



European Research Headlines

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MICROELECTRONICS

▮ [New EUR 6 billion nanoelectronics R&D programme](#)

MEDEA+, a European-wide collaborative research programme centred on microelectronics and part of the EUREKA project, has announced that CATRENE (Cluster for Application and Technology Research in Europe) is to be the follow-on programme designed to take electronics into the nanoscale era. The new programme has two important novel features: the Lighthouse Project — which will address major socioeconomic needs such as transportation, healthcare, security, energy and entertainment — and a new structure that will focus on large application markets, identified in a roadmap of required technologies.



The new CATRENE programme will help take electronics into the nanoscale era.

The MEDEA+ programme supported 77 projects, involving 20 000 person-years and around 450 partner organisations. The work resulted in important innovations within a number of areas, including automotive and traffic control, broadband communications, secure society, energy saving and healthcare. It should be noted that the new CATRENE public-private partnership will ensure the continued development of European expertise in semiconductor technology and applications. Like MEDEA+ and its predecessors MEDEA and JESSI, the new programme involves all the key actors in the value chain including those working with applications, technology and materials, as well as equipment suppliers. Industrial companies, both large and small, universities, and research institutes will take part with the support of public authorities.

The MEDEA+ Chairman and CATRENE Chairman-elect, Jozef Cornu, says: 'For more than a decade the EUREKA JESSI, MEDEA and MEDEA+ programmes have made it possible for Europe's industry to reinforce its position in semiconductor process technology, manufacturing and applications to become a key supplier to markets such as telecommunications, consumer electronics and automotive electronics.'

The start date for CATRENE is scheduled for 1 January 2008; it will last four years, extendable by another four years, and will operate under the auspices of the EUREKA programme. Commercial participants in EUREKA projects can get half their costs paid by their national governments, while academic institutions can get up to 75 percent of their costs paid. The programme has been earmarked to make use of 4 000 person-years of effort each year, equivalent to EUR 6 billion for the extended programme.

Key technology goals contained within the programme include maintaining and increasing Europe's strength in intellectual property (IP) across the entire electronics supply chain, as well as sustaining and strengthening leadership in lithography and silicon-on-insulator materials and component packaging, and reinforcing European expertise in applying semiconductor process technology to efficient design for new electronics applications. 'Nanoelectronics will offer enormous opportunities to those who are the first to master and bring to market new technologies and applications and we believe that CATRENE will play a vital role in helping Europe's microelectronics industry to go from strength to strength,' underlines Cornu.

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