During a time when access to information and connectivity has been more important than ever, light science and technology is providing efficient and affordable solutions to current global challenges.

On 16 May 2020, we celebrated the International Day of Light and the light-based technologies that drive cleaner energy, sustainable farming, high-speed connectivity and better diagnostics and treatments.

"The best thing we can do is put our confidence in scientists and engineers who work with light and in many other areas of science to develop solutions to the many challenges we are facing, and to guide us towards a brighter future."

John Dudley
International Day of Light Steering Committee Chair
Université Bourgogne Franche-Comté, France
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were 25% less events registered through lightday.org compared to 2019. 83% of the events held globally on 16 May were online/virtual activities. The projected participant number is based on both virtual events that took place as well as both in-person and virtual events that have been postponed to later in the year and are still planning to take place as of June 2020.

The celebration of #IDL2020 and #SEETHELIGHT reached:

- **400,000** Social media impressions
- **69** Countries with registered events and **750,000** Projected participants*
- **41,000** views of lightday.org in May 2020 (Up 44% compared to 2019)
- **9,500** Hashtag uses (Up 29% on Twitter compared to 2019)
- **150,000** LightDay.org impressions on Google
- **250** Online news articles (Up 14% compared to 2019)
- **1,800** views of the articles on lightday.org

*Views by Country:
- USA (20%)
- India (16%)
- UK (6%)
- Italy (5%)
- Germany (5%)
- China (4%)
- Brazil (3%)
- Spain (2%)
- Mexico (2%)
- Canada (2%)
- Other (35%)

#IDL2020 was used 30% more in May 2020 than #IDL2019 in all of 2019.
#SEETHELIGHT was a video message released on 13 May on social media.

There were 30,000 views by 25 May 2020.
Parallel with four themes in the video are four articles from leaders in the field. These pieces describe the role of light and how light drives cleaner energy, sustainable farming, high-speed connectivity and better diagnostics and treatments.

The authors include Nobel Laureate Donna Strickland, University of Waterloo, Canada; Juergen Popp and Ute Neugebauer, Leibniz Institute of Photonic Technology e.V. Jena, Germany; Cather Simpson, University of Auckland, New Zealand; and Imrana Ashraf, Quaid-i-Azam University, Pakistan.

The following are excerpts from each of the pieces available at lightday.org/seethelight.

In the field of infectious disease — a topic that is very much in focus in our current COVID-19 world — light-based technologies have already made an enormous impact with optical microscopy and PCR testing. The next five to ten years could see new techniques start to take hold that optimize the accuracy, cost, and speed of diagnostics. And with better diagnostics comes better treatment, including a greater push towards personalized medicine.

The applications of photonics in agriculture is a small window into the amazing capabilities of light and its boundless ability to solve humanity’s problems. It can be harnessed as an energy source, a sensor, and a tool to increase food production and the sustainability of farming. Including the birth of the laser 60 years ago, history has shown time and time again that light can be used to make the world a better place, one innovation at a time. It’s up to us to see that science — and the science of light, specifically — is a source of hope for us to inspire future innovations.

Light contains infinite possibilities for science and technologies that can transform our world. It has the power to generate clean, renewable solar energy for all, even for those living in remote or poverty-stricken areas. In combination with more efficient lightbulbs, it paves the way for greater access to education, safer city streets, and a healthier population who doesn’t have to rely on burning dangerous fuels. And the positive impact of these changes on the environment can even be measured using light.

Optical fiber is what enables wireless communication, which has become one of the most important mediums of transmission of information between devices. In this technology, electromagnetic waves transmit information through the air without requiring any cable or wires or other conducting materials.
HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GRASSROOTS CELEBRATION

309 events in 69 countries around 16 May. 50 community videos received from 30 countries with over 22,000 views.
In 2021, the International Day of Light will continue to be an annual, public-facing focal point for the continued appreciation of light and the role it plays in science, culture and art, education, and sustainable development, and in fields as diverse as medicine, communications, and energy.

In order to expand the reach of the International Day of Light, #LightDay2021 and #SEETHELIGHT, we ask all partners and interested parties to schedule events, share content and explore new opportunities. You can reach us at seethelight@lightday.org

John Dudley
Chair

Bethany Downer
Secretariat

THANK YOU

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