



User Guidance Manual

Dear QNano User,

These QNano User guidelines aim at supporting our Users through their interaction with the Transnational Access (TA) element of the QNano infrastructure, and provides detailed guidance on all aspects of the application process, what to expect during your TA visit, and the final reporting requirements. It also describes the services available and the conditions of use, as well as providing contact details for all potential Transnational Access Facility (TAF) hosts to facilitate the development of your application.

Please note that these guidelines are subject to regular updating. So, please make sure you are working with the latest edition. This version (version 2.0) dates from 01.06.2012.

Should you have any queries that are not answered in this User Guidance Manual or the Frequently Asked Questions document, please email your queries to the relevant TAF Administrator whose details can be found at www.qnano-ri.eu or email your query to the User Office ta@qnano-ri.eu.

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1. Introduction

QNano is a European Research Infrastructure (ERI) funded as a 4-year project by the European Commission (EC) within the FP7 “Capacities” Programme. QNano integrates the analytical and nanomaterials characterisation capacities together with the scientific and technological skills of 15 laboratories¹ from 10 European countries to create an analytical research infrastructure whose purpose is to drive high quality research and testing practices in the assessment of the safety (or otherwise) of nanomaterials in order to support the European Commission’s vision of the innovation economy within which nanotechnologies are an enabling technology that will underpin advances across a wide range of technology sectors, as long as they can be implemented in a safe and responsible manner.

Physiochemical and other analytical characterization in the biological and safety context is quite different from analysis of nanomaterials for other applications, as it must be performed *in situ* in the test media, and under dynamic conditions at the interface between materials science and biology. Some of the important (relevant) physiochemical characteristics are not yet fully understood.
















The fact that engineered structures have access to biological machinery, combined with their unique (for example high-surface area) properties, means that material quality and reproducibility are vital for nanomaterials to be regulated. Details such as the tendency of nanomaterials to secrete difficult-to-remove relatively immobile impurities into an organism, or to sequester contaminants from the environment and transport them into living organisms, for example, can have profound consequences for predicting fate and behaviour in different cell types, tissues, complex matrices, organisms, and all require detailed characterisation to be interpreted correctly.

Users of the QNano Transnational Access services will have the opportunity to develop their own research proposals in conjunction with technical experts from the various analytical laboratories, as well as being able to access a wealth of knowledge on all aspects of nanomaterials quality and *in-situ* characterisation, the latest protocols and best practice for nanomaterials characterisation for safety assessment, and, if required, nanomaterials from the QNano Nanomaterials Hub, which are undergoing rigorous testing and characterisation for development as positive and negative control nanomaterials for a range of biological impact end-points. The focus of the research proposals must be on characterisation however, as QNano is an analytical infrastructure, rather than a nanosafety testing facility.

The EC supports Transnational Access to QNano Transnational Access Facilities (TAF) by reimbursing the access costs of the TAFs and the travel expenses of its Users. Selection of Users

¹ Note there are 29 partners in total in QNano, but only 15 are offering Transnational Access.

is via an open competition, with 6-monthly application deadlines, and a full review process. This document explains how external Users can obtain access to the TAFs and laboratories provided by QNano. The QNano consortium is coordinated by University College Dublin (NUID-UCD) and consists of the following partners offering Transnational Access:

Partner name	Short name	Country
University College Dublin	NUID-UCD	Ireland 
Natural History Museum	NHM	United Kingdom 
Joint Research Centre, Institute for Consumer Health and Protection*	JRC	Italy 
Karlsruhe Institute of Technology	KIT	Germany 
Facultes Universitaires Notre-Dame De La Paix	FUNDP	Belgium 
University of Leeds	UNIVLEEDs	United Kingdom 
Norwegian Institute for Air Research	NILU	Norway 
Centro de Investigación Cooperativa en Biomateriales	CIC	Spain 
Uppsala University	UU	Sweden 
Institut Català de Nanotecnologia	ICN	Spain 
Wageningen University	WU	The Netherlands 
Vlaamse Instelling voor Technologisch Onderzoek	VITO	Belgium 
Slovak Medical University	SMU	Slovakia 
Trinity College Dublin	TCD	Ireland 
University of Exeter	UoE	United Kingdom 

* please note that Users working in Italy and/or Belgium are allowed to access JRC's installations.



Summary of the Application process

Applications for access to QNano must be submitted electronically using the application form available from <http://www.qnano-ri.eu/apply-for-access>. The first call for proposals will be launched on 1st November 2011 with a closing date of 31st January 2012, and the following calls will be published at six monthly intervals. Proposals will be reviewed together by the User Selection Panels (see section 2.7.1) at their meeting 8-12 weeks after the call deadlines. Proposals may request the use of one TAF per application and more than one application can be submitted per call however only one application per User per TAF will be approved. Each application can request the use of one or more technologies at that one TAF.

The four categories of access provided under QNano are as follows:

- A: Nanomaterial synthesis;
- B: Nanomaterial labelling & pre-processing;
- C: Nanomaterial characterisation *in situ* & *ex situ*;
- D: Nanomaterial exposure assessment

These are all offered through QNano via the same application form (see section 2.3 Application).

Upon receipt the proposals will be checked for eligibility for Transnational Access (TA) by the Transnational Access Leader (TAL) of the proposed host TAF and also checked for technological feasibility. The TAL will ensure that the relevant technology expert provides feedback on the proposal including the scientific ambition of the proposed work and estimate if the time required is appropriate to the proposed experiments and the TAL will make any additional comments required and return the technological feasibility check to the User Office. All proposals should have been discussed with the technology expert prior to submission, if this does not occur proposals will likely be recommended for resubmission to a subsequent call. Proposals are then forwarded to the User Selection Panel (USP) where they are rated for access. Track record in science and technology of the applicants can also be included in the considerations of the USP. The USP may ask the applicants for clarification of particular points. After acceptance arrangements for the proposed work are made between the proposer and the host TAF. The timing of the proposed work will be subject to the availability of the requested technology/ies at the proposed TAF, but all User visits must be completed within 1 year of offer.

