

NanoGlobe and TiE Partner to Promote Nanotechnology Business and Investment in Singapore and the Region

Abstract:

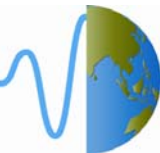
Another effort to promote nanotechnology business in Singapore was carried out by The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) Singapore in partnership with NanoGlobe through a breakfast seminar which brought together investors, entrepreneurs, government and academic representatives to discuss the latest nanotechnology commercialization trends and challenges, investment strategy and emerging opportunities. In this article, we share with you the seminar discussion and some insights on Singapore nanotechnology commercialization advantages and challenges.

Partnering with NanoGlobe, The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) Singapore (<http://singapore.tie.org>) organized its very first dedicated nanotechnology seminar to promote nanotechnology further to Singapore community. Since its establishment in 1992 in Silicon Valley, TiE has grown into a global non-profit organization operated in 11 countries around the world, providing a platform for mentoring, networking & education, to entrepreneurs & professionals. It is the largest of non-profit organization of entrepreneurs. The breakfast seminar of Business and Investment Opportunities in Nanotechnology in Asia

(http://singapore.tie.org/TGS/EM/viewevent/viewEventPT?id_event=4153&from_where=chapter_homepage) attracted a good turn out on sunny morning 27th January to listen and join the panel discussion on nanotechnology from the industry, investment, government and academia perspective.

Dr Lerwen Liu, Managing Director of NanoGlobe started to provide some insights about nanomaterials commercialization activities around the world, such as Samsung with its CNT (carbon nanotube) composite and CNT flexible transparent electrode, and Bayer MaterialScience with its CNT production. Viewing from the investment perspective, Mr Andreas Kroell, Managing Director of Nanostart Asia highlighted the challenges for investing in nanotech startups in Singapore such as the country having a small home market. Nevertheless, believing in value of nanotechnology as an enabler not an industry, Nanostart Asia has invested in two Singapore start-ups namely Curiox and Biomers in past 2 years.

An Indian origin, Singapore based entrepreneur Mr Mahesh Patel, Managing Director of ShayoNano Singapore shared his experience in setting up his company in Singapore. Approached by the Singapore EDB (Economic Development Board) representative in Mumbai in 2006, Mr Patel finally decided to



establish his subsidiary company in Singapore in January 2007 impressed by the world class infrastructure and adequate government support for nanotech R&D. Prior to this, his 3 day visit to Singapore arranged by EDB has changed his perception of Singapore being a touristic destination to an advanced world class destination for R&D and high-tech industry growth. “We are about to finish building the largest microwave synthesis facility in the world in our facility in science park”, Mr Patel indicated enthusiastically during the seminar. In addition, one product ShayoNano is currently developing is nanoclay for catalyst, CO2 absorption and flame retardant applications.

Challenges in commercializing nanotechnology in Singapore were further discussed during the panel and Q&A session. Being traditionally a trading nation, Singapore needs to develop its own technology competencies. In addition, “Nanotech start ups in Singapore need to internationalize themselves as early as possible due to the difficulties in finding suitable commercialization/manufacturing partners locally”, said Dr Liu. It was also highlighted that multi national companies in Singapore should take advantage of Singapore R&D infrastructure and talents to develop innovation in Singapore. “with 36 offices present around the world, International Enterprise (IE) Singapore (www.iesingapore.gov.sg) is ready to bring and help local companies internationalize themselves and facilitate any communication for overseas partnership opportunities”, said Timothy Chua, Assistant Manager of Technology Business Division, IE Singapore.

Along the same line of innovation and commercialization, Prof Venky Venkatesan, Director of NanoCore Research Center of National University of Singapore (NUS) (www.nanocore.nus.edu.sg) emphasized the need of open communication platform for people across various disciplines to exchange ideas thus accelerating the thinking process, innovation and cutting edge research. “This was the reason why I came to Singapore, invited by the former NUS President Prof. SHIH Choon Fong to create a mini Bell Lab (where I used to work) that brings together scientists from various disciplines to simulate more efficient and innovative research.”



The Panelists (left to right: Dr Lerwen Liu, Mr Mahesh Patel and Mr Andreas Kroell) with Timothy Chua from IE Singapore addressing advantages and challenges in commercializing nanotechnology in Singapore