

Southern Growth Policies Board Leads Regional Approach to Nanotechnology

Southern Growth Policies Board, a regional public policy think tank based in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, is developing a Southern Nanotechnology Network of universities, businesses, policy makers, researchers and economic developers to position the South as a leader in the emerging nanotechnology industry. The first meeting of the network will take place on October 10th in Oak Ridge, Tennessee with nanotechnology experts in both the public and private sectors to develop the framework for a regional initiative to increase collaborative research, commercialization opportunities and to incorporate nanotechnology in primary economic development plans. Partners in the initiative include Oak Ridge National Laboratories and Technology 2020, both of Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

The Southern Nanotechnology Network grew out of a series of technology and innovation reports and projects of the Southern Technology council, the advisory council on technology policy and development issues for the Southern Growth Policies Board. As Scott Doron, director of the Southern Technology Council explained, "Our research suggests that the South can significantly increase its competitive advantage in nanotechnology through regional collaboration among research institutions and with the private sector." He added, "The Southern Nanotechnology Network will connect the region's assets and increase research, funding and new business creation."

The Southern Technology council's *Connecting the Dots: Creating a Southern Nanotechnology Network*, released in April 2006, provided recommendations for establishing the Southern Nanotechnology network and outlined the South's strengths and weaknesses in nanotechnology in five key areas – human capital, knowledge generation, patents, funding and commercialization. The report includes data for all of the Southern Growth member states including Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

To participate in the Nano Summit, email sdoron@southern.org for more information. To order copies of *Connecting the Dots: Creating a Southern Nanotechnology Network* or to learn more about Southern Growth Policies Board, visit www.southern.org.