



**SUSNANOFAB**  
*Grant Agreement No. 882506*



# Governance Structure of the Digital Platform

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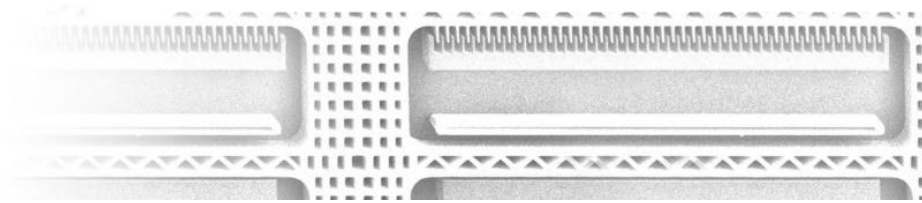


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## Table of Figures

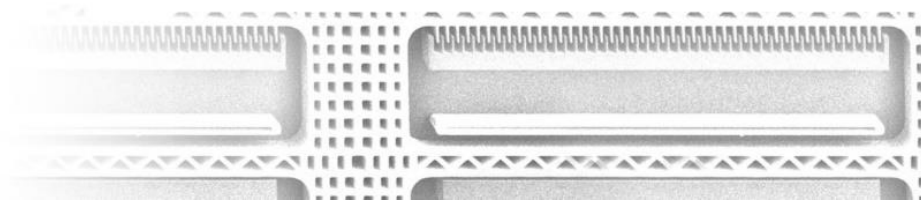
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## Executive Summary

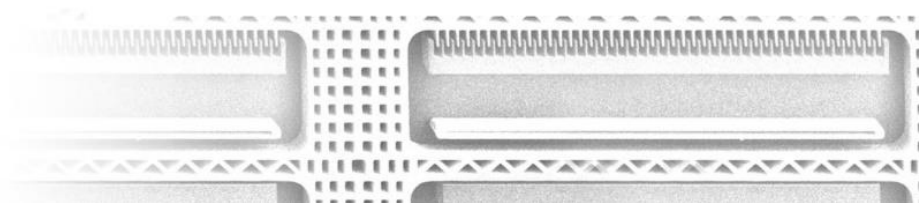
This document is a deliverable of the SUSNANOFAB project – a coordination and support action to promote a competitive and sustainable nanofabrication industry - funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Programme, under Grant Agreement #882506.

SUSNANOFAB is a concerted sustainable action that will establish a robust network on nanofabrication that tackles the missing links between policies, infrastructure, expertise and industry requirements. The SUSNANOFAB project proposes an integrated strategy at a European level that articulates the whole value-chain, aiming at the promotion of a competitive and sustainable nanofabrication industry.

At a strategic level, the project is committed to delivering an EU-wide Strategic Roadmap on Nanofabrication. This roadmap among other will cover nanofabrication aspects from design to manufacturing upscaling, environmental sustainability, health & ethics matters, as well as future skills & capabilities. At an operational and end-user level, the project will develop an Open Access Digital Platform that interoperates with current platforms, projects and other initiatives at the European level.

This deliverable is developed within WP5 – Stakeholders engagement, dissemination, communication and exploitation – that includes the development of the SUSNANOFAB Open Access Digital Platform, a “one stop shop” of information and communication related to nanofabrication. This platform will be the catalyst of the nanomanufacturing ecosystem, which will connect and enhance the European nanomanufacturing related networks, create a sustainable community of stakeholders and facilitate the delivery of SUSNANOFAB's services and activities coming out of its working groups, brokerage and training services, roadmap, best practices and more.

The Governance Structure of the Digital Platform will define the responsibilities for the governance bodies and their key roles of the platform, during and after the project completion. The present document will also serve as the initial step for the development of the business plan for the sustainability of the Digital Platform in the long-term.





## I. Introduction

This document is Deliverable 5.4 “Governance Structure of the Digital Platform” (henceforth referred to as D5.4) of the SUSNANOFAB project. The main objective of this deliverable is to define the framework of the governance structure and decision making procedures, by defining the roles and responsibilities within the partners of the consortium, external experts and stakeholders. This document sets the framework for the strategic decisions to be taken regarding the implementation of the platform, as well as in the long term planning to reach the mission of the project.

