

# European interregional collaboration on thin-film PV

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Imec and its partners in the Solliance initiative announce that they have launched, together with the Institute of Materials Research of the University of Hasselt (IMO), the Solar Flare Interreg Project. Solar Flare is co-funded by the European Union and the regional governments and supports regional projects in the Eindhoven-Leuven region that focus on the development of thin-film solar energy with higher efficiency and lower cost.

Large-scale development and application of [solar energy](#) is one of the focus points in the European Climate policy and the EU 2020 strategy. The [Solar Flare](#) project aims at reducing the cost of solar energy by developing a thin-film PV technology as possible future alternative to the prevailing Si PV technology. To make thin-film PV a viable alternative to Si PV, the efficiencies of [thin-film solar cells](#), which are currently around 13% for modules, should approximate the efficiencies of today's mainstream Si PV modules of around 17%.

The Solar Flare project stimulates innovation and networking within the region, to promote the development of CIGS and alternative thin-film technologies which are based on [novel materials](#), and of generic technologies that are vital to any thin film PV industry such as transparent conductive layers are being investigated. This type of surfaces must enable niche-applications such as solar cells integrated in windows, where not only cost but also aesthetic arguments and response to indirect light play an important role. In order to estimate the potential for local industries to develop thin film PV technologies, a specific Cost

of Ownership model for TF-PV will be developed and used.

"Solar Energy will undoubtedly keep on playing an important role in the EU2020 strategy. To strengthen the position of our local industry in this global market, cross-border collaboration is essential. We therefore will keep on supporting open innovation in the region," says Monique Swinnen, Deputy of the province of Vlaams-Brabant (Flanders) and member of the steering group Interreg Flanders-The Netherlands.

The project runs within the framework of Solliance, an initiative to leverage the complementarities of the Solliance partners and strengthen the competitive position of the Eindhoven-Leuven-Aachen triangle (ELAT region) as a relevant player on the global thin-film PV market. Solliance creates synergy among more than 250 researchers. Within Solliance, research programs of the different research groups are aligned, state-of-the-art infrastructure is shared, and close cooperation with the solar business community is assured.

The Solar Flare interregional project is funded by the European Union, Interreg Flanders-Netherlands, Ministry of Economical Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation (The Netherlands), and the provinces of North Brabant (The Netherlands) and Flemish Brabant and Limburg (Belgium). Partners within the Solar Flare project are ECN, TNO, [imec](#), Holst Centre, TU/e and the University of Hasselt/IMO.

Provided by IMEC

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