

Professor Justin Wark: Response to STFC Announcement

The recent announcement by STFC concerning the New Light Source, XFEL, and the Photon Science Research Institute is a serious setback for those of us who are convinced that XUV and X-ray FELs hold forth the potential to revolutionize many areas of science, with high impact in areas of evident scientific and economic impact to the UK. Clearly the major reason behind this extremely regrettable outcome is the current appalling financial situation.

I fully agree with Professor Jon Marangos, leader of the NLS project, who states on the NLS website that more than ever it is now vitally important to maintain UK momentum in FEL science and the highest priority in the short term must be devoted to establishing strong UK groups participating in FEL research at the existing international facilities; FLASH, LCLS and (from 2015) XFEL as well as other developing FEL projects in Europe and Japan. Over the coming weeks and months we will be exploring with both STFC and the other research councils how such momentum may be maintained.

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