Approval of a proposal and assignment of User time at a TAF under QNano is accompanied by an obligation to publish the results obtained in due time most preferably in ISI refereed journals (see 2.7.2 Conditions of Access).

2. Applying for access

2.1 Who can apply

No fee open access is available for Transnational Access for Users from industry or research institutions located in EU member states and associated states.

EC financial support requires that the results of the work carried out are intended for publication.

For more details see section

2.7.2 Conditions of access.

2.2 What does the award cover

The award covers all research costs in the form of a daily rate. This will be calculated directly from your application form and therefore you need to have discussed your project with your proposed host technology expert in advance of submission. You will not be required to formulate a budget.

The award also covers the cost of your international travel, local accommodation and a per diem which contributes towards your subsistence and local travel. You will be required to meet the cost of local travel in your country of origin, e.g. taxi to the airport.

2.3 Application

You can apply for access to a QNano TAF at any time during an open call via the online application form (<http://www.qnano-ri.eu/apply-for-access>), and all applications will be reviewed together about 8-12 weeks from the call closing date.

QNano will publish two regular calls for proposals each year from 2012-2014 in order to stimulate additional awareness of QNano's offer throughout the European Nanosafety Community. The first call will be published 1st November 2011. There will be additional calls for proposals throughout the project duration, published on the website.

2.3.1 How to apply

The application form should be completed and submitted on-line (<http://www.qnano-ri.eu/apply-for-access>).

There are 3 simple steps to submitting an application:

- Define the work you want to carry out, and ensure that it is within the scope of the QNano research infrastructure (see section 1);



- Select the technologies most appropriate for your needs and discuss your ideas directly with the technology expert at the appropriate TAF or contact the TAL at the relevant TAF who will put you in contact with the relevant technology expert.

- Complete the application form online, which has two sections, firstly the Personal Details section which ensures that you do not have to re-enter your personal information for each subsequent TAF application and your TAF Application details (Project details, further information, facility information and resource needs).

Special notes for completion of a successful application:

Country of home institution: The countries in the drop down list of the online application form are EC member states and associated states. The EC supports TA to QNano of researchers working in organisations based in these countries. Please check that the desired TAF is not located in the country where you work. (If this is the case access may be possible via local arrangement).

Supporting Statement: A supporting statement is requirement for PhD and Postdoctoral applicants. It should be submitted by a senior peer who knows both you and your work first-hand (e.g. supervisor). Please see further details in section X.

Technology Experts: It is essential that you discuss your proposal with the particular technology expert before submitting your proposal via the online system, as you must include a named expert at your proposed TAF. If you are uncertain which technologies to select please contact our User Office (ta@qnano-ri.eu) who will point you in the right direction. A list of technology experts and short technology descriptions are included on the QNano website (www.qnano-ri.eu).

Note: Proposals will only be accepted if written in English, if submitted by the call deadline, and with all information present (including host technology expert contact details). A report on previous QNano User access must be provided before any additional access to QNano TAFs can be approved.

2.3.2 QNano's Scope within the European Research Area

All applications must fit within the remit of QNano and the European Research Area. The main objectives of QNano within the European Research Area are to:

- Support the development and implementation of best practice and high quality research into the interactions of nanomaterials with living systems;
- Promote nanomaterials' characterisation in-situ as the basis for reproducible nanosafety assessment;

- Support researchers to fully characterise their own nanomaterials, before, during and after exposure to living systems, as part of their on-going research in nanosafety or nanomedicine.

Further information can be found in the presentation [European Research Area](#) and on the QNano website www.qnano-ri.eu

2.4 Categories of Access, Technologies and Transnational Access Facilities

The technologies, instruments, processes and TAFs in QNano are operated in different locations under four different categories. They are subject to continuous improvement. Please check the descriptions of the technologies on the QNano website (www.QNano-RI.eu).

A summary of which QNano TAF is offering access under each category is given below, Users can apply to more than one Category per call as long as the instrumentation is located in the one TAF:

TAF	Category of Access			
	A	B	C	D
UCD	√	√	√	√
NHM	√	√	√	√
JRC	√	√	√	√
KIT	√		√	√
FUNDP			√	√
UNIVLEEDS			√	
NILU			√	√
CIC		√	√	√
UU	√		√	
ICN	√		√	
WU	√	√	√	√
VITO			√	√
SMU				√
TCD			√	√
UoE			√	√

- A: Nanomaterial synthesis
- B: Nanomaterial labelling & pre-processing
- C: Nanomaterial characterisation *in situ* & *ex situ*
- D: Nanomaterial exposure assessment

Note that Categories A and B do not necessarily require a physical visit, but can simply be a request for access to specific nanomaterials being developed as part of the QNano Nanomaterials Hub. Users can apply to more than one Category per call as long as the instrumentation is located in the one TAF. The units for measuring access to QNano are days of equipment and laboratory use.



Details of all technologies and capabilities of the TAFs accessible under QNano are given on the QNano website by Category A, B, C or D and by TAF (www.QNano-RI.eu).

Nanomaterials synthesis, labelling and processing (Categories A and B):

The TA facilities in this category were chosen on the basis that they have the capability to produce high quality nanomaterials (unlabelled and labelled) which will be evaluated through the inter-laboratory comparison testing approaches within the QNano Nanomaterials Hub, and provided for TA to Users. Nanomaterials synthesis is brought to a high art by specialist synthetic groupings all of whom have had extensive contact with the biological community, and are well prepared to address the implantation of nanomaterials processing for biological applications and nanosafety assessment. The QNano TA facilities include infrastructure (including synchrotrons) to radiolabel nanomaterials, for optical labelling, such as with quantum dots, and uniquely, to isotope-label nanomaterials which is being pioneered by QNano partners as a means to distinguish between engineered and anthropogenic nanoscale materials, especially in environmental contexts.

