

France launches public debate on nanotechnology

By Katie Bird, 29-Sep-2009

France has launched a public debate on nanotechnology in an attempt to involve as many citizens as possible in deciding the future of this emerging technology.

Seventeen public meetings will be held around France, the first of which will take place in Strasbourg on October 15, 2009.

The programme will be led by the Commission of Public Debates (CPDP) and will end with a meeting in Paris on February 23, 2010.

According to president of the CPDP Jean Bergougnot, the debate brings the views of the public to those in decision making roles.

"This debate must inform the public on the complex problems related to nanotechnology, allow the public to put forward their concerns and expectations, and make decision makers aware of their responsibilities," he said.

The programme of public meetings is supported by a website, where practical information about the meetings can be found as well as informative documents from interested parties involved in the technology.

In addition, all the questions submitted by the public will also be found on the site, with the aim of educating the public about nanotechnology, its uses and potential dangers.

Themed public meetings

Each of the seventeen public meetings will be organised around a different theme, related to the region in which it takes place. But, these serve as an organising principle only and participants will have the freedom to approach whatever subject they wish during the discussions.

Strasbourg's meeting will focus on the European regulation of nanotechnology, as well as looking at nanostructured materials.

Orleans's meeting on October 27 will focus on the use of the technology in the pharmaceutical and cosmetic sectors as well as looking at the protection of consumers.

Other themes include protection of those working with the materials, nanoparticles in the organism and the focus on ethics and governance that will be covered in the last session in Paris.

For more information please visit the Nano Public Debate [website](#) .

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