Press Release

NanoCode - Implementing the European Commission Code of Conduct for Nanotechnologies

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The European Project *NanoCode: a multistakeholder dialogue providing inputs to implement the European Code of Conducts for Nanosciences & Nanotechnologies Research* commenced in January 2010. This two-year project is funded under the Programme *Capacities*, in the area *Science in Society*, within the 7th Framework Program (FP7).

The objective of NanoCode is to define and develop a framework aimed at supporting the successful integration and implementation, at European level and beyond, of the Code of Conduct (CoC) for nanosciences and nanotechnologies (N&N) research as developed by the European Commission.

The unique characteristics of materials at the nanoscale could potentially lead to a huge range of valuable new applications and benefits, but may also pose novel challenges in terms of managing the technological and societal implications associated with them.

The CoC collects together most of the concepts and values that have emerged in recent years from the debate on the governance and ethics of nanotechnologies, and is an important reference point concerning the principles that should underpin research activities, the interaction amongst key stakeholders and, in general, "good governance" for the responsible development of nanotechnologies.

The NanoCode project will facilitate a multistakeholder dialogue on the CoC at European level and in selected Associated Countries that is aimed at improving and strengthening awareness of the CoC, promoting trust-building among stakeholders and, as an ultimate goal, developing a framework to support the wider application of the CoC.

Based on the opinions of stakeholders and on experience with other codes, voluntary measures and practices set up by different organisations aimed at responsible development of N&N research, this framework will:

- Identify those practices that support compliance with the principles and actions of the EC's CoC and help to underpin its implementation;
- Propose criteria and indicators to assess the level of application of the CoC;
- Suggest and evaluate a portfolio of incentives and disincentives;
- Propose possible future integration of and changes to the CoC.

The development of practical tool (the CodeMeter) to help stakeholders assess their performance in complying with the CoC's principles will form a key element of the framework.

The project will also use a variety of national and international events, a dedicated website and a series of brief publications as tools to communicate project findings and provide a centralised and unique source of information on the CoC and its application in Europe and beyond.

NanoCode brings together experienced partners from 10 different countries (Germany, UK, France, The Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, South Africa and Argentina). The project is led by AIRI/Nanotec IT (Italy).

For further information please contact the Project Coordinator Dr. Elvio Mantovani (mantovani@nanotec.it)

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