Nanomaterials characterisation *in situ* and *ex situ* (Category C):

In situ characterization of nanomaterials is highly developed in QNano partner laboratories, including the characterisation of the nanoparticle 'protein corona' which is now believed to be the primary object for most nanomaterials in contact with living organisms. QNano TA partners have developed new approaches to physico-chemically characterizing nanoparticles within living organisms, using tools from proteomics, lipidomics, and various forms of spectroscopy, as well as having developed model systems for assessment of the biological impacts of nanomaterials and characterisation of nanomaterials in food or in the environment.

Nanomaterials dose-response and exposure assessment (category D):

Several of the TA facilities have very strong backgrounds in assessment of nanomaterial impacts, including characterisation of nanomaterials dose-response effects, and development of *in vitro* approaches. Several TA facilities offer access to *in vivo* exposure chambers for small animals (run under GLP conditions in some cases) which are unique in the world. The team also includes the only facility for quantitative biokinetics studies using radio-labelled nanomaterials. Several of the TA facilities also include novel models / technical approaches that are being applied to the development of alternative approaches for nanomaterials testing (to reduce the current reliance on animal testing strategies).

2.5 Online Application Form

Guide to using the application form:

2.5.1 Registration

Once you have registered at <http://www.qnano-ri.eu/apply-for-access> you can complete an application form to visit your chosen TAF. The registration process allows you to generate an application for each project that you propose, save it and then edit it where appropriate before finally submitting it/them for assessment. Please note that only one application will be accepted per User per TAF per call. Should a User apply to two TAFs with two separate project applications, these can both be accepted if approved by the USP, but one of these will be considered as repeat visit and priority will be given to new Users.

Should a User apply to two TAFs for the same project application (joint application) a very good justification is required in order for one application to be allowed visit two TAFs. For a joint application the User must submit one application indicating on the application form that it is a joint application and indicating the two TAFs that the User needs to access.

There will be two calls per year from 2012 - 2014.

2.5.2 Applying to more than one TAF under a call

If you require access to more than one TAF you must complete another TAF application, however, your personal details only have to be submitted once.

2.5.3 Personal details and the application form

The application form has two sections. Firstly the Personal Details section which ensures that you do not have to re-enter your personal information for each subsequent TAF application. This information will be attached to each TAF application upon submission. If you wish to update these details please go into the 'Update your details' section to amend and save them. The TAF Application details (Project details, further information, facility information and resource needs). Please refer to section 2.6 for further information.

2.5.4 Applying as a User Group

No User Groups have been established for the 1st call. In this section on the application form, please enter No and then n/a to the subsequent questions in this section.

2.5.5 Submission and Receipt of TAF applications

You must submit your application for assessment BEFORE the deadline for it to be eligible for consideration. Once you have submitted a TAF application you will not be able to make any further changes. You will receive an email to confirm that we have received your application.



Receipt of the application will be acknowledged. If you do not receive an acknowledgement by email which will include your application reference (e.g. XXX-TAF-01) within two working days please contact the User Office (ta@qnano-ri.eu). The status of proposals can be tracked online by using your login and password provided upon registering, if you forget your password this can be retrieved on the login page.

2.5.6 Supporting statement (for PhD/Postdoctoral applicants)

The supporting statement is required by PhD and Postdoctoral applicants only, this will be used as a reference. Therefore, it should be provided by a senior peer who knows both you and your work first-hand (e.g. supervisor).

Once you request the supporting statement an email will be sent with your attached application form to your designated supporter. The supporter will then need to complete the statement BEFORE the call deadline and submit it online as per the instructions received in the email. Late statements will not be accepted.

Once they have submitted the supporting statement, an email will be sent to the QNano TAF Administrator and the applicant with a copy of the completed application.

Only applications with completed supporting statements will be eligible for consideration by the QNano User Selection Panel (USP).

Please note that an applicant can submit their completed application without their supporting statement. The supporting statement will be added once it has been completed.

Note: All other applicants who do not require a supporting statement, please add n/a to all lines in this part of the application, and use nosupporter@qnano-ri.eu as the email address.

Supporting statements cannot be sent via email as they are an integrated part of the application and it becomes available to the USP. The QNano software is modelled on the European Commission's Marie Curie Action System, and has been approved by the Commission as an acceptable method of collecting applications and associated information.

2.5.7 Website timeout

Please note that for security reasons the system will timeout after 30 minutes of inactivity. If you have not saved your application during your session you will lose new data.

Note: In the web application form the ? symbol indicates additional information provided.

Once you have finished a session please make sure you click logout.

2.6 Project Proposal

The details requested in the application form are necessary for our reporting duties to the EC and for the assessment of your proposal. Please read the conditions of EC support before submitting your application (see section

2.7.2 Conditions of access).

2.6.1 Project summary

State clearly the objectives of the proposed application together with the general and specific scientific background and project methodology; give results of preliminary work.

Please explain the scientific importance and originality of your proposal and expected outputs. Especially for scientists who are new in the field they apply for, the following questions might be helpful when writing an application for access at QNano:

- Tell us what you want to measure, why it is new or interesting?
- Why do you need the use of the particular technologies requested at the proposed TAF for your measurements?
- Roughly estimate the instrument time required.
- Do you have experience in the measurements / technologies proposed?
- Please give references, preferably own publications.

Method(s): The suitability and necessity of the proposed methods and equipment for the proposed application should be clearly described. Queries concerning the feasibility (technical or safety aspects) of a proposed application should be clarified with the relevant technology expert before the proposal is submitted.

