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# Organ-on-a-Chip Focused Strategic Partnership (OrChESTRA)

#### **Deliverable D5.5**

Outreach activities reports – 2

# **Work Package 5**

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#### 1 Introduction

This document presents the second report on Task 5.3 – Outreach, covering activities delivered between M19 (01 March 2024) and M36 (31 August 2025). Building on D5.4, it was aimed to increase the visibility of ODTÜ MEMS and OrChESTRA among industry, academia, students, and the wider public. Activities comprised stakeholder visits and one-to-one meetings, Students' Days, Professionals' Days, and open-door events.

The outreach was designed for two-way engagement: to showcase infrastructure and capabilities, and to gather stakeholders needs and opportunities that can inform future collaboration and skills development. The sections that follow outline the approach and audiences, provide a detailed account of the activities and their reach, and summarise the outcomes and lessons learned.

### **2** OUTREACH ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED

During M19–M36, outreach activities were delivered to increase the visibility of ODTÜ MEMS and to promote organ-on-chip and related microfluidics applications across sectors.

### 2.1 Visits to Local Stakeholders and One-to-One Meetings

As part of ODTÜ MEMS's ambition to serve as a hub for microfluidics and organ-on-chip in Türkiye, a targeted programme of stakeholder engagements was conducted, including onsite meetings at ODTÜ MEMS and visits to stakeholder premises. Each engagement aimed to match stakeholder needs (cleanroom access and services, microfabrication and sensor development, OoC use-cases, funding/consortia), turning meetings into concrete entry points to the hub.

Over the period, 94 engagements were conducted: 48 with businesses/private R&D centres, 19 with public bodies/regulators, 18 with universities and research institutes, and 9 with international partners. This distribution reflects deliberate hub-building: strong industry outreach to translate capabilities into collaboration, sustained dialogue with public entities to align with national priorities, and continuous academic exchange to support knowledge sharing.

Topics prioritised microfluidics and OoC: assay development and biosensing in microfluidic chips (incl. body-fluid analytes and food/agri applications), rapid test platforms for customs/security and forensic workflows, cleanroom-based microfabrication and packaging for microfluidic devices, and imaging/flow analysis integrated with chip experiments. Complementary areas addressed stakeholder demand in infrared/optical sensing (cameras, drones, spectrometry), inertial sensing, RF-MEMS hardware, semiconductor/cleanroom services, and aerospace/transport subsystems. Typical outcomes included next technical steps (demos, parameter-setting sessions), facility-access or service arrangements, joint-proposal scoping, and, where appropriate, initiation of NDA/LoI processes—the practical mechanics of an emerging national hub. The list of visits and one-to-one meetings conducted by ODTÜ MEMS, along with their distribution according to the type of organization, is presented in Table 1 and Figure 1 respectively.

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**Table 1:** List of visits and one-to-one meetings.

Date of the meeting/visit	Stakeholder	Main discussion topics
05/03/2024	ECO Consultancy	Introduction of current services
07/03/2024	ROKETSAN	RF MEMS production
08/03/2024	GTC Carbon	Use of MEMS sensors for environmental monitoring
12/03/2024	NURUS Ar-Ge	Introduction of MEMS Center
14/03/2024	Vestel	General introduction of technologies
14/03/2024	Başkent University	Application of MEMS technology in earthquake/seismic sensors
14/03/2024	KDE Technology	Microfabrication and use of infrastructure
19/03/2024	Asisguard	Discussion on the current technologies and infrastructure
20/03/2024	ASELSAN	Silicon - glass substrate process
20/03/2024	TUBITAK MAM	Chemical and bio sensor applications
26/03/2024	Ford Otosan	Possible collaboration opportunities for EU grants
		on image sensors
28/03/2024	TOBB ETU	Fiberoptics and MEMS Sensors
29/03/2024	Turk Traktor, Agrovisio	Use of MEMS sensors for agricultural yield
29/03/2024	HAVELSAN	Use of MEMS sensors for forest fires
02/04/2024	SAYKAL	MEMS applications in livestock monitoring
16/04/2024	BEGA Defense	Introduction of MEMS Center
17/04/2024	Ministry of Health	Application of MEMS technology in insulin pumps
18/04/2024	ROKETSAN	Technical documents and specifications are examined
26/04/2024	ARGEDOR	Introduction of MEMS Center
02/05/2024	ARLEON	Introduction of MEMS Center
09/05/2024	TOGG	MEMS filter for electrical vehicles
10/05/2024	Ankara University	Discussion on the current technologies and infrastructure
22/05/2024	SSB	RF Limiter MEMS R&D Project
31/05/2024	Infinitus Engineering	Inertial MEMS sensors
03/07/2024	NURDAM	Introduction of MEMS Center
09/07/2024	TUBITAK BILGEM	Collaboration for lithography
01/08/2024	FACE TEKNOLOJİ	Improving assessment performance via remote sensing of water resources
01/08/2024	TOPRAQ	Developing agricultural sensors
22/08/2024	GÜNAM	Remote sensing for solar panels
05/09/2024	HAVELSAN	Decision-support systems for customs
05/09/2024	Presidency of Defense Industries, Türkiye	R&D projects
26/09/2024	Microflown, the Netherlands	Collaboration on acoustic sensors
30/09/2024	Nero Industry	Collaboration on cleanroom infrastructure
03/10/2024	Enveko Technology	Infrared sensors for camera and drone systems

