

Cincinnati in December 2006. That same year, an ICON survey of occupational practices for handling nanomaterials revealed a great need for improved communication about best practices.

"Progress in addressing the occupational health implications of engineered nanomaterials requires the open sharing of information and the development and dissemination of good guidance," said Charles L. Geraci, chief of the Document Development Branch in the Education and Information Division of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), and coordinator of NIOSH's nanotechnology cross-sector program under the National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA). "We are pleased to see international forums of the sort offered by the ICON-sponsored GoodNanoGuide and the opportunity they provide in particular for helping to disseminate NIOSH's research and recommendations, and to make users aware of our resources."

The international nature of the GoodNanoGuide is important to its success, said Steve Hankin, director of operations for SAFENANO, the United Kingdom's premier independent resource on nanotechnology hazard and risk. "SAFENANO is delighted to be involved with establishing and sustaining the GoodNanoGuide," Hankin said. "The initiative complements related nanotechnology risk activities in the U.K., Europe and North America. SAFENANO sees the GoodNanoGuide as an exciting means of capturing, appraising and cascading good practice -- on an international basis -- to contribute to the knowledge base of nanotechnology safety."

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Located in Houston, Rice University is consistently ranked one of America's best teaching and research universities. Known for its "unconventional wisdom," Rice is

distinguished by its: size -- 3,001 undergraduates and 2,144 graduate students; selectivity -- 12 applicants for each place in the freshman class; resources -- an undergraduate student-to-faculty ratio of 5-to-1; sixth largest endowment per student among American private research universities; residential college system, which builds communities that are both close-knit and diverse; and collaborative culture, which crosses disciplines, integrates teaching and research, and intermingles undergraduate and graduate work.

The International Council on Nanotechnology (ICON) is an international, multi-stakeholder organization based at Rice University. Our mission is to develop and communicate information regarding potential environmental and health risks of nanotechnology thereby fostering risk reduction while maximizing societal benefit. The council has evolved into a network of scholars, industrialists, government officials and public interest advocates who share information and perspectives on a broad range of issues at the intersection of nanotechnology and environment, health and safety. We maintain a public portal for information on nanomaterial environment, health and safety (EHS) at <http://icon.rice.edu>.