Results expected: Describe the results expected from the application to QNano, their scientific or technical relevance.

2.6.2 Safety

Ensuring safety of our Users and staff is the highest priority at QNano. Therefore, any information relevant to safety has to be disclosed in the proposals. Safety comprises everything from the use of toxic materials, radioactive samples, potentially hazardous biological materials, dangerous equipment, and others.

Failure to provide sufficient information will automatically void the application.

2.6.3 Ethical approvals

If any ethical approvals are required for your research, please indicate whether these are already in place in your home institution or whether they must be applied for at the host institute.

Failure to include a statement on ethical requirements will automatically void the application.



2.7 What happens after submitting a proposal

The following stages in the proposal handling are indicated in the system:

- Notification of receipt of application sent.
- The application form is checked for completion and eligibility for Transnational Access and any other supplementary information is sent to the TAL and technology experts of the requested TAFs. This information is also sent to the technology experts of TAFs with similar capabilities.
- The application is returned to the User Office along with the feasibility report and an estimate of the time required for the work.
- The User Office forwards the collected information and application to the USP. Members of this panel are experts in the relevant areas of science and technology and are appointed by the QNano Transnational Access Steering Group (TASG).
- The USP assesses the proposal according to scientific excellence and gives a recommendation.
- The User Office is informed of the recommendation. The USP may request more information or clarification. In this case the User Office acts as “go between” between the User and the USP, and the proposal may be recommended for re-submission to the subsequent call.
- The Users, TALs and technology experts are notified of the results of the USP.
- The Users and technology experts make technical and practical arrangements for the visit, with the assistance of the TAF administrator. Each TAF has their own process for booking flights and accommodation, please contact the User office or the relevant TAF administrator and they will advise you of the process.
- Please refer to the User Checklist provided in Annex 2 upon being awarded access to a QNano TAF.
- Carry out work. Work must start within 12 months of approval of the User application.
- Complete QNano User Evaluation Form (see Annex 3) which is accessible through the online system. Note: The European Commission also have a confidential User questionnaire that you are required to complete, details of which are found at http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/capacities/questionnaire_en.html.
- Publish results by the User, including the appropriate acknowledgement of the QNano support (see section 3.5 Acknowledgements) and details of all publications entered into the QNano online application system (via your User login and password).
- The application process takes between 8-12 weeks from the call deadline. Once the USP has met and agreed the allocation of awards the results of your application will be emailed to you and your host TAF.

2.7.1 User Selection Panel

Each User application is evaluated by an international User Selection Panel (USP). Members of this board are experts in the relevant areas of science and technology and are appointed by the QNano Transnational Access Steering Group (TASG).

The USP follow standard guidelines for reviewing all User applications. The work is assessed on the main criteria of scientific and technological excellence, however other criteria are considered, such as:

- Realistic methodological approach and work plan;
- the potential impact of the research on the European Research Area;
- the value of supporting statement (PhD and Postdoctoral Researches only)
- the strength of the justification for requested access to service/facilities for the TA;
- the value of expected gains and outputs
- the CV of the applicant;
- the potential for ongoing research collaboration from the proposal.

Once the Panel has marked the applications they will meet at the USP meeting to discuss their scores and recommendations. The degree of demand for individual TAFs and previous use by the user are also considered.

2.7.2 Conditions of access

No fee access is only available for TA i.e., the User must travel to a country that is not the country in which they are currently working. Users must be from organisations in EU member or associated states, or belong to Approved User Groups.

Users and their hosts are required to sign the User Agreement (see Annex 4) prior to the commencement of the User visit / Access. Upon arrival at a TAF, Users are required to sign the Rules and Regulations of the host institution. These may vary slightly from institution to institution, but the generic template is shown in Annex 5. Should Users home institutions require sight of all documents prior to signature, the institution-specific version of the Rules and Regulations form can be requested from the User Office (ta@qnano-ri.eu) prior to the visit.

Intellectual property generated within the projects belongs to the User. However only Users and User Groups with the right to publish results are entitled to access free of charge. For format of the required acknowledgement see section 3.5 Acknowledgements.

The User should note that the EC has the right to publish the list of Users from all of its Research Infrastructures. Reports from User visits made by the QNano project coordinator to the EC will contain the names, nationalities, home institutions and description of the work of all Users funded through QNano.



2.7.3 Time allocation

The User Selection Panel (USP) reviews the proposals and ranks them according to scientific and technological merit.

Time at specific equipment / TAFs is allocated according to the recommendations of the USP and the QNano Transnational Access Steering Group, and is based on the estimated access time in the feasibility check. The time allocation process is based on a close interaction between Users and QNano technology experts following the USP process.

2.7.4 Safety requirements

Prior to your visit at any QNano TAF it is necessary to read the General Safety Regulations of the access provider inside the QNano consortium.

Users who carry potentially dangerous materials and/or equipment must notify the User Office and host TAF in advance of the visit.

Any additional equipment installed by the User has to meet the national (and in special cases the QNano partner's) safety regulations which will be checked by our safety officers.

3. Assistance and collaboration

3.1 Technology experts

An assigned QNano technology expert is responsible for each piece of technology at each TAF. It is mandatory that the User contacts the technology expert of the TAF they wish to visit prior to submitting a proposal. The technology expert will serve as your local contact in the development of your application.

Details of the local technology experts are given on www.qnano-ri.eu/access. Should you need assistance with choosing which technologies you should apply for please contact the TAL for the facility and they will assign a technology expert to you alternatively contact the User Office at ta@qnano-ri.eu.

3.2 Transnational Access Leader

Each TAF has an assigned TAL who is responsible for the overall management of the TA access at their specific TAF. Details of the local TAL are given on www.qnano-ri.eu/access.