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03/10/2024	Assoc. Prof. Emre Büküşoğlu, METU	Microfluidics related R&D topics and filters for infrared cameras
04/10/2024	Assoc. Prof. Gonca Bilge Özel, Yeditepe Uni.	Sensors for food applications
17/10/2024	General Directorate of Military Factories, Türkiye	R&D projects
25/10/2024	National Technology Academy, Türkiye	Collaboration opportunities for academic activities
30/10/2024	Dr. Kerem Altun, Yıldız Technical University	Inertial sensors for an athlete-tracking system
01/11/2024	Customs Enforcement Criminal Laboratory, Türkiye	Sensors to monitor prohibited substances at customs
04/11/2024	ASELSAN	Joint R&D to develop inertial sensors for athletics
05/11/2024	TAI	R&D activities for various sensor developments
08/11/2024	Atlas University	Project collaboration to detect and track illegal/contraband goods
08/11/2024	NIRLAB AG, Switzerland	Infrared sensors for handheld spectrometer
25/11/2024	STM	Collaboration on imaging and navigation sensors
27/11/2024	Ankara Police Criminal Lab.	Low-cost rapid test kits for forensic analyses
28/11/2024	ROKETSAN	R&D collaborations
29/11/2024	TÜBİTAK YİTAL	Cleanroom usage, service procurement
02/12/2024	Ankara Food Reference Laboratory	Sensors for rapid detection of residues in agricultural products
03/12/2024	TEI	R&D activities for various sensor developments
03/12/2024	Fraunhofer Institute - EMFT,	Joint project opportunities with different
09/12/2024	Germany	Fraunhofer institutes
10/12/2024	Aegean Forestry Research Institute Directorate	Validation of remote-sensing data for forest inventory work
11/12/2024	Disaster and Emergency Management Authority of Türkiye	Sensors for disaster prevention, monitoring and rescue systems
18/12/2024	Horuseyetech, Brazil	Collaboration to develop inertial sensors
09/01/2025	Ankara Development Agency	Teaming project and co-funding assessment
10/01/2025	Ford Trucks Türkiye	R&D on producing bipolar plates for fuel cells via etching
13/01/2025	Fraunhofer Institute for Silicon Technology - ISIT, Germany	Potential collaboration opportunities on powderMEMS
14/01/2025	Food Control Laboratory	Rapid detection of pesticide residues in agricultural products
14/01/2025	Ankara Water and Sewerage Administration Dept. of R&D	Developing sensors for infrastructure systems
20/01/2025	AIJU Institute, Spain	Horizon Europe, Interreg and similar calls
27/01/2025	Gülsan Synthetic Weaving Industry and Trade Inc.	Health Monitoring Systems/Sensors for baby and adult diapers
14/02/2025	Navist	Sensors for subsystems of various aerial vehicles
21/02/2025	TEI	Flame sensors for jet engines
25/02/2025	Muğla Water and Sewerage Administration (MUSKI) and Muğla Metropolitan Municipality	Consortium meetings for an Interreg call

