

# PRESS RELEASE

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**PRESS RELEASE**

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## Future of flying being developed in Kamenz

### Fraunhofer IWS is founding member of the new competence center for autonomous and electric flying

**(Dresden, September 24, 2020) Commercial drones and air cabs will soon no longer be mere fantasies of the future. In order to bring new ideas for tomorrow's aviation to life, numerous partners together with the city of Kamenz as well as international companies and institutions founded the "Kompetenzzentrum autonomes und elektrisches Fliegen". The aim is to create the framework conditions for field trials and extensive testing in this region. The Fraunhofer Institute for Material and Beam Technology IWS participates as a founding member.**

The commercial airfield in Kamenz is the new location for the "Kompetenzzentrum autonomes und elektrisches Fliegen". There, a network of international partners bundles its expertise in electric and hybrid propulsion systems. In addition to the city of Kamenz, this includes Fraunhofer institutes, universities, more than 20 companies from a wide range of industries, as well as partners in Thuringia, Brandenburg, France, Poland and the Czech Republic. Thematic focuses are battery and hydrogen technology, swarm applications, data transmission and security as well as autonomous navigation using artificial intelligence. As a founding member, Fraunhofer IWS participates in the initiative with next generation batteries that will feature an increased energy density and will provide the link to the battery center Dresden.

### Investments of EUR 1.3 million planned

A further objective of the competence center is to create the framework conditions for further companies and institutions to settle in Kamenz. In the period from 2020 to 2021, investments of 1.3 million euros are planned for the site. These investments shall flow into the construction of a hangar especially for the development and production of commercial drones as well as for autonomous and electric flying, into the set-up of the real laboratory and the conversion of the tower into an innovation and seminar center. As of the middle of next year, the infrastructural framework is to be fully available.

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## **AEF.aero coordinates and ensures acceptance**

Networking in the competence center is coordinated by the non-profit organization under the label AEF.aero, which aims at strengthening the regional economy and establishing new branches of industry as a supporting element in the planned structural change of the region. In addition to joint participation in national and international trade fairs, the initiative is also committed to attracting young professionals. Furthermore, the topics of autonomous flying, the expansion of a nationwide 5G network and the use of drones in daily life require extensive and objective communication with the people in the region. Suitable communication measures should increase the acceptance of these issues among the population.

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## **About the competence center**

The non-profit organization under the label AEF.aero coordinates the networking activities around the "Competence Center for Autonomous and Electric Flying", which is being established at the commercial airfield in Kamenz. More than 20 partners from the private and public sectors are involved in the network, which exclusively and directly pursues charitable purposes, in particular through research, development and prototype production in the field of autonomous and electric flying. To achieve these goals, it cooperates with national and international organizations. The competence center aims at strengthening Saxony as a location for business and science, participating in the process of structural change in Lusatia, and creating and maintaining jobs. To this end, the network will be intensively expanded, projects at state, federal and European level will be initiated and the establishment of start-ups and companies shall be supported. In this way, the network is to contribute to bringing together different industries in order to expand the development of the circular economy in manned and unmanned aviation. In addition, AEF.aero intends to participate in the development of proposals for the future regulation and standardization of unmanned and electrified aircraft and to increase their acceptance by the public.

Further information: [www.aef.aero](http://www.aef.aero)