3.3 TAF Administrator

There is a dedicated TAF administrator for each TAF, the TAF admin can assist with booking arrangements for your proposed visit and will ensure with the relevant documentation is completed at the start and end of your visit. Details of the local TAF admin are given on www.qnano-ri.eu/access.

3.4 Collaborations

QNANO encourages collaborations between Users and QNano staff. Such collaborations are especially relevant in cases where researchers from QNano access providers are expected to develop techniques or processes that are beyond the current state-of-the-art. Collaboration should be agreed on before a proposal is submitted but in any case well before the work on a project commences.

3.5 Acknowledgements

Irrespective of special arrangements such as those under point 3.4 Collaborations, publications resulting from work at QNano have to contain an acknowledgement according to the following pattern:

“This research received support from the QNano Project <http://www.qnano-ri.eu> which is financed by the European Community Research Infrastructures under the FP7 Capacities Programme (Grant No. INFRA-2010-262163), and its partner [Insert Partner Name].”

A similar acknowledgement should be included during conference presentations, including the proceedings, and at other public presentations.



The name of the TAF and technology expert may also be given in the acknowledgement.

3.6 Publications

The details of all publications relating to work in QNano must be submitted on the User online system.. Please indicate the type of publication: Scientific Journal, Book, Patent, Proceedings, article on www, other. These publications should also carry the acknowledgement given above.

A pdf file of the publication and full citation details of a publication as soon as it has been accepted or published should also be sent to ta@qnano-ri.eu.

We need this information in order to monitor the success of our Open access and are required to report this information in our regular project reports.

Please bear in mind, that your publication record will also be made available to the USP and will impact the success of future applications.

3.7 Importing equipment

All visitors bringing material, including samples or equipment to one of the QNano partner organisations, TAFs or laboratories are advised that such equipment or material remains entirely in the responsibility of the visitors concerned.

4. After the access is completed

4.1 Project follow up

After your visit to one of our partners a User Evaluation form is required on your visit which may seem minor but are quite important to us. The information required is essential for our project reporting to the EC and recovery of the access costs from them, it is also important for improving our services therefore we are most grateful for the time you spend completing the forms.

The User Evaluation Form should be completed within four weeks of your visit. This should be submitted online using your User login and password.

4.1.1 User Evaluation Form

User Evaluation Forms are to be submitted online using your User login and password.

Please note our EC funding for the access activities is dependent upon our reporting of this information. Therefore we are grateful for the completion of this form. We are also continually looking to improve our services and therefore appreciate your feedback in this form.

The template of the Evaluation form is shown in Annex 3.

In addition, the European Commission requests that Users complete their confidential questionnaire, which can be found under the link: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/capacities/questionnaire_en.html. The link to the personal questionnaire will be sent by the EC following completion of the visit, as informed by the QNano User Office.

Annexes

Annex 1: TA User application form

The TA User application form is an online application form. There are two sections the personal details section and the application section. The personal details section only needs to be completed once the same information can be used then for all subsequent applications. Please see below the personal details and application questions for reference.

Application - Project details	
User Group Details	<p>Are you the User Group Leader? There are no User Groups assigned for this call therefore click no and put N/A in the next 3 questions.</p> <p>If No, name of the User group leader? N/A</p> <p>If No, home institution of the User group leader? N/A</p> <p>Name(s) of the other User(s) in your User group? N/A</p>
Proposed project:	Project title (max 225 characters)
Project Objectives:	(max 100 words)
Proposed length of visit:	
Proposed start date and end date:	
Which TAF do you propose to visit (If you require access to more than one TAF you must complete a separate application form for each)	
Which other TAFs do you need to visit to complete your proposed project? Please briefly explain why you need access to these other TAFs.	
<p>Have you had a visit to this or any other TAF(s) funded by Qnano? If yes which TAF(s)</p> <p>If Yes, please give your application number(s) and describe the output(s) delivered from your prior visit(s)</p>	
Further Information	
Project discipline and Project specific discipline.	Please choose from drop down boxes provided in application system
Project summary using non technical	

terminology only (maximum 2000 characters including spaces)	
Scientific content and project methodology including a detailed work plan with timetable for planned activities during the period of research at the TAF, so it is clear what you will actually be doing during your visit. (maximum 2500 characters including spaces)	
Reasons for requesting access to the Infrastructure (maximum 2500 characters including spaces)	
What do you expect to gain from your visit (maximum 2000 characters including spaces)	
Expected outputs resulting from your visit (maximum 2000 characters including spaces)	
Training, Safety and Ethical requirements (Please include statement on each)	
Facility Information	
Is this your first application for support to visit XXX-TAF under the QNano project? If no please give details including previous Project Acronyms	
Is this your first visit to XXX-TAF (including non-Qnano funded visits). If no, please give details including dates and who your visit was funded by.	
If no, was it related to this project?	
Do you have the requested combination of facilities and expertise in your home country? If yes, please explain why you need access to a similar facility under XXX-TAF	
Name of XXX-TAF technology expert	

<p>that you expect to be your host. (If you are applying to access more than one piece of equipment please name a technology expert for each instrument within the TAF that you are applying for. Please ensure that you have contacted the relevant technology expert(s) through your host TAL.</p>	
<p>Have you contacted your proposed host technology expert about your visit?</p>	
<p>Resource needs</p>	<p>In this section the applicant chooses the TAF they wish to visit and the technologies that they require to use including the number of days of access required for each facility/piece of equipment.</p>
<p>Supporting Statement</p>	<p>The supporting statement will be used as a reference for PhD/Postdoctoral applicants. Therefore it should be provided by a senior peer who knows both you and your work first-hand (e.g. supervisor) Information required:</p> <p>Supporter name: Institution: Position: Email address: Phone number:</p>

