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MATERIALS TECHNOLOGY BOOSTS COMPETITIVENESS OF FINNISH COMPANIES

Functional Materials programme promotes cross-industry research and development

Helsinki, Finland - April 16th 2008 - New materials are gaining ground as the next significant innovation area for Finnish companies. With the aid of several pioneering projects, Finnish companies are reinforcing their technology and product development initiatives across traditional industry boundaries.

The Tekes **Functional Materials** programme aims to develop functional materials for different industries in Finland. The aim is to provide Finnish industry with access to the best possible expertise in materials production and use, through domestic and international networking. The nearly seven-year programme started last year, and its total funding volume is over 200 million euros.

“The research programme has only just begun, but already we are seeing a number of very interesting research and corporate projects. An example is Kiilto Oy, which manufactures an adhesive that functions as fireproofing material. Finland has a significant number of companies and organisations conducting research in new materials. The Functional Materials programme brings together the developers and end users of these materials,” said Dr. **Solveig Roschier**, Programme Manager, Tekes.

“A new feature of this programme is the multidisciplinary thematic groups that bring together companies that struggle with similar issues in different industries. Top experts from companies and research organisations discuss mutual focus areas for research priorities in order to solve these key challenges. As each participant can utilise the results in their own activities, the overall efficiency and impact of materials research is increased markedly,” said Ms. **Anneli Ojapalo**, Programme Coordinator, Spinverse Ltd.

The properties of functional materials are designed to serve a specific purpose in such a way that the functionalities are controllable and repeatable. For example, building and packaging materials can be made to react to changes in humidity or temperature.

The potential applications of functional materials encompass numerous fields. For instance, Helsinki-based **AdaptaMat** produces metallic Magnetic Memory Shape materials (MSM), which produce a change of dimension, shape or stress due to an applied magnetic field. MSM elements facilitate the development of totally new applications, for example faster valves for process industries. The movement cycle generated by changes in the material dimensions enables higher speeds than conventional mechanical constructions.

“Various industries benefit from the programme by promoting innovative business based on completely new materials solutions. On the other hand, traditional fields such as the forest, energy, machine and metal industries can also renew their production with expertise in new materials and manufacturing innovations,” added Dr. Roschier.



The Tekes Functional Materials programme funds research in the properties and applications of new materials, as well as their processing, handling and future applications. Environmental and product lifecycle considerations are addressed in each new project throughout the programme.

The Functional Materials programme is presented at the NMP Finland Conference, held on the 16th and 17th April 2008 at Helsinki Fair Center (Messukeskus), Helsinki, Finland.

The NMP Finland Conference is organised by Spinverse Ltd. The company commercialises emerging technologies by combining scientific, industrial and investment expertise with a broad contact and knowledge base. Spinverse Ltd. coordinates the Tekes FinNano and Functional Materials programmes. The NMP Finland Conference is expected to attract over 400 experts from over 14 countries. A large number of companies will have a presence in the Materia 08 exhibition, the largest technical event in Finland.

For more information about the event, please visit www.nmpfinland.net.

Additional information on the Functional Materials programme is available at: www.tekes.fi/materiaalit (link to English site in upper right-hand corner)

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Tekes, the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation, is the main government financing and expert organisation for research and technological development in Finland. Tekes finances industrial R&D projects as well as projects in universities and research institutes. Approximately half of Tekes funding is channeled through its diverse range of programmes. www.tekes.fi

Spinverse Ltd. specialises in commercialising emerging breakthrough technologies. The company brings together leading industry innovators by coordinating the Tekes FinNano and Functional Materials programmes, as well as by organising the annual Nanotech Northern Europe event. Spinverse Ltd. was founded in 2004 and is located in Espoo, Finland. www.spinverse.com