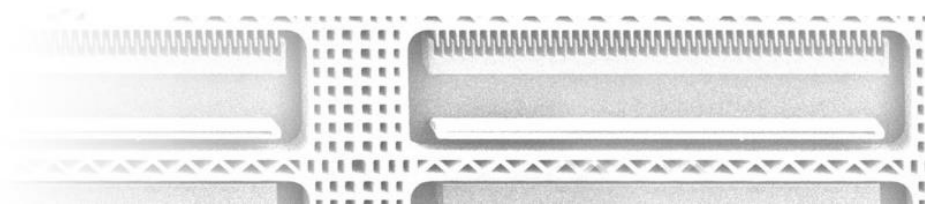
The intended audience of this document is the SUSNANOFAB consortium and the European Commission.

The Governance Structure will describe the management boards and their responsibilities for the development and enhancement of the open digital platform in the duration of the SUSNANOFAB project and beyond.

The Governance Structure of the SUSNANOFAB platform will cover:

- The Methodology;
- The Governance Structure Bodies;
- The Stakeholder’s participation; and
- The Legal Status;

This document will also set the Governance Structure and framework the foundations for the development of the Exploitation and Business Plan for the SUSNANOFAB platform – D5.11.





## 2. Methodology

To ensure a proper exploitation of all project's results and in particular of the Digital Platform and the information and services therein, an exploitation strategy will be considered starting from the early stage of the project. The definition of the Governance Structure will be the first step to achieve an effective management and deployment of the platform. It will also set the basis for the development of a suitable business plan to guarantee the sustainability of the Digital Platform in the long-term.

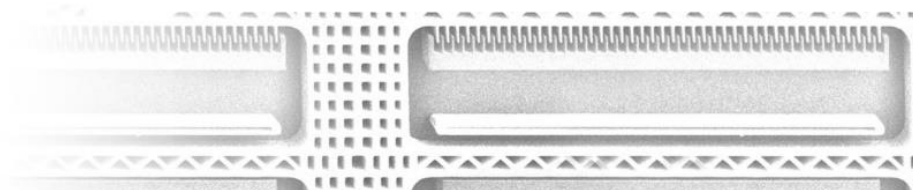
The sustainability of the nanofabrication ecosystem and its digital platform beyond the project completion will be enabled through an efficient governance structure and an industrially relevant business model. The governance structure will include the Coordination Groups with an advisory role, to provide strategic guidance on the platform in the medium term.

The SUSNANOFAB consortium will take into account broader data governance considerations involving transparency to users and managed access rules. Strategies will be drawn to decide the management and technical structures, including its procedures for operating.

The platform management structure and procedures are designed to provide to a framework for making strategic decisions to enable the platform to achieve its goals. In addition to the SUSNANOFAB consortium, the governance structure to be adopted will be complemented by a consistent network of experts with an advisory role. It will ensure the participation of the stakeholders as well. Thus, the platform's governance structure will provide an effective cooperation model between the various stakeholders and offer mechanisms for defining optimal solutions and innovative activities, during and beyond EC's funding period.

Besides the definition of the structure - by outlining the governance bodies for the management of the digital platform - other components will be addressed in the present document:

- the main responsibilities of each body;
- the procedures for meetings, reporting and communication frameworks;
- the legal status and the stakeholders' participation on the Governance Structure of the Platform will also be addressed as the starting point for further development of the Business Plan for the SUSNANOFAB Platform.





### 3. Governance Structure

The platform will be managed in close coordination at three different levels. The Governance Structure to be adopted for the Platform will comprise the following bodies:

- In the Executive Level: The Steering Committee
  - The Steering Committee will consist of senior management professionals from the SUSNANOFAB Consortium who oversee the management of the platform and make strategic decisions on the business operations.
- In the Operational Level:
  - The Technical Board; and
  - The Secretariat and Management Board
- Advisory Level: Advisory Board