Annex 2: User Checklist

What	Who	When	Achieved
<i>Pre-arrival</i>			
Have the dates been agreed between User and technology expert?	User	3 months prior to visit	Y / N
Have flights and accommodation arrangements for the appropriate dates and within budget been discussed with the TAF Administrator?	User and TAF Administrator	2 months prior to visit	Y / N
Have any necessary materials / samples been secured?	User / TAL	1 month prior to visit	Y / N / NA
Has any necessary ethical approvals been secured?	User / TAL	1 month prior to visit	Y / N / NA
Have any necessary visa or immigration documents been secured (if applicable)?	User	1 month prior to visit	Y / N / NA
Has the User been provided with details of how to travel to the institution, and when to arrive and who will meet them?	TAF Administrator	2 weeks prior to visit	Y / N
<i>On Arrival</i>			
Have both the User and the Host TAL signed the User Agreement form (Annex 4) and arrival forms?	User & TAL/TAF Admin	1 week prior to visit	Y / N
Has the User been given their per diem for the visit duration? (This will depend upon the regulations of the TAF please discuss with the TAF administrator)	User / TAF Administrator	Day 1 of visit	Y / N
Has the User been given the local safety instructions, access card & other necessary papers?	TAL / TAF Administrator	Day 1 of visit	Y / N
<i>During the access visit</i>			
Has a User seminar been arranged to allow the User to present their ongoing research at the TAF?	TAL / User	During visit	Y / N



<i>Post access visit</i>			
Has the User completed the TA User Evaluation Form	User / TAF Administrator	Within 4 weeks of visit	Y / N

Annex 3: User Evaluation Form

The User Evaluation Form is completed online, please see the Evaluation Form below for reference.

User Name	
Project Title	
TAF Name	
Technologies Accessed	
Project/Unique ID	
Visit Dates	
Technology Expert Name	
Host Department	
Project Objectives (maximum 100 words)	
Project Achievements including summary of work carried out (maximum 400 words)	
Training Received	
How would you rate the training received?	Excellent, Very Good, Good, Poor
Seminars attended and given whilst at TAF. Please give brief abstract of each seminar given.	
Would you still have been able to carry out your work at this research infrastructure without the support of QNano TA	
If no to the above question please state why not.	
How would you rate the administrative support provided for your TAF (including travel and accommodation arrangements, provision of desk space, internet	Excellent, Very Good, Good, Poor

access etc.)	
How would you rate the layout of the website and the information provided on the technologies available?	Excellent, Very Good, Good, Poor
How would you rate the application process and information provided in the User Guidance Manual?	Excellent, Very Good, Good, Poor
How would you rate the assistance with choice of technologies?	Excellent, Very Good, Good, Poor
How would you rate the assistance with experimental design and work plan preparation?	Excellent, Very Good, Good, Poor
How would you rate your visit to the TAF overall?	
How does the TAF compare to any other TAF(s) which you have visited?	
Would your research benefit from access to another TAF?	
If yes to the above, which TAF(s) and why?	
Are there any ways that you can suggest to improve Qnano TA User access for future visitors?	
Any further comments	

Annex 4: User Agreement

User Agreement

Between

.....(Name of the Transnational Access provider)

.....(Address of the Transnational Access provider)

- hereinafter referred to as “....”

and

.....(Name of the User)

.....(Address of the User)

- hereinafter referred to as “....”

WHEREAS, following an award of funding by the European Commission to a project “A pan-European infrastructure for quality in nanomaterials safety testing (QNano)” under the Seventh Framework Programme of the European Commission,(*Name of the Transnational Access provider*) and other parties entered into a Grant Agreement with the European Commission (the “Grant Agreement”), specifying, inter alia, the activities to be undertaken in QNano.

WHEREAS,(*Name of the Transnational Access provider*) and other parties have also entered into a Consortium Agreement whereby the(*Name of the Transnational Access provider*) and the other parties have, between themselves, specified and supplemented the provisions of the Grant Agreement.

WHEREAS, according to Section 4.1 of this Consortium Agreement User Agreement each Party providing Transnational Access to its installation (TAF) to the selected Users shall enter into a User Agreement.

WHEREAS,(*Name of the Transnational Access provider*) is prepared to provide access to its installations (TAFs) (*specifications of the installations (TAFs) and the Category of Access to be provided, as per the DoW*).

WHEREAS,(*Name of the User*) has considerable expertise and experience in the field of and is interested in having access to the installations (TAFs) of(*Name of the Transnational Access provider*).

NOW THEREFORE,(*Name of the Transnational Access provider*) and(*Name of the User*) have agreed as follows:

I General Principles

....(*Name of the Transnational Access provider*) provide, from (*date*) to (*date*), access free of charge to(*Name of the User*) to its installation (TAF), indicated above, which is managed by it, including, according to the Grant Agreement, all the logistical, technical and technological, and scientific support as well as specific training, that is normally provided to external researchers using the TAF.

....(*Name of the User*) shall conform to the safety, security, ethical and specific regulations, inclusive of the respective general and specific instructions of the(*Name of the Transnational Access provider*).

....(*Name of the User*) is obliged to comply with the Terms and Conditions of the Grant Agreement (Appendix 1) and with the terms of Consortium Agreement (Appendix 2).

The Transnational Access of(*Name of the User*) to the installation (TAF) of(*Name of the Transnational Access provider*) will be subject to the proof of any relevant insurance policies according to the requirements of the Transnational Access provider, and to the provision of proof of all of the required ethical approvals for the proposed research being in place.

II Confidentiality

All information in whatever form or mode of transmission, which is disclosed by a *Party* (the "*Disclosing Party*") to any other *Party* (the "*Recipient*") in connection with the *Project* during its implementation and which has been explicitly marked as "confidential", or when disclosed orally, has been identified as confidential at the time of disclosure and has been confirmed and designated in writing within 15 days at the latest as confidential information by the *Disclosing Party*, is "Confidential Information".

