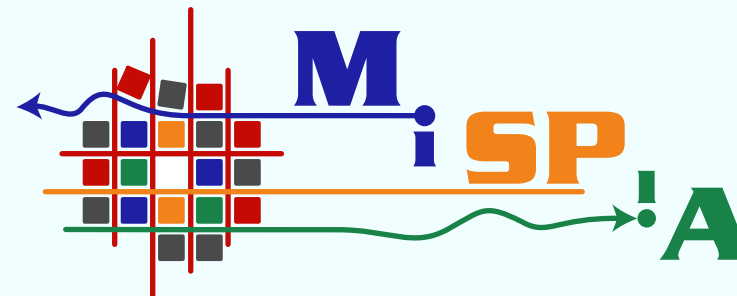


Project Partners

-  Politecnico di Milano, IT
-  Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft zur Foerderung der angewandten Forschung e.V, DE
-  Heriot-Watt University, UK
-  Micro Photon Devices s.r.l., IT
-  Centro Ricerche FIAT scpa, IT
-  EMZA Visual Sense LTD, IL
-  CF Consulting Finanziamenti Unione Europea s.r.l., IT



Microelectronic Single-Photon 3D Imaging Arrays for low-light high-speed Safety and Security Applications

Contact

Name: Prof. Zappa Franco

Tel: +39 02 2399 6149

Fax: +39 02 2399 3699

E-mail: franco.zappa@polimi.it

Affiliation and Address:

PolIMI - Politecnico di Milano
DEI - Dip. Elettronica e Informazione
Piazza Leonardo da Vinci 32
I-20133 Milan - ITALY

www.mispia.eu

MiSP!A consortium consists of 7 partners, who are among the leading European research groups in the fields of SPAD arrays and single-photon instrumentation (Politecnico di Milano, Italy), CMOS sensors fabrication and advanced SOI processes (Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft zur Foerderung der angewandten Forschung e.V, Germany), design and fabrication of micro-lens arrays (Heriot-Watt University, United Kingdom), development of time-correlated single-photon counting detection modules and cameras (Micro Photon Devices s.r.l., Italy), safety applications in automotive field (Centro Ricerche Fiat scpa, Italy), then a leader in the security surveillance monitoring (EMZA Visual Sense Ltd, Israel) and finally CF consulting srl (Italy) with vast experience in the management and dissemination of European projects.

