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500 experts from 25 countries:

NANOTECHNOLOGY IN NORTHERN EUROPE 2006 BRINGS THE FIELD'S PIONEERS TO FINLAND

Nanotechnology in Northern Europe (NTNE 2006), the region's largest nanotechnology event, is organised in Finland for the second time. The event takes place in Helsinki from 16 – 18.5 and attracts almost 500 participants from 25 countries, with nearly 100 organisations involved in an exhibition and surrounding events.

80 world-class researchers will present several new innovations. The event also attracts representatives of industry and investors. Main themes include new solutions in nanoelectronics and photonics, instrumentation, and nanotechnology safety.

Keynote speakers at the congress include Sumio Iijima, widely tipped to be a future Nobel Prize winner; Bob Iannucci, head of the Nokia Research Center; Nicholas Hartley, head of the Strategy and Policy unit at the European Commission's Research Directorate; and Livio Baldi, director of STMicroelectronics and member of ENIAC, the EU's nanoelectronics working group.

Sumio Iijima is one of nanotechnology's pioneers, and is tipped to receive the Nobel Prize in coming years for his discovery of the carbon nanotube. A key development in nanomaterials, carbon nanotubes have applications ranging from sports equipment and electronics to energy storage and portable devices. In March, ice hockey stick manufacturer Montreal released the first hockey stick to be made from Hybtonite carbon fibre, a material utilising carbon nanotubes that was developed in Finland.

Dr. Bob Iannucci, Head of Nokia Research Center, addresses in his keynote the role of nanotechnology in the development of mobile communications. "Within the vision of the future mobile lifestyle, technological advancements in the converging nanotechnology disciplines have the potential to create new value for consumers through increased product performance and more satisfying user experience", says Dr. Iannucci. "Further cross-disciplinary research is needed to realize the full extent of the impact of nanotechnologies in information technologies."

At an exhibition running alongside the congress, leading device manufacturers showcase measurement instruments and other tools for nanotechnology research. Additionally, leading Nordic nanotechnology research centres present their work and plans for future development.

Over the next five years, over 100 million euros will be invested in nanotechnology research and product development in Finland. The main funding sources are Tekes (the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation), the Academy of Finland, and the Education Ministry. During the spring, Tekes' FinNano program has mapped the possibilities that nanotechnology offers to key Finnish sectors, such as electronics, forest products, and the chemical industry. The results of this work will be announced at Tekes' FinNano seminar, which is organised with NTNE2006 and takes place on 18.5.

The NTNE2006 congress is organised by Finnish nanotechnology consultancy and seed capital firm Spinverse Consulting. The event's main partners are Nokia, Tekes, and the Nordic Innovation Center.

For further information:

NTNE2006 website (including the congress program, in English)
www.nano.fi.

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