

WeGaNet – A Strategic Research Network of the German Electroplating Industry

Strategic Research Objectives

WeGaNet aims at new technological solutions to secure the economically and ecologically sustainable development of the industry sector. This includes advanced coatings with new functionalities and optimised life-cycle performance (in particular in terms of energy and material consumption), advanced coating processes offering better adaptability and controllability as well as increased resource efficiency, and new definitions of the supplier and customer relations to optimise production across the value chain.

This strategic objective is being translated into concrete technology development goals, one challenging goal being the development of self-repairing galvanic coatings based on active nano-particles, included according process technology to produce such coatings and adapted measurement and control techniques.

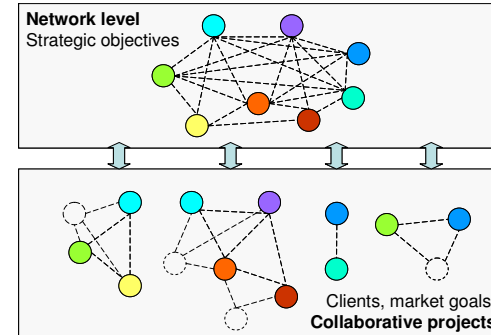
Organisation and Management

Network

- Initiated in 2009, the network presently comprises some 15 active members, including
 - electroplaters,
 - suppliers (chemicals, process equipment, measurement & control),
 - research institutes, and
 - DGO, the industry sector's technical association.
- Common denominator: motivated companies with common problems, willing to share knowledge
- Horizontal and vertical integration:
 - Broad industrial relevance, addressing basic problems of a sector
 - Value chain integration to avoid typical interface problems
- Open network raising growing interest from surface technology companies as well as their customers.
- Long term cooperation agreement ensuring confidentiality, rights and obligations.

Management

- The network is being co-ordinated by DGO, with continuous management support from i.con. innovation since its inception.
- „Hands-on“ management directs both the network’s strategy and the joint planning and implementation of R&D projects:
 - **Strategy:** a clear medium to long term orientation, with concrete implementation roadmap
 - **Implementation:** concrete, individual projects in line with overall strategy, based on ideas from network members and with more short-term, measurable results
- Hence, network management secures that Networking is indeed being transformed from “Not working” to a successful implementation of Open Innovation.



Financing

- Public funding is used to co-finance the technology development projects