-wolfgang-prof-overview.html
and www.cf.ac.uk/optom/research/researchgroups/biomedicalimaging/index.html

Gloucester Royal Hospital
The Biophotonics Research Unit at Gloucester Royal Hospital, led by Dr Nick Stone, have been pioneering the clinical use of light for both treatment and diagnosis of early cancers. Numerous early cancers have been studied using optical diagnostic techniques including OCT (at 1300 nm), and the complimentary spectroscopies of Raman and FTIR. The greatest strength is working at the clinical interface with multidisciplinary teams made up of surgeons, scientists and pathologists.

NPL is the United Kingdom's national standards laboratory, an internationally respected and independent centre of excellence in research, development and knowledge transfer in measurement and materials science. For more than a century we have developed and maintained the nation's primary measurement standards - the heart of an infrastructure designed to ensure accuracy, consistency and innovation in physical measurement.

Web: www.npl.co.uk

Kamelian products are marketed by Amphotonix, which specialises in the design and manufacture of advanced III-V photonic components focussing on semiconductor optical amplifiers (SOAs) and broadband light sources (SLDs).

Web: www.kamelian.com

UK Technology Strategy Board
The Technology Strategy Board is an executive non-departmental public body (NDPB), established by the Government through the DTI. Its task, operating across all important sectors of the UK economy, is to stimulate innovation in those areas which offer the greatest scope for boosting UK growth and productivity.

Web: www.berr.gov.uk/innovation/technologystrategyboard/index.html