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26/02/2025	Roketsan	MEMS chip
05/03/2025	Primewize	Sensors to determine parameters from body fluids
05/03/2025	MAN Türkiye	Sensors for heavy-duty vehicles
11/03/2025	BSH Türkiye	Sensors for white goods
12/03/2025	Fraunhofer EMFT, Germany	Potential joint R&D activities
13/03/2025	Ankara Bölge Kriminal Laboratuvarı	Rapid test kits/sensors for various forensic analysis
13/03/2025	Roketsan	Image sensors
20/03/2025	METU Central Lab.	Potential joint R&D activities
20/03/2025	Defense Technologies Engineering and Trade Inc.	RF-MEMS hardware
15/04/2025	Orion Innovation R&D Centre	Potential joint R&D activities
15/04/2025	Aselsan	Potential joint R&D activities
15/04/2025	Joint Research and Application Center of Excellence in Neuroscience and Neurotechnology (NÖROM)	Collaboration opportunities in neuroscience
16/04/2025	Roketsan	Inertial sensors
16/04/2025	Aselsan	Horizon Europe projects
18/04/2025	AISTEK Chemical Laboratory Instruments and Foreign Trade Co. Ltd.	Infrared sensors and spectrometers
21/04/2025	KROHNE – Industrial Process Measurement and Instrumentation Company	Intro of ODTÜ MEMS, potential joint R&D activities
30/04/2025	Turkish Energy, Nuclear and Mineral Research Agency TENMAK	Potential joint R&D activities
05/05/2025	Mantiscope	Infrared sensors and cameras
21/05/2025	Netherlands Innovation Network	Introductory and briefing meeting
28/05/2025	METU RÖMER – Center for Robotics Research and Application	Collaboration opportunities to develop various sensors for space activities
19/06/2025	TÜBİTAK YİTAL	Cleanroom usage
24/06/2025	GCLAB	Potential collaboration opportunities in developing inertial sensors
04/07/2025	BSH Spain	Potential collaboration areas for developing white- goods sensors
25/07/2025	The Presidency of Health Institutes of Türkiye (TÜSEB)	Various health sensors and hardware
25/07/2025	The Presidency of Health Institutes of Türkiye (TÜSEB)	Developing a sensor for heart-health monitoring
29/07/2025	Presidency of Defence Industries of Türkiye (SSB)	ODTÜ MEMS' capabilities related to quantum studies
30/07/2025	TÜSEB Cancer Institute of Türkiye	Cancer detection and monitoring
13/08/2025	Blitztech	Infrared sensors and cameras
26/08/2025	Zeiss	Use of the equipment at the ZEISS
27/08/2025	Acıbadem University	HE collaborations for human-health monitoring

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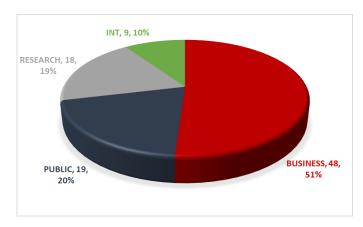


Figure 1: Distribution of stakeholder meetings.

These engagements helped present ODTÜ MEMS's capabilities to a wide range of stakeholders and identified practical avenues for collaboration. Together, the meetings provide a useful basis for continued cooperation on microfluidics and organ-on-chip. ODTÜ MEMS will continue stakeholder contacts as part of its regular activities.

### 2.2 Students Days

In this period, Students' Days were organised as short, lab-adjacent visits to introduce attendees to microfluidics, MEMS, and cleanroom practice at ODTÜ MEMS. Each visit combined a concise briefing (MEMS/BioMEMS, organ-on-chip use-cases, career paths) with a guided facilities tour, including basic cleanroom rules and demonstrations of imaging/measurement setups. Table 2 summarises the Students' Days delivered in M18–M36.

Following the positive feedback and interest received, the Students' Day concept has been adopted as a regular outreach activity of ODTÜ MEMS and continues beyond the project's lifetime as part of the Centre's annual engagement programme. The events have increased ODTÜ MEMS' visibility among prospective undergraduate students, creating a growing pipeline of young researchers interested in microengineering and organ-on-chip technologies. Notably, four participants of the Students' Day events have subsequently joined ODTÜ MEMS as researchers, demonstrating the tangible impact of this initiative on talent attraction and capacity building.

