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Saint-Gobain and the CNRS join forces in Japan

Saint-Gobain, the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) and the National Institute for Materials Science (NIMS) have launched an international joint unit (UMI) in Tsukuba, Japan. The UMI, called Laboratory for Innovative Key Materials and Structures (LINK), was inaugurated in the presence of the French Ambassador to Japan, Thierry Dana. It seeks to develop new materials that may find applications in several of Saint-Gobain's industrial activities, in particular ceramics, grains and powders, crystals, glazing and abrasives. Housed at the NIMS, one of the world's leading materials research laboratories, the UMI associates Saint-Gobain and the CNRS, and is their first joint research unit abroad.

The new laboratory is the result of a long-standing cooperation between the three partners: Saint-Gobain, the CNRS and the NIMS. In France, the CNRS and Saint-Gobain have two joint research units based in Saint-Gobain's research centers in Aubervilliers and Cavaillon. Saint-Gobain and NIMS researchers have been collaborating for five years at the Center of Excellence for Advanced Materials, located at the NIMS in Tsukuba, Japan. After more than 10 years of close cooperation between researchers from the CNRS, the University of Rennes 1 and the NIMS, scientific workshops - held alternatively in France and Japan - were finally introduced in 2011.

The new project is based on an innovative collaboration model involving top-level researchers from Saint-Gobain, the NIMS and the CNRS. The LINK's research will focus on the development of new materials, including their synthesis, elaboration process and the study of their physico-chemical properties. In France, this research will be carried out in close collaboration with the Institute for Chemical Sciences in Rennes, which involves the CNRS, the University of Rennes 1, ENSCR and INSA. It will receive substantial scientific support from the NIMS, which will provide invaluable know-how in the structural characterization of materials and the modeling of their properties.

The project forms part of a program aimed at strengthening Saint-Gobain's upstream research. This scheme is implemented at the international level in collaboration with universities and public-sector research institutes in order to help the group expand its skills and recruit talented young scientists.

The CNRS already has three international joint units in Japan: the Laboratory for Integrated Micro Mechatronics Systems (LIMMS), the Joint Robotics Laboratory (JRL) and the Japanese-French Laboratory for Informatics (JFLI). The creation of the LINK therefore strengthens the CNRS's position in Japan.



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About CNRS

Founded in 1939, the French National Center for Scientific Research is a public research institution. It generates knowledge for the benefit of society. With more than 33,000 employees throughout France, the CNRS produces science in all disciplinary fields, relying on its 1100 research and service units. Many renowned researchers have worked in CNRS research labs at some point in their career. With 20 Nobel laureates and 12 Fields prize winners, the CNRS has a long tradition of excellence. For further information, please click on: <http://www.cnrs.fr/>.

About Saint-Gobain

Saint-Gobain, the world leader in the habitat and construction markets, designs, manufactures and distributes building and high-performance materials, providing innovative solutions to growth, energy efficiency and environmental protection challenges. With sales of €42 billion in 2013, Saint-Gobain operates in 64 countries and has nearly 190,000 employees. For further information about Saint-Gobain, please check our website: www.saint-gobain.com or download the new "Saint-Gobain Shareholder" application for tablets and smartphones.

About the NIMS

The NIMS (National Institute for Materials Science) is Japan's only Independent Administrative Institution (IAI) that specializes in materials science. The NIMS is responsible for managing the basic research and development of materials science and improving expertise in this field. To achieve this objective, the NIMS works with other research centers in Japan and around the world. It also publicly disseminates academic research results and promotes their practical use. The National Institute for Materials Science also educates and trains outstanding and distinguished scientists and engineers in the field of materials science and engineering. Further information on the NIMS is available on: <http://www.nims.go.jp/eng/index.htm>.

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