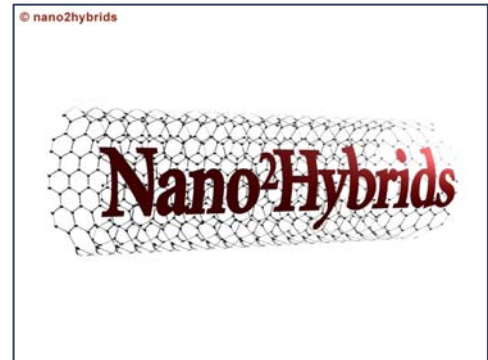


First European nanotechnology project to go out live on YouTube

© If you have ever wondered how a real science project operates and wanted to see what it is like working in a research lab, then the nano2hybrids project should fulfil your curiosity-driven appetite.

Over the next three years, the scientists involved in the EU-funded nano2hybrids project will be breaking new ground in the fields of nanoscience and communication.



As its main form of outreach, the researchers will unravel the progress of their research on a daily and monthly basis by posting video diaries and writeups of their trials and tribulations on their website and on the popular video-sharing website, YouTube. In this way, the consortium of 15 scientists will show the general public what science research is really like and maybe inspire a new, younger generation to choose a career in science.

The idea behind the project is to use a novel plasma technique to modify the surface of carbon nanotubes and build metal structures of just a few atoms to add onto the tubes' surfaces. These metal-nanotube hybrid materials would then have a huge potential for use in gas sensors.

It is estimated that billions of these nanotubes could be made into a paste and spread thinly on electrodes that are printed on a small square of plastic. The scientists say they can develop this device into the smallest, cheapest and most sensitive device ever made to detect all kinds of gases, from the most dangerous to the more common (such as the smell released by ripe fruit). The device developed could then be commercialised by the private partner involved in the project.

Unlike any other scientific project before it, the scientists, each with their own camera, are aiming to take the general public with them on their scientific journey and share the experience of doing science.

The project teamed up with the Vega Science Trust, which has been successful in creating science films. The Trust in turn introduced the project partners to Ed Goldwyn, a producer who pioneered video diary documentaries at the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

The site allows visitors to leave comments and questions for the scientists. *'We're really hoping to get a dialogue going through the website,'* says the Science Communication Coordinator of the nano2hybrids project, Chris Ewels.

'The website is very much an experiment that's running in parallel with the science experiments themselves. Different partners in the project have different ideas of who they'd like to be communicating with,' he added.

So far, the scientists in the project have posted 15 videos on YouTube, which have been watched more than 5,000 times. The diary format recordings are also available on the project's own website, along with writeups by the scientists.

Although high-quality science content on YouTube is still limited, the nano2hybrids project could be the pioneering project that helps to change that.

Links:

The nano²hybrids website: <http://www.nano2hybrids.net>

Nano²hybrids on youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/nano2hybrids>

The Vega Science Trust <http://www.vega.org.uk>

Nano²hybrids images and media: <http://www.nano2hybrids.net/media>

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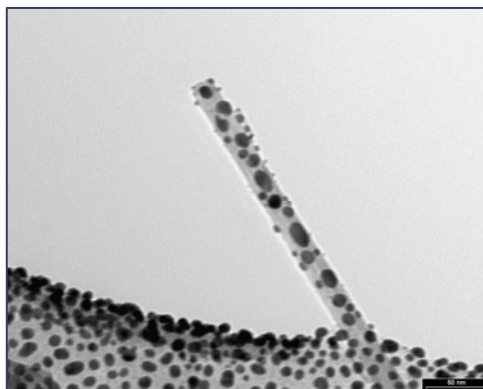
Images:

There are various images available in electronic form for media use (these are a selection, we also have many scientific images) © www.nano2hybrids.net

See <http://www.nano2hybrids.net/media> for more hi-resolution media.



Project scientist Alex Felten receives video training from ex-BBC producer Ed Goldwyn



Gold nanoparticles on a carbon nanotube

Video diaries from the nano2hybrids project on YouTube:

