

General

Preface October 2018

Each month our CEO reflects on the events in his (professional) life and discusses some of the articles featured in the magazine. This month he talks about the trendy side of technology and how imec can help companies to go from an idea to a high-volume product.

“At SuperNova we presented our one-stop ‘innovation’ shop under the slogan ‘We set your innovation in motion’. As we are a research center, companies do not always realize that we can also guide their innovations, from idea to high-volume product. But the fact that we are a research center actually has many advantages.”

At the end of September I was able to speak at SuperNova, a tech festival in Antwerp. This can be seen as the Tomorrowland of technology, not only because of the trendy way in which technology is presented – with different pavilions, a panorama bridge, 200 interactive demos, etc. – but also literally: you can go and see what tomorrow will look like. With a robot that makes cocktails, a flying car, a 3D printer that makes 3D selfies, the port of the future in 360°-projection, a 3D-printed dress made of a swarm of drones, and more besides.

Although imec also likes to look toward the future, we had a different focus at SuperNova: presenting our one-stop ‘innovation’ shop. As we are a research center, companies do not always realize that we can also guide their innovations. Yet we have various groups in our center who are perfectly placed to do this. For the development and refinement of a product or service idea, for example, there is imec.livinglabs. Among other things, this specializes in user research and rapid prototyping to quickly test an idea or prototype with a target group. Because what use is your idea if no one is interested in it? Furthermore there is imec Taiwan – this month we celebrated their 10th birthday during ITF Taiwan – to transform an idea into a product. From its location at the heart of the Taiwanese electronics industry, we have built up a unique network, and can help companies to make prototypes, or market-ready products, in whatever volume. Finally, we can make customized microchips for a particular application thanks to our expertise and extensive network in the global chip industry. And if you work with a research center, you also benefit from the very latest technologies and a high degree of flexibility, both in terms of technology, and in terms of product volumes and partnership models.

In this edition of imec magazine, we look once again at some examples of many new technologies, including an ultra-small microscope that fits on a chip, a robot that maps out surroundings ‘on the fly’, an approach that makes DNA sequencing even more user-friendly for doctors, optical transceivers that can handle over 400Gb/s (important for the data centers of the future), and solar cells that consist of 2 ‘flavors’. Happy reading!

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