Table 2: Students' Days conducted during M19-M36

Date	School	Format (briefing + tour)	# Part.
05/03/2024	Aselsan Vocational & Technical Anatolian HS	Intro to microsystems + facility/cleanroom tour	26
12/03/2024	Bahçelievler Deneme Anatolian HS	Practical MEMS applications + tour	38
21/10/2024	Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt Uni., Mechanical Eng.	Intro briefing + cleanroom tour	18
03/01/2025	METU Mechanical Eng. & EEE	Presentations on MEMS technologies + cleanroom tour	26
02/02/2025	Nermin Mehmet Çekiç Anatolian HS	Intro to microsystems + facility/cleanroom tour	36
18/03/2025	METU Mechanical Eng.	Short briefing on microfluidics/BioMEMS + cleanroom tour	18
14/04/2025	GOP Vocational & Technical Anatolian HS	Intro session + cleanroom tour	21

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**Aselsan Vocational & Technical Anatolian High School:** On 5 March 2024, students received an introduction to microsystems concepts, followed by a guided walk-through of the laboratories and cleanroom. The session highlighted technician roles and good practice in lab settings. Twenty-six students attended.

**Bahçelievler Deneme Anatolian High School:** On 12 March 2024, students joined a practical talk showcasing everyday applications of MEMS (wearables, automotive safety, consumer devices), then toured core facilities. Questions and answers were focused on study choices and engineering career paths. Thirty-eight students attended.

**Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University:** On 21 October 2024, mechanical engineering students received a focused briefing on microfabrication workflows and how design files translate into processes and test structures, followed by a cleanroom tour. Discussion centred on entry-level research tasks. Eighteen students attended.

**Middle East Technical University** – **METU:** On 3 January 2025, mechanical engineering and electrical electronics engineering students attended short presentations on MEMS technologies and organ-on-chip examples currently used at the Centre, then visited the cleanroom. Several participants expressed interest in internships. Twenty-six students attended.

**Nermin Mehmet Çekiç Anatolian High School:** On 2 February 2025, students received a beginner-level overview of microsystems and basic laboratory safety, with a facilities and cleanroom tour to demystify equipment and procedures. Thirty-six students attended.

**Middle East Technical University – METU:** On 18 March 2025, mechanical engineering students joined a compact briefing on microfluidics/BioMEMS and chip-level flow control/sensing, followed by a tour of fabrication and testing areas linked to these topics. Eighteen students attended.

**GOP Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School:** On 14 April 2025, students participated in an introductory session on technician-level tasks in measurement and equipment operation, followed by a cleanroom tour. Emphasis was placed on employability skills and safety. Twenty-one students attended.



**Figure 2:** Scenes from Students' Days: briefing sessions on microfluidics/BioMEMS and MEMS technologies and a guided tour of the cleanroom.

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### 2.3 Open-Door Day

An open-door event was held on 10 June 2024, at the start of the two-day "3rd BioMEMS & Microfluidic Technologies Workshop" to give the wider public and regional stakeholders a first-hand view of the Centre's facilities and research. The programme combined short introductory talks on BioMEMS/microfluidics with guided tours of the laboratories and the cleanroom, allowing visitors to see equipment in operation and to discuss practical questions with researchers. Positioning the event ahead of the scientific sessions created a clear bridge between outreach and the workshop programme, which drew 100+ participants in hybrid format and included a special session on MDR/IVDR and a student poster segment.

The open-door day contributed to visibility beyond the academic audience: the workshop received media coverage (<a href="https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/bilim-teknoloji/turk-arastirmacilarin-liderliginde-deney-hayvanlarinin-yerini-alacak-cip-gelistirilecek/3295239">https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/bilim-teknoloji/turk-arastirmacilarin-liderliginde-deney-hayvanlarinin-yerini-alacak-cip-gelistirilecek/3295239</a>), which amplified the reach of the activity and highlighted ODTÜ MEMS's role in advancing microfluidics and organ-on-chip research. Overall, the event supported transparent communication of capabilities, encouraged dialogue with potential collaborators and prospective students, and provided an accessible entry point to the subsequent technical sessions.