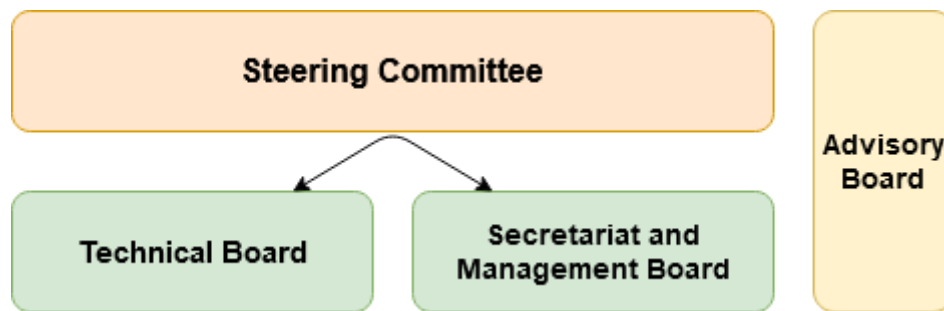


Figure 1 - Governance Structure

#### 3.1 The Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is the ultimate decision-making of the Platform. It shall consist of high level managers and decision makers, from the SUSNANOFAB consortium partners, who should provide, review and monitor strategic direction and policy guidance to the project operational teams (Technical Board and Secretariat and Management Team) and the stakeholders. They should also provide recommendations on platform approaches and discuss general strategies, opportunities for the platform deployment, planning and implementation. The general responsibilities of the Steering Committee are to ensure that the functional structure of the governance bodies work optimally individually and with each other; as well as to provide continuous recommendations to the Platform's operations.

To fulfil its tasks, the Steering Committee must achieve a shared understanding of the SUSNANOFAB's Platform risks and opportunities. The success of the Steering Committee will depend on an enhanced communication within the other bodies of the governance structure, as well as between the chair and the members of the Steering Committee. It is therefore important that the Steering Committee work with up-to-date





information, and ensure that information is exchanged as frequently as necessary. In addition to face-to-face meetings, exchange information through other channels, including the use of e-mail, telephone, and video conferences will also be made. The Steering Committee may find it more advantageous to organize face-to-face meetings for more complex issues, for an initial meeting, or for extraordinary circumstances.

The Steering Committee will operate according to an annual agenda, which will define the topics to be addressed, their timeline and deliverables. The agenda will be prepared by the Steering Committee chair and adopted by the members.

### **3.1.1 Responsibilities of the Steering Committee Chair**

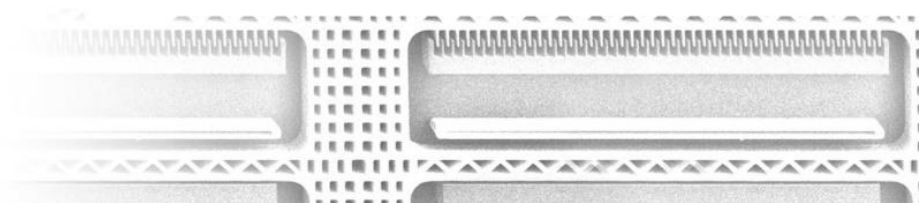
The Steering Committee Chair shall be responsible for the overall functioning of the Steering Committee. The responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Prepare and send to the members the yearly calendar of the Steering Committee meetings and the annual agenda;
- Secure availability of the venue and visual aids;
- Prepare the meeting agenda and ensure that agendas and supporting materials are delivered to the members in advance of the meetings;
- Clarify the purpose of each meeting to the members and explain the agenda at the beginning of each meeting;
- Keep the meeting moving by putting time limits on each agenda item and keeping all meetings to a duration of no longer than two hours;
- Secure the participation of the members of the Steering Committee;
- Prepare action plans;
- Appoint task forces and the members thereto;
- Prepare and submit to the members the minutes of the meetings and the status of actions plans and deliverables.

### **3.1.2 Responsibilities of the Steering Committee Members**

The responsibilities of the individual members of the Steering Committee include, but are not limited to the following:

- Secure participation to all the Steering Committee meetings;
- Understand the objectives and desired outcomes of each Steering Committee meeting;
- Study any documents/materials provided by the Steering Committee in advance;
- Actively participate in meetings through discussion and review of minutes, papers and other documents;
- Support open discussion, debate and encourage other members to voice their insights;
- Participate in task forces when requested to do so.







### 3.1.3 Rules of Procedure for the Steering Committee

This section provides information of the Steering Committee membership, decision-making process, frequency of meetings, agenda, minutes of meetings and decision papers.

#### **Membership, appointment and term of office:**

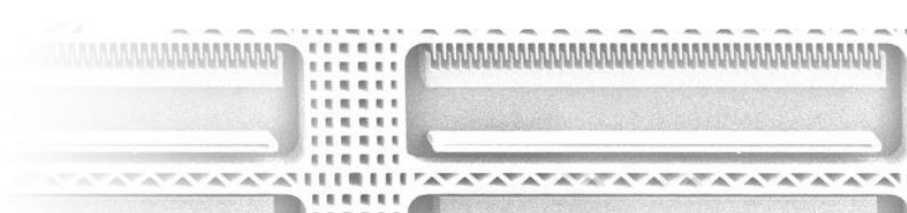
The term of office for the chair and for the members of the Steering Committee shall be of 2 years.

The Steering Committee shall be composed by ten members, being one representative for each of the partners of the SUSNANOFAB Consortium. The members shall be appointed by each of the partner. Each member shall be deemed to be dully authorised to deliberate, negotiate and decide on all matters regarding:

- Business Operations of the Platform;
- Finances of the Platform;
- Intellectual Property Rights of the Platform;

Steering Committee Members
One representative of RINA Consulting SPA (RINA-C)
One representative of International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory (INL)
One representative of Fundación TECNALIA Research & Innovation (TECNALIA)
One representative of University College Cork, National University of Ireland (TYNDALL)
One representative of Commissariat a l energie atomique et aux energies alternatives (CEA)
One representative of Nanotechnology Industries Association (NIA)
One representative of Centre Technique Industriel de la Plasturgie et des Composites (IPC)
One representative of ONVEGA
One representative of Technische Universitaet Wien (TUW)
One representative of Fundación IDONIAL

The Chair should be elected in the first ordinary meeting of the Steering Committee by its members. A call shall be issued for the nomination of candidates for the office of Chair of the Steering Committee. The election will not be held unless 2/3 of the members are present or represented. If the quorum is not reached, the Steering Committee shall convene another ordinary meeting within 15 calendar days. If in this meeting the quorum is not reached again, an extraordinary meeting shall be convene in which the members shall be entitle to elect the chair even if less than the quorum of





members are present or represented. Each member of the Steering Committee shall have one vote. The election of the chair will be made by simple majority.

The Vice-Chair will be appointed by the chair and its term will run concurrent with the term of the chair of the Steering Committee. The Vice-Chair shall provide support to the chair. The Chair may also direct the Vice-Chair to perform certain functions the chair is unable to carry out.

### **Meetings:**

The Steering Committee shall meet in ordinary meetings, at least twice a year. The dates of the ordinary meetings will be established in a yearly calendar in the first ordinary meeting of that year.

Extraordinary meetings may be requested by the chair, by his or her own initiative, or at the request of 1/3 of the members of the Steering Committee.

Joint meetings of the Steering Committee with other of the bodies of the governance structure of the SUSNANOFAB platform may be convened to discuss issues coming within their respective areas of responsibilities.

### **Minutes of meetings:**

The chair of the Steering Committee shall produce the written minutes of each meeting which shall be the formal record of all decisions taken. He or she shall send the draft minutes to all members within 10 calendar days of the meeting.

### **Preparation and adoption of the agenda:**

The chair shall draw up the agenda and submit it to the Steering Committee. The draft agenda for the ordinary meetings shall be considered for adoption at the opening of the session. Supplementary items with supporting documents may be added to the agenda during the session.

In the case of an extraordinary meeting, a detailed description of the business to be discussed shall be circulated with the notice convening to the meeting.

### **Documentation to be submitted to the members of the Steering Committee:**

The chair shall submit the draft agenda well in advance of the meeting, taking into account the urgency and complexity of the subject, and no later than 3 calendar days before the date of the ordinary meeting. Other documents related to the meeting shall, as far as possible, be submitted within the same time limit.

In justified cases, the chair may, by his or her own initiative or at the request of a member of the Steering committee, shorten the time limit for submission of documents. Except of cases of extreme urgency, the time limit shall not be shorten than 1 calendar day.

### **Recommendations of the Steering Committee:**



The Steering Committee shall deliver its recommendations to the Technical Board and to the Secretariat and Management Board within the time limit laid down by the chair, according to the urgency of the matter. Time limits shall be proportionate and shall afford the members early and effective opportunities to examine the issue at stake and express their views.

The chair shall, without proceeding to a formal vote, establish that the Steering Committee has delivered a recommendation, by consensus, on the issue at stake. The presence of at least 2/3 of the members is required to enable the Steering Committee to deliver a recommendation.

#### **Voting Rules of the Steering Committee:**

The Steering Committee shall not deliberate and decide validly unless 2/3 of its members are presented or represented. Each member of the Steering Committee shall have one vote. The decisions shall be taken by a majority of 2/3 of the vote cast.

A member which can show that its own work, time for performance, costs, liabilities, intellectual property rights or other legitimate interests would be severely affected by a decision of the Steering Committee may exercise a veto with respect to the corresponding decision or relevant part of the decision.

#### **Terms of Reference for the Steering Committee:**

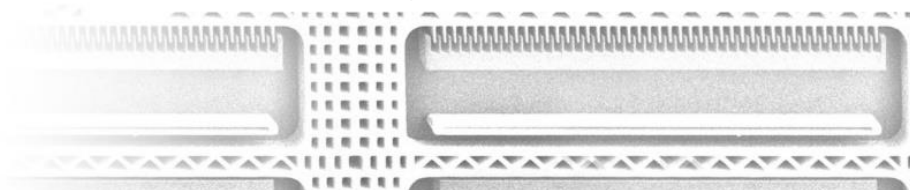
The Terms of Reference for the SUSNANOFAB Steering Committee shall be agreed and settled between all partners of the consortium at M12 of the SUSNANOFAB Project. It should follow the guidelines defined in this present document.

### **3.2 The Technical Board**

The Technical Board of the SUSNANOFAB shall coordinate the technical progress of the platform and decide about operational issues. It is an operational and technical body with a key role in the deployment of the platform. The Technical Board shall support the Steering Committee in all technical matters related to the Platform. It shall manage to stay abreast of new developments and new technologies and anticipate emerging concepts and trends to achieve interoperable deployments aligned with the SUSNANOFAB strategy.

The Technical Board shall have the authority of making technical decisions, as deployment that are in accordance with the objectives and scope of the SUSNANOFAB platform strategy. The Technical Board shall be responsible for managing all the transactions between end-user and the services provided by the platform, providing a transparent and safe environment for all the platform stakeholders.

The Technical Board should make tools and services available, ensure free-flowing traffic between users and verify information about the services and data provided and the customer. To ensure optimum smooth-running of transactions on the





platform, the Technical Board must manage its activities in two different operational levels:

1. Creating a regulatory framework for the digital platform developments;
2. Making available the tools and services to the stakeholders by streamlining updates and exchanges for the final users.

In particular, the Technical Board responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Coordinate the implementation of the platform developments;
- Operate the platform helpdesk and back office;
- Ensure the compliance with the highest data management standards, including personal data protection compliance.
- Follow the recommendations issued by the Steering Committee;
- Report formally to the Steering Committee on its activities and proceedings.

The Technical Board shall also undertake additional activities within the scope of its responsibilities as the Steering Committee may from time to time determine.

The members of the Technical Board shall be nominated by the Steering Committee and must be composed by at least 3 members. The chair of the Technical Board shall be appointed by the Steering Committee for the term of 2 years. The chair of the Technical Board might be invited to attend the Steering Committee ordinary meetings.

The Terms of Reference of the Technical Board must be agreed and settled up by the Steering Committee in M12 of the SUSNANOFAB Project.

### **3.3 The Secretariat and Management Board**

The Secretariat and Management Board is responsible for the management of the day-to-day work in the SUSNANOFAB platform. It shall support the Steering Committee. Its responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Perform the overall coordination of the platform activities; such as administrative tasks, planning, quality assurance, document procedures and reporting;
- Coordinate the information flow between the governance bodies of the SUSNANOFAB platform;
- Coordinate communication and dissemination activities;
- Manage external information and contacts on behalf of the SUSNANOFAB Steering Committee;
- Report formally to the Steering Committee on its activities and proceedings.

The Secretariat and Management Board shall also undertake additional activities within the scope of its responsibilities as the Steering Committee may from time to time determine.