The *Recipients* hereby undertake in addition and without prejudice to any commitment of non-disclosure under the *Grant Agreement*, for a period of 5 years after the end of the *Project*:

- not to use Confidential Information otherwise than for the purpose for which it was disclosed;
- not to disclose Confidential Information to any third party without the prior written consent by the *Disclosing Party*;
- to ensure that internal distribution of Confidential Information by a *Recipient* shall take place on a strict need-to-know basis; and
- to return to the *Disclosing Party* on demand all Confidential Information which has been supplied to or acquired by the *Recipients* including all copies thereof and to delete all information stored in a machine readable form. If needed for the recording of ongoing obligations, the *Recipients* may however request to keep a copy for archival purposes only.

The *Recipients* shall be responsible for the fulfilment of the above obligations on the part of their employees and shall ensure that their employees remain so obliged, as far as legally possible, during and after the end of the *Project* and/or after the termination of employment.

The above shall not apply for disclosure or use of Confidential Information, if and in so far as the *Recipient* can show that:

- the Confidential Information becomes publicly available by means other than a breach of the *Recipient's* confidentiality obligations;
- the *Disclosing Party* subsequently informs the *Recipient* that the Confidential Information is no longer confidential;
- the Confidential Information is communicated to the *Recipient* without any obligation of confidence by a third party who is in lawful possession thereof and under no obligation of confidence to the *Disclosing Party*;
- the disclosure or communication of the Confidential Information is foreseen by provisions of the *Grant Agreement*;
- the Confidential Information, at any time, was developed by the *Recipient* completely independently of any such disclosure by the *Disclosing Party*;
- the Confidential Information was already known to the *Recipient* prior to disclosure.

The *Recipient* shall apply the same degree of care with regard to the Confidential Information disclosed within the scope of the *Project* as with its own confidential and/or proprietary information, but in no case less than reasonable care.

Each *Party* shall promptly advise the other *Party* in writing of any unauthorised disclosure, misappropriation or misuse by any person of Confidential Information as soon as practicable after it becomes aware of such unauthorised disclosure, misappropriation or misuse.

If any *Party* becomes aware that it will be required, or is likely to be required, to disclose Confidential Information in order to comply with applicable laws or regulations or with a court or administrative order, it shall, to the extent it is lawfully able to do so, prior to any such disclosure

- notify the *Disclosing Party*, and
- comply with the *Disclosing Party's* reasonable instructions to protect the confidentiality of the information.

The confidentiality obligations under this User Agreement and the Grant Agreement shall not prevent the communication of Confidential Information to the Project Coordinator and thereby to the European Commission.

III Publicity

...(Name of the User) have the same rights and obligations in regard to publicity as referred to for the ...(Name of the Transnational Access provider) in Annex II.9 of the Grant Agreement.

In particular, ...(Name of the User) shall suitably acknowledge the support provided by the European Commission and the Transnational Access provided to the User by the QNano research infrastructure.

The Commission is authorised to publish, in whatever form and on or by whatever medium, including the internet, the relevant data of ...(Name of the User).

IV Access Rights

...(Name of the Transnational Access provider) grants ...(Name of the User) non-transferable, non exclusive Access Rights to its Background² and Foreground³ on a royalty-free basis if needed by ...(Name of the User) to carry out its own work under the QNano Project.

...(Name of the Transnational Access provider) will inform, as soon as possible, ...(Name of the User) of any restriction which might substantially affect the granting of Access Rights.

...(Name of the User) grants(Name of the Transnational Access provider) non-transferable, non exclusive Access Rights to its Background and Foreground on a royalty-free basis if needed by ...(Name of the User) to carry out its own work under the QNano Project.

V Liability

1. In respect to any information or materials (including Foreground and Background) supplied by one Party to another under this User Agreement, no warranty or representation of any kind is made, given or implied as to the sufficiency or fitness for purpose, nor as to the absence of any infringement of any proprietary rights of third parties.
2. Each Party shall be liable for the damage and losses suffered by the other Party due to a wilful act or gross negligence. However, subject to the Transnational Access provider's specific rules no Party shall be liable to the other Party for indirect or consequential loss or damages, such as but not limited to, loss of profit, loss of revenue or loss of contracts, provided such damage was not caused by a wilful act.

VI Disputes and Governing Law

1. This User Agreement shall be construed according to and will be governed by the laws of Belgium.
2. All disputes arising out of, or in connection with, this User Agreement, which cannot be resolved amicably, shall first be referred to the Transnational Access Steering Group for resolution and if unsuccessful to the Executive Coordination Board which shall attempt to mediate between the Parties. If the dispute cannot be resolved in this manner it shall be finally settled under the Rules of Arbitration of the International Chamber of Commerce by one or more arbitrators appointed in accordance with the said Rules.

The place of arbitration shall be Brussels unless otherwise agreed by the Parties.

The award of the arbitration will be final and binding upon the Parties.

Nothing in this User Agreement shall limit the Parties' right to seek injunctive relief or to enforce arbitration award in any applicable competent court of law.

² Definition of Background is given in Annex II.1 of the Grant Agreement

³ Definition of Foreground is given in Annex II.1 of the Grant Agreement

VII Miscellaneous

1. Rights and obligations arising from this User Agreement shall not be assignable without the prior written consent of the other Party.
2. Any alterations and amendments to this User Agreement shall be in writing, and copied to the Coordinator, to be effective. This requirement can only be waived in writing.
3. Should a provision of this User Agreement be or become invalid, this shall not affect the validity of the rest of the User Agreement as a whole. The Parties shall make a concerted attempt to reach retrospectively an agreement on a new valid provision the result of which shall reflect as much as possible the invalid provision which it will replace.