**Figure 3:** Open-Door Day at ODTÜ MEMS: visitors engaging with researchers during lab/cleanroom tours and poster displays; media presence captured interviews that contributed to event visibility.

### 2.4 Professionals' Day: Organ-on-a-Chip Masterclasses with AZAR Innovations

Under OrChESTRA, ODTÜ MEMS hosted hands-on Organ-on-a-Chip Masterclasses in collaboration with AZAR Innovations (9–12 July 2024). The programme offered an introductory yet practical exploration of organ-on-a-chip and microfluidic applications, combining theoretical lectures with laboratory demonstrations and exercises.

The target audience comprised industry scientists and technicians from the biomedical, pharmaceutical and diagnostics sectors, as well as early-career academic researchers (MSc students, PhD candidates and postdoctoral fellows) with in-vitro cell-culture experience. This mix fostered dialogue between academic and industrial participants.

The event stimulated cross-sector learning and strengthened professional links around organ-on-a-chip technologies, aligning with the aim of the Professionals' Days to promote trans-disciplinary collaboration between ODTÜ MEMS and external stakeholders. (See also Deliverable D4.5 for details on the AZAR collaboration.)

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### 2.5 Clustering Efforts

ODTÜ MEMS has significantly advanced the national and international ecosystem for micro-medical technologies through clustering initiatives and the establishment of strategic partnerships under the OrChESTRA framework. Through these efforts, the Centre has positioned itself as a hub for BioMEMS and organ-on-chip technologies in Türkiye.

Building on these achievements, ODTÜ MEMS continues to strengthen both national and international collaboration networks through joint events, participation in major European conferences, and alignment with complementary initiatives. The following sections summarise key activities that exemplify these clustering and synergy efforts.

### 2.5.1 Engagement with MedTech Europe

In the context of the 3rd BioMEMS and Microfluidic Technologies Workshop (10–11 June 2024), ODTÜ MEMS engaged with MedTech Europe to address regulatory aspects of medical and analytical devices. Jana Russo (Moravcová), Manager for Medical Devices, contributed to the Panel on Implementation of MDR and IVDR, providing insights on fostering innovation within regulatory frameworks. This collaboration supported OrChESTRA's aim to connect scientific progress with regulatory and industrial communities.

### 2.5.2 Engagement with EUROoCS Society

During the reporting period, the OrChESTRA consortium maintained active engagement with the European Organ-on-Chip Society (EUROoCS) as part of its clustering and networking activities. The project was represented at the EUROoCS 2024 Conference, held on 3–5 July 2024 at Politecnico di Milano, Italy, where OrChESTRA was introduced as Türkiye's national Organ-on-a-Chip initiative. The presentation took place within the plenary session entitled "Updates from National OoC Initiatives", which gathered representatives from several European national networks including the Netherlands, UK, Italy, and Portugal to exchange information on ongoing activities and coordination mechanisms.

In this context, the OrChESTRA representative, Dr. Ender Yıldırım, provided an overview of the project's objectives, consortium composition, and implementation roadmap, emphasising its contribution to strengthening national research and innovation capacity in the Organ-on-Chip field and its alignment with the broader European landscape. A dedicated pitching video summarising the project's vision and scope was also displayed during the session (available online at <a href="https://youtu.be/9TaennVus">https://youtu.be/9TaennVus</a> E). This participation enhanced the project's visibility within the EUROoCS community, established new connections with other national initiatives, and contributed to the mutual exchange of best practices relevant to standardisation, manufacturing, and translational research in the Organ-on-Chip domain.

# 2.5.3 Engagement with Microfluidic ChipShop

During the July 2024 microfluidics masterclasses at ODTÜ MEMS, Microfluidic ChipShop supplied microfluidic chips for hands-on training and provided remote technical support and advice. Building on this initial interaction, we are consulting them on microfluidic design choices and leveraging their catalogue of off-the-shelf lab-on-chip solutions where appropriate. In parallel, we are exploring their participation as an industrial partner in a prospective consortium for upcoming research funding opportunities.

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### 2.5.4 Cooperation with Portuguese Institute for Quality (IPQ)

Through the preparation of ACCORDO proposal, ODTÜ MEMS engaged IPQ on microfluidic measurement and regulatory topics. Then, ODTÜ MEMS was subsequently invited to join a EURAMET Metrology Partnership proposal; following a consolidation phase, **ODTÜ** continued as the Turkish partner while **ODTÜ MEMS** was not included in the final consortium. The interaction has nonetheless established effective channels with IPQ, and work on shared metrology priorities is continuing.

#### 2.5.5 Partnership with INESC MN

Collaboration with INESC MN was catalysed through the co-design of the ACCORDO proposal, aiming at place-based development of organ-on-a-chip ecosystems in Lisbon (Portugal) and Ankara (Türkiye). These efforts supported the coordination of national OoC initiatives led by Dr. Vania Silvério (INESC MN) and Dr. Ender Yıldırım (ODTÜ MEMS). The teams in Portugal and Türkiye are now pursuing opportunities to expand the ecosystem with support from industrial partners and public authorities, while remaining open to further national and international collaborations to broaden the network and amplify impact.

### 2.5.6 Joint OrChESTRA-MAESTRO Synergy Meeting

On 17 October 2024 in Ankara, OrChESTRA together with MAESTRO, hosted a technically focused synergy session centered on organ-on-a-chip (OoC) that brought together numerous companies, universities and research centres from across Türkiye. Discussions concentrated on microfluidics and organ-on-a-chip for health applications, focusing on sharing experience from ongoing studies.

### 2.5.7 Engagement with Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT)

As part of OrChESTRA's outreach and clustering activities, Prof. Haluk Külah (ODTÜ MEMS) met with researchers at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) in November 2024. Discussions with Prof. Jan Korvink, Head of the Institute of Microstructure Technology, focused on potential collaboration areas and the preparation of joint project applications in the field of biomedical microsystems. This engagement contributed to OrChESTRA's goal of strengthening international research networks and increasing ODTÜ MEMS's visibility within the European microtechnology community.

#### 2.5.8 Synergy Workshop in Rome

To extend links beyond the consortium, OrChESTRA deepened contacts with the Phoenix-OoC team in Rome via an existing connection between Prof. Fabiana Arduini (Phoenix-OoC coordinator) and Dr Can Dinçer (UFR). Prof. Arduini proposed a sister-project arrangement and invited OrChESTRA to a synergy workshop in Rome. Following this exchange, she joined the OrChESTRA Advisory Board, and OrChESTRA's technical manager Dr. Ender Yıldırım was invited to the Phoenix-OoC Advisory Board. OrChESTRA then took part in a half-day Horizon Europe synergy session alongside Phoenix-OoC, UNLOOC (Chips JU), BuonMarrow, and OMICSENS. The workshop focused on sharing project roadmaps, exploring complementarities, and identifying collaboration opportunities in the organ-on-a-chip domain; it supported peer exchange on platform approaches and data/validation practices and surfaced several areas for informal follow-up (e.g., assay integration and standardisation touchpoints).

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#### 3 CONCLUSION AND OVERALL IMPACT

Across the whole duration of the project (M1–M36), OrChESTRA's outreach actions have strengthened ODTÜ MEMS's visibility and engagement with academic, industrial, and public stakeholders across a broad range of technological fields related to microsystems, sensors, and advanced manufacturing. In total, 126 one-to-one engagements were conducted (67 with businesses/private R&D centres, 25 with public bodies/regulators, 22 with universities/research institutes, and 12 with international partners). Of these, 94 took place during the second period, reflecting the growing demand for collaboration and knowledge exchange with the Centre.

The Students' Days format has now been institutionalised at ODTÜ MEMS and continues as part of the Centre's regular activities; cumulatively, the two reports document 334 student participants. The Open-Door Day held in conjunction with the scientific workshop attracted over 100 participants in hybrid format, providing visibility for both the Centre's facilities and its ongoing research themes. Under Professionals' Days, the Organ-on-a-Chip masterclasses (two sessions, ~40 participants) offered an introductory and practice-oriented training format for early-career researchers and professionals.

Moving forward, one-to-one visits remain an active engagement channel, Students' Days have become a recurring institutional activity, and future masterclasses are planned on a paid basis to ensure sustainability of specialised training. Collectively, these efforts have enhanced ODTÜ MEMS's recognition as a national hub for microsystems innovation and reinforced the long-term outreach and collaboration impact of the OrChESTRA project.

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