

# PRESS RELEASE

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**Award for many years of commitment**

## Two SVC Distinguished Presenter Awards for representatives of the Fraunhofer IST

**Within the framework of this year's conference of the Society of Vacuum Coaters (SVC TechCon 2024), the two long-standing employees of the Fraunhofer Institute for Surface Engineering and Thin Films IST, Dr. Ralf Bandorf and Dr. Volker Sittinger, were honored with the "Distinguished Presenter Award", which was conferred for the very first time. The award honors individuals who have enriched the SVC technical program through sustainable contributions towards the advancement of vacuum coating, surface engineering and related technologies.**

The prerequisites for being honored with the Distinguished Presenter Award are stringent: ten SVC conferences with a poster contribution or presentation, participation in five consecutive SVC conferences, and a minimum of five years' membership of the Society of Vacuum Coaters (SVC) prior to nomination. In the almost 70-year history of the SVC, only the seven award winners have been able to fulfill the criteria for the newly introduced award – including no fewer than two representatives of the Fraunhofer IST.

For more than 15 years, Ralf Bandorf and Volker Sittinger have been members of the SVC, and they have been actively involved in its organization and further development for almost as long. Both emphasize that the SVC TechCon is one of the most important conferences in which they participate every year. "The SVC TechCon not only offers me a platform for scientific exchange, but has also made a very practical contribution towards the development of project partnerships," explained Volker Sittinger, Head of the "Diamond-based systems and CleanTech" department. His colleague Ralf Bandorf, Group Leader for "Optical-Electrical Systems", added: "Many topics of my daily work at the Fraunhofer IST can be applied within the SVC network. As a result of the existing contacts, international knowledge exchange and collaborative research are considerably easier. In particular, the industrial focus is an ideal complement to the application-oriented research at Fraunhofer, and offers numerous synergies."

The two scientists are delighted with the award. "For me, the SVC is like a family within the vacuum community. It is a privilege to be part of this international community and to have made a significant contribution towards its further development. For this reason, the award is also a special honor for me," explained Dr. Bandorf.

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Dr. Sittinger is also proud of the recognition of the work that he has accomplished over the years: "It is a good feeling to see that personal commitment is recognized and appreciated, and I accept the award on behalf of my entire team, with whom I am privileged to work."

For the future, both scientists hope that they can maintain and further expand their existing contacts. Furthermore, they want to continue to play an active role in shaping the SVC and to encourage young colleagues in particular to become actively involved. Dr. Sittinger summarized: "We hope that we can continue to contribute towards the development of exciting technologies in the future and that our work will help to make the world a better place. There is still so much to discover and improve – and I am looking forward to that."

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The award winners Dr. Volker Sittinger (left) and Dr. Ralf Bandorf after the presentation of the Distinguished Presenter Award. © Fraunhofer IST, Holger Gerdes

The Fraunhofer Institute for Surface Engineering and Thin Films IST is an innovative partner for research and development in surface technology, with expertise in the associated product and production systems. The aim is to develop customized and sustainable solutions: from prototypes, through economic production scenarios, to upscaling to industrial magnitudes – and all this whilst maintaining closed material and substance cycles. The Fraunhofer IST is one of the seventy-six institutes of the Fraunhofer Society, Europe's leading research organization.