The members of the Secretariat and Management Board shall be nominated by the Steering Committee and must be have at least 3 members. The Steering



Committee shall appoint the chair of the Secretariat and Management Board for the term of 2 years. The chair of the Secretariat and Management Board might be invited to attend the Steering Committee ordinary meetings.

The Terms of Reference of the Secretariat and Management Board must be agreed and settled up by the Steering Committee by M12 of the SUSNANOFAB Project.

### 3.4 The Advisory Board

The Advisory Board composed by external experts will have a non-binding advisory role in the Governance Structure adopted by the SUSNANOFAB digital platform. It is a consultative body requested to provide the Steering Committee with periodic recommendation on the Platform and the SUSNANOFAB networking activities, aiming to maximise the industrial and market impact of the platform and its main outputs.

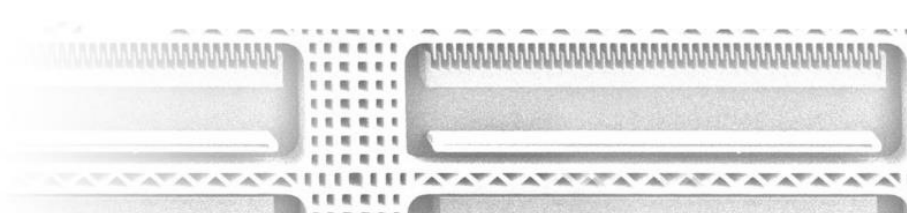
The Advisory Board must be composed of at least 5 external experts with knowledge in the sustainable nanofabrication ecosystem. The members shall be invited and appointed by the Steering Committee of the SUSNANOFAB Platform. The Steering Committee shall appoint the chair of the Advisory Board for the term of 2 years. The chair of the Advisory Board might be invited to attend the Steering Committee ordinary meetings.

The members of the Advisory Board shall be invited and appointed by the Steering Committee following the criteria below:

<b>Advisory Board Members</b>
One representative from Brown University – representing the CG1
One representative from Baylor University – representing the CG2
One representative from Georgia Tech Research Corporation – representing the CG3
One representative from the Strategic Advisory Board of the SUSNANOFAB project
One representative from the NANOFABNET Consortium

The Advisory Board will provide strategic advice on the management of the SUSNANOFAB platform and networking activities. Its responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Provide independent external advice on the strategies related to the implementation of the SUSNANOFAB platform;
- Provide advice on the engagement of the stakeholders network and in communication and dissemination strategies;
- Provide feedback on the SUSNANOFAB platform developments;







- Support on networking activities for building up a strong SUSNANOFAB network;
- Provide advice in the business model implementation.

The Terms of Reference for the Advisory Board must be agreed and settled up at M12 by the Steering Committee.

#### **4. Governance and Stakeholder Participation**

Stakeholders' participation is an essential element in an open and collaborative platform as the SUSNANOFAB. Stakeholders' engagement mechanisms will be created in order to maintain a strong network, incorporate their needs in the tool, and promote their active participation in the platform.

To achieve that, a proper communication flow between the platform and the stakeholders is mandatory. Well-structured channels will be adopted to keep an open communication with the stakeholders. A Customer Support and Helpdesk will be implemented and managed under the responsibility of the operational level teams.

Stakeholders will be consulted for new implementations, features, projects and initiatives of the platform through surveys, webinars and events. They'll be kept updated on the platform's activities through periodic newsletters. They'll be involved and invited to participate in relevant workshops and trainings regarding the nanofabrication ecosystem.

#### **5. Legal Status**

At this stage, as the platform has no income stream foreseen, there's no necessity of creating a legal entity for the SUSNANOFAB Platform.

Once the project is finished, if the SUSNANOFAB Platform chooses to apply for direct funding, or to raise fees, it may require the creation of a legal entity. The legal status options will be further analysed in the development of the Exploitation and Business Plan for the open digital platform.

#### **6. Conclusion**

The adoption of the presented Governance Structure for the SUSNANOFAB Open Digital Platform will guarantee the successful development and deployment process of the tool. The governance structure defined herein will ensure a balanced control of the activities, following a strategic planning and defined procedures to achieve the best performance and results possible. It will ensure the Platform management at 3 different levels in close coordination: Executive level, operational level and advisory level.

Consequently, a strong governance structure will secure and strengthen the stakeholders' confidence in the SUSNANOFAB platform and in the services and information provided.

