

UCLA's CNSI, Dutch institute sign agreement to collaborate on nanoscience, nanotechnology

EurekAlert

The California NanoSystems Institute at UCLA and the MESA+ Institute of Nanotechnology at the University of Twente in the Netherlands have signed a memorandum of understanding to use their combined intellectual and physical resources to collaborate on projects that apply nanotechnology to problems of global concern in health and the environment.

Two of the world's leading institutes of nanoscience and nanotechnology, the CNSI and MESA+ are helping to expand the understanding of the nature and behavior of phenomena at the nanoscale.

Through joint research projects and educational exchanges, the institutes will focus special attention on nanoelectronics, medical diagnostic and therapeutic devices, and new materials. Collaborative efforts will be undertaken to commercialize the research, moving it from the lab to the marketplace in order to maximize the economic and social benefits of discoveries and devices.

The memorandum was signed Sept. 14 by CNSI director Paul S. Weiss and MESA+ scientific director Dave Blank at a ceremony held at the University of Twente in conjunction with the MESA+ annual research conference.

"We're excited to formalize our ties with MESA+, a preeminent center of nanoscience and nanotechnology," said Weiss, who holds UCLA's Fred Kavli Chair in Nanosystems Sciences. "CNSI seeks to encourage greater participation in the global scientific community, and this partnership will broaden the research capabilities of faculty at CNSI and UCLA. We look forward to collaborating on innovative research that will result in new technologies for improved therapeutics."

"MESA+ and CNSI are both using nanoscience to explore biological operations at the cellular level," said Blank, noting the shared research agendas of the two institutes. "Our discoveries will contribute to the diagnosis and treatment of cancer and viral diseases. This agreement will be a valuable means of generating collaborations among researchers and exchanges of graduate students. From these joint efforts are certain to flow discoveries and inventions having great social and economic value for the Netherlands and the United States, and for the entire world."

The CNSI has become an international center for nanoscience and nanotechnology with links to universities and other institutions throughout the world, and it serves as a hub for exchanges between scientists engaged in nanoscale research in Asia and Europe. The institute currently has formal agreements with major universities and institutes in Japan, Korea, the United Kingdom, Germany and Singapore.

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The MESA+ Institute for Nanotechnology is one of the world's largest nanotech research facilities, employing 500 people, 275 of whom are Ph.D.s or postdoctoral scholars. It includes 1,250 square meters of clean-room space, combined with a wide array of advanced instrumentation and other equipment.

MESA+ emphasizes interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary projects and encourages and supports cooperative activities among researchers through a unique, flexible administrative structure. The institute is designed to allow physicists, electrical engineers, chemists and mathematicians to work collaboratively on problems dealing with the environment, energy and drug delivery. Their efforts are enhanced by cooperative research arrangements with scientists and institutions throughout the world.

The MESA+ environment also fosters the establishment and maturation of startups in the micro- and nano-industries. Through a special technology-transfer program, the institute opens its research facilities and clean-room space to small and medium-sized enterprises. This policy has resulted in the creation of more than 40 high-tech startups.

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