

Switzerland Launches Knowledge and Education Platform for Nanotechnology (“Swiss Nano-Cube”) (<http://www.swissnanocube.ch/en/home>)

St.Gallen, Zollikofen (Switzerland). “Swiss Nano-Cube” is the new national interactive knowledge and education platform for micro and nanotechnology (<http://www.swissnanocube.ch/en/home>). Its mission among students and young professionals is to awake interest in engineering and science. It is addressed to teachers and students of vocational schools, secondary schools as well as higher professional schools. The web-based learning platform has been developed by the Innovation Society St.Gallen and the Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (SFIVET) with the support of several Swiss Federal Offices and private organisations.

Knowledge and Background in Nanotechnology

Nanotechnology is an enabling technology offering huge potentials. Ultra-light materials, more efficient solar cells, “smart” textiles or new therapeutic methods to fight cancer are a few examples of promising nanotechnology applications. Today, the development of new and innovative products is increasingly often based on nanotechnologies in industry segments. This is also challenging the educational system, but only few practice-oriented offers for teaching and learning exist and most teachers have not received any nano-specific education yet. In order to close this gap, the Innovation Society St.Gallen and the Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (SFIVET) have developed the “Swiss Nano-Cube” platform which provides material for school lessons as well as comprehensive background information for those interested in nanotechnologies.

From the Interactive “Nano Game” to the Nobel Prize in Physics

“Swiss Nano-Cube” is a knowledge and education platform providing information knowledge on diverse areas of knowledge. Playing the interactive *Nanorama* game, you can discover everyday nanoproducts. The *NanoTeachBox* offers didactic material for teaching and learning, video clips, presentations and much more to be used in classrooms. With regards to the *Year of Chemistry* in 2011 and the support of Metrohm Foundation, a *nano chemistry* module has been developed. It contains detailed instructions on how to perform illustrating nanotechnology-related experiments particularly for chemistry classes. Further modules are being developed. In addition, “Swiss Nano-Cube” offers a broad spectrum of background information on basic mechanisms and effects in the nano world and on economic, social and technical issues of nanotechnologies, as well as practical information useful for the professional life. Simultaneously, “Swiss Nano-Cube” offers *TeachNano* courses for the advanced training of teachers.

Knowledge and Dialogue for a Better Understanding

“Swiss Nano-Cube” is supported by private organisations and several Swiss Federal Offices (OPET, FOEN, FOAG). With their commitments, the Swiss public authorities follow the existing national strategy for the promotion of young talents in technical and scientific jobs and actively contribute to

increase public communication on the opportunities and risks of nanotechnologies as it is mentioned in the Swiss Action Plan on Nanotechnologies. The platform will be evaluated by the end of 2011 and further developed with the help of experts from economy, science and education. Thus, “Swiss Nano-Cube” as a pathbreaking educational platform emphasises the pioneering role of Switzerland in education and technology.

For further information please contact:

Marianne Dietiker (project lead)

The Innovation Society St.Gallen

Email: marianne.dietiker@swissnanocube.ch

Phone: +41 (0) 71 274 72 66

Martin Vonlanthen

Eidg. Hochschuleinstitut für Berufsbildung (EHB)

E-Mail: martin.vonlanthen@ehb-schweiz.ch

Tel. +41 (0) 31 910 37 10

Swiss Nano-Cube Project Lead:

The Innovation Society St.Gallen is a advisory spin-off from the University of St.Gallen. The company is a pioneer in nanotechnology consulting with a focus on innovation management and communication. The company is based at the technology center (tebo) of the EMPA in St.Gallen. Further information: www.innovationsociety.ch.

The Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (SFIVET) is the competence center of the Swiss Federation for vocational education and training and provides tertiary-level basic and continuing training to professionals. Further information: www.ehb-schweiz.ch.