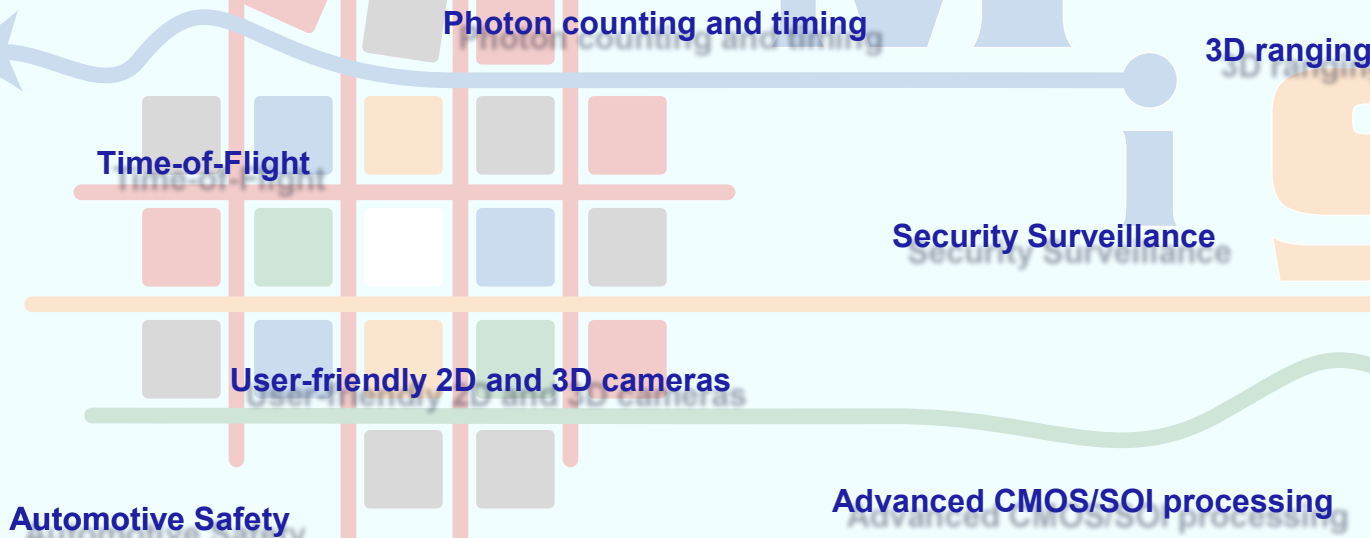


Grant agreement no: 257646
01.06.2010 — 31.05.2013
Information and Communications Technologies
Seventh Framework Programme



Single-Photon Avalanche Diode SPAD

Arrays of smart-pixels



MiSPIA idea is to develop advanced micro-electronic SPAD array chips able not only to count single photons (“single-photon counting”), but also to accurately tag them with their arrival time (“single-photon timing”) and so provide a full image (“single-photon imaging”) of the object under investigation. Therefore, MiSPIA aims to conceive, develop and fabricate photonic and microelectronic technologies for cost-effective manufacturing of very fast, highly sensitive, two-dimensional (2D) and three-dimensional (3D) SPAD cameras running at higher speed than standard video-rate.

Context

MiSPIA will develop beyond state-of-the-art photonics technology for array imagers of smart-pixels able to detect single photons. Intelligent in-pixel pre-processing will simultaneously provide ultra high sensitivity (single-photon level), very high frame-rate (up to 200,000fps) and advanced multi-spectral (300-900nm) three-dimensional (3D) distance ranging and two-dimensional (2D) imaging of fast moving objects. MiSPIA detectors will be used in two key applications: long-range (200-1,000m) 2D and 3D active identification in low light level surveillance operations; and very fast (over 200fps) short-range (10-50m) 3D monitoring in automotive pre-crash safety systems. Instead of (slow and noisy) CCDs and CMOS active pixels (with poor sensitivity and noisy electronics), MiSPIA will exploit the ultimate performances of truly-single photon detectors: the Single-Photon Avalanche Diodes (SPAD). MiSPIA imagers will be based on four different SPAD smart-pixels: “photon-counting” pixels for 2D imaging; LIDAR pixels for 3D direct “time-of-flight” (dTOF); two different phase-sensitive pixels for 3D indirect time-of-flight (iTOF) depth acquisitions. Full-size imager chips will be manufactured, characterized and eventually integrated into two 3D ranging cameras deployed into the two end-users applications for validation. MiSPIA technologies will be both highly-advanced and cost-effective: a high-voltage 0.35 μm CMOS processing for front-side illuminated imagers; and a new flipped-chip Silicon-on-Insulator (SOI) CMOS technology for back-side illuminated imagers. Both will prove beyond state-of-the-art co-integration of photonic SPAD detectors and CMOS microelectronics for intelligent and dense 2D imaging and 3D ranging high-performance cameras. Such cameras will provide imaging at the quantum limit and on-chip pre-processing at the most effective speed and a drastic reduction of manufacturing costs, down to 5€ per imager chip.

Project objectives

MiSPIA aims at two clearly identified 3D applications: high frame-rate, short-range (10-50m) 3D ranging systems for automotive prompt intervention for front- and back- pre-crash safety systems; and multi-spectral long-range (200-1,000m) 3D ranging systems for security surveillance. In the automotive field, moving or standing objects/obstacles to detect are vehicles, bicycle, pedestrian, small objects (trees, poles, etc.). Possible preventive or protective actions will be pre-crash warning (e.g. an acoustic warning signal), collision mitigation, pre-tensioning of safety belts, pre-setting of air bags.

- ◆ Single Photon Avalanche Diode smart-pixels with “in-pixel intelligence”
- ◆ Front-side illuminated array chips (FrontSPAD)
- ◆ 3D ranging modules based on FrontSPAD arrays
- ◆ Back-side illuminated array chips (BackSPAD)
- ◆ Assembly and test of the BackSPAD imager
- ◆ Integration of the 3D camera into short-range high speed Safety applications
- ◆ Integration of the 3D multi-spectral camera into long-range Security application