

PRESS RELEASE

## Ireland's world-class nanotechnology infrastructure and a strategic approach to investment will position Ireland to become global nanotech leader

### Minister Lenihan launches National Nanotech Framework

(Tuesday 31 August 2010) A substantial investment by the Irish Government in nanotechnology in recent years has made Ireland home to a world-class infrastructural base which will serve as a strong foundation to produce high quality nanotechnology research, push commercialisation and ensure Ireland's international competitiveness in this space, according to a new report published today by Forfás, Ireland's policy advisory board for enterprise and science. *Ireland's Nanotechnology Commercialisation Framework 2010-2014* presents a national framework to position Ireland as a knowledge and innovation centre for certain niche areas of nanotechnology.

Welcoming the report, Conor Lenihan, TD, Minister for Science, Technology & Innovation said:

"Government has invested wisely in nanotechnology in recent years and Ireland now has a world-class nanotechnology infrastructure. Facilities of research excellence were established and upgraded in CRANN in TCD and Tyndall in UCC. These facilities were complemented by the INSPIRE programme, a national initiative to promote collaboration and partnership between Irish nanotechnology researchers.

"The establishment of the Competence Centre for Applied Nanotechnology, an industry-led research initiative involving some of the world's leading companies such as multinationals Intel, Seagate, Medtronic and Analog Devices and Irish companies Aerogen, Audit Diagnostics, Creganna and Proxy Biomedical will also reap rewards.

"To build on this success and ensure Ireland's place with international leaders, I am pleased to announce today the establishment of a nanotechnology coordinating group to manage and oversee the implementation of the nanotechnology policy recommended in this Forfás report."

The nanotechnology coordinating group will comprise key industrialists, academics and the enterprise development agencies and will be chaired by Martin Cronin.

*Ireland's Nanotechnology Commercialisation Framework 2010-2014* suggests additional implementation measures to support the focus of nanotechnology investment. Strategic measures are recommended in the areas of:

- Funding
- Infrastructure
- Industry involvement in research
- Collaboration
- Workforce development and academia

Speaking at the launch of the report, Martin Shanahan, Chief Executive of Forfás said:

“Ireland’s national objectives for nanotechnology are centred on supporting the needs of indigenous and foreign enterprise and to ensure the creation of economic impact and value. To achieve these objectives, Ireland needs to maintain current funding levels but focus this funding into fewer, more strategic technology-application combinations, and have an increased focus on commercialisation.

“This report recommends that Ireland should focus its nanotechnology efforts across three technology domains - advanced materials, Beyond Moore, and nanobiotechnology - as they apply across four application domains - next generation electronics, medical devices and diagnostics, environmental applications, and industrial process improvements. Implementing this strategy will see Ireland competing to win in the global nanotechnology market.”

The full report can be downloaded from the Forfás website, [www.forfas.ie](http://www.forfas.ie)

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#### **About Forfás**

Forfás is Ireland’s policy advisory board for enterprise, trade, science, technology and innovation. It provides independent and rigorous research, advice and support in the areas of enterprise and science policy. This work informs the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation and wider Government. Forfás works with IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and Science Foundation Ireland to ensure the coherence of policies across the enterprise development agencies.

Forfás manages the work of and provides research and analytical support to:

- . Advisory Council for Science, Technology and Innovation
- . Expert Group on Future Skills Needs
- . National Competitiveness Council

Forfás manages the national awareness programme, Discover Science and Engineering (DSE), the accreditation services of the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) and hosts the Office of the Chief Scientific Adviser to Government.

**The Nanotechnology Coordinating Group will include:**

Martin Cronin (Chair)

Martin Cronin is former CEO of Forfás, and a former Executive Director of IDA Ireland. He is currently a member of the Higher Education Authority and a Board member at Appian Asset Management.

Dr Diarmuid O’Brien, CRANN, TCD

Prof. Roger Whatmore, Tyndall, UCC

Prof. Brian MacCraith, DCU

Leonard Hobbs, Intel

Michael Howe, Creganna

Representatives from:

Forfás

IDA Ireland

Enterprise Ireland

Science Foundation Ireland

HEA