The Transnational Access provider may refuse proposed access to its TAF on the grounds that while ethical approval has been granted by the proposed User's institution, the research does not meet the criteria for ethical approval in the Transnational Access provider.

4. The following Appendices shall be an integral part of this Agreement:

Appendix 1: QNano Grant Agreement

Appendix 2: QNano Consortium Agreement

Signatures

.....
(Name of Transnational Access Provider)

.....
(Name of the User)



Annex 5: QNano TA User Rules & Regulations

The regulations and guidelines detailed below must be read and adhered to by all Transnational Access Users of the QNano research infrastructure.⁴

Both User and Host should sign two copies of this form. One copy is retained by the Host (a scanned copy to be sent to ta@qnano-ri.eu and the second copy is retained by the User.

-
1. Access to the TAF must follow the [*Insert TAF Name*] procedures.
 2. As a holder of a temporary access pass you will be able to access the building between 8 am and 7.30 pm. If you wish to work after 7.30 pm or at weekends it is at approval of the Head of School (HoD). Authorisation must be arranged by your Host and via the HoD. Specific departmental procedures will be supplied by the Host to the User upon arrival at [*Insert TAF Name*].
 3. Departmental safety guidance notes, Codes of Conduct including Health and Safety and Fire Evacuation procedures should be read and signed, where appropriate, on arrival and adhered to at all times. (It is the Host's responsibility to ensure that each User is given copies of relevant documents and signs copies of them where appropriate).
 4. The equipment in the laboratories and facilities is covered by service agreements and is maintained in the best possible working order. In the event of equipment failure, which is beyond the reasonable control of [*Insert TAF Name*], which impacts upon the scheduled access of the QNano User, [*Insert TAF Name*] shall not be obliged to automatically grant an extension to the visit to permit the delayed work to be completed. Every effort will be made to accommodate the needs of the QNano User. However, due to the scheduled booking system for the equipment, in some instances, QNano Users may have to forego some access.
 5. The European Commission Code of Conduct on responsible nanotechnologies⁵ should be read on arrival and adhered to at all times. The Host is responsible for distributing this document on arrival and ensuring that the User adheres to the conditions within it.
 6. Any publication resulting from collaboration under QNano TA should acknowledge **"This research received support from the QNano Project <http://www.qnano-ri.eu> which is financed by the European Community Research Infrastructures under the FP7 Capacities Programme (Grant No. INFRA-2010-262163), and its partner [*Insert Partner Name*]."**

⁴ Each TAL to adapt this form for their TAF, and return the revised form to Ms. Aine Moore (ta@qnano-ri.eu)

⁵ <ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/docs/nanocode-recommendation.pdf>

7. The User should deposit copies of all resultant publications with their Host (1 copy) and with the QNano Project Office. Details of all outputs should be entered onto the QNano website and updated regularly.
8. Users should not talk to the Press about any aspects of the QNano Project without first discussing the matter with their Host and the QNano Programme Manager.
9. All QNano Users will have free access to the citation/abstract information through the PubMed or the Web of Science during their visit.
10. Personal Laptops and Memory sticks can only be used in *[Insert TAF Name]* PCs/MACs once they have been virus checked by IT. Please contact *[insert appropriate contact person / details]* to have your memory stick checked. The IP address of personal laptops will be recorded, and must be used in accordance with *[Insert TAF Name]* IT guidelines, which will be provided by the Host.
11. Users without their own lap-top will be provided with use of a laptop or desktop computer for the duration of their visit. Laptops must be returned to the host at the end of the visit. Failure to do so will result in your home institute being charged the replacement cost.
12. *[Insert TAF Name]* Users shall be given access to a printer for printing of research-related articles. Fair usage policies will apply, and number of pages printed will be monitored (via computer IP address):
 - 200 black and white A4 copies free of charge (for visits of ten working days and under)
 - 400 black and white A4 copies free of charge (for visits over ten working days' duration).
 - Any additional copies will be charged directly to the User.
13. The User will collect a *per diem* allowance for local travel and subsistence on a weekly basis from the Host *[or finance office – add details as appropriate]*. The daily allowance is €100 and includes the cost of B&B accommodation.
14. The User will complete the User Evaluation form on www.qnano-ri.eu within one week of your visit.
15. The Commission's official and confidential questionnaire must be completed and submitted to the Commission within one month of the end of the visit. The Commission will be notified once the visit is complete.



16. All QNano Users are covered by workers insurance while on the premises of the TAF. Neither QNano nor [*Insert TAF Name*] are responsible for the provision of Insurance for medical requirements or personal possessions. It is the direct responsibility of the User to arrange adequate personal insurance for the duration of the visit under QNano funding.

I the undersigned User agree to abide by the rules detailed above.

User Name

User Signature

Date:

Host Signature (witness)

Date:

Please return an electronic copy of the signed form to ta@qnano-ri.eu

Abbreviations

TA – **Transnational Access**

TAF – **Transnational Access Facility**

TAL – **Transnational Access Leader**

TA Admin – **User Office Transnational Access Administrator**

TAF Admin – **Transnational Access Facility Administrator**

USP – **User Selection Panel**

Glossary

Access provider: means the beneficiary that is in charge of providing access to the infrastructure(s) or installations(s).

Infrastructure: means a facility, a resource (or a coherent set of them) together with the related services that are used by the scientific community to conduct research.

TAF/Installation: means a part of an infrastructure that could be used independently from the rest.

User: means a researcher applying for access, either individually or as part of a User Group, including the User Group leader.

User Group: means a research team of one or more researchers given access to the infrastructure under the QNano project. The User Group leader and majority of the Users must work in an institution established in a Member State or Associated State. The User Group leader and majority of the Users should work in a country other than where the TAF/Installation to be visited is based.

Transnational Access: means the provision of cost free access to Users to the 15 TAFs/Installations offering Transnational Access, in response to TA calls via the QNano website.