

NANOPHASE TECHNOLOGIES CORPORATION
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

(As adopted on May 6, 2013)

These principles have been adopted by the Board of Directors (the "Board") of Nanophase Technologies Corporation (the "Company") for the purpose of establishing the corporate governance policies pursuant to which the Board intends to conduct its oversight of the business of the Company in accordance with its fiduciary responsibilities.

1. Role of the Board

The role of the Board is to oversee the performance of the Chief Executive Officer ("CEO") and other senior management and to assure that the best interests of stockholders are being served. To satisfy this responsibility, the directors are expected to take a proactive approach to their duties and function as active monitors of corporate management. Accordingly, the directors provide oversight in the formulation of the long term strategic, financial and organizational goals of the Company and of the plans designed to achieve those goals. In addition, the Board reviews and approves standards and policies to ensure that the Company is committed to achieving its objectives through the maintenance of the highest standards of responsible conduct and ethics and to assure that management carries out their day-to-day operational duties in a competent and ethical manner.

The day-to-day business of the Company is carried out by its employees, managers and officers, under the direction of the CEO and the oversight of the Board, to enhance the long-term value of the Company for the benefit of stockholders. The Board and management also recognize that creating long-term enterprise value is advanced by considering the interests and concerns of other stakeholders, including the Company's employees, customers, creditors and suppliers, as well as the community generally.

The Board understands that effective directors act on an informed basis after thorough inquiry and careful review, appropriate in scope to the magnitude of the matter being considered. The directors know their position requires them to ask probing questions of management and outside advisors. The directors also rely on the advice, reports and opinions of management, counsel and expert advisers. In doing so, the Board evaluates the qualifications of those it relies upon for information and advice and also looks to the processes used by managers and advisors in reaching their recommendations. In addition, the Board has the authority to hire outside advisors at the Company's expense if they feel it is appropriate.

2. Selection of Chairman of the Board and CEO

The Board shall fill the Chairman of the Board and CEO positions based upon the Board's view of what is in the best interests of the Company. The CEO and Chairman may, but need not be, the same person.

3. Lead Independent Director

In order to facilitate communication between management and the non-employee Directors, in the event that the Chairman of the Board is not an independent Director, the Board should elect a "Lead Independent Director," who will have the responsibility to schedule and prepare agendas for meetings of non-employee Directors. The Lead Independent Director will communicate with the CEO, disseminate information to the rest of the Board in a timely manner and raise issues with management on behalf of the non-employee Directors when appropriate. All members of the Board are encouraged to

communicate with the CEO. As long as the Chairman of the Board is an independent, non-employee director, the "Lead Independent Director" responsibility may be assigned to the Chairman.

4. Committees

The Board has three standing committees: the Audit and Finance Committee, the Compensation Committee and the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee. The Board will continue to delegate substantial responsibilities to each committee, and each committee should consist either solely or primarily of independent directors, as defined by the rules and regulations of the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC Rules") and as specified in the respective charters for these committees. The members of these committees shall also meet the other membership criteria specified in the respective charters for these committees. New committees may be formed as determined by the Board.

5. Assignment of Committee Members

Committees should be appointed (or re-appointed), and chairs of each committee designated, by the full Board, upon recommendation by the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee, annually. While the composition of the committees of the Board should be looked at each year in making certain that these committees are not stagnant or without fair representation, it is the Board's belief that continuity of experience in the specific functions of these committees provides a significant benefit to the stockholders and to management.

6. Frequency and Length of Committee Meetings

Each committee chairman, in consultation with committee members, will determine the frequency and length of meetings of his or her committee, considering all relevant factors such as the committee's mandate, nature of current committee business to be discussed and the like. Moreover, the committee chairman should feel free to call additional committee meetings at times other than the scheduled meetings of the full Board.

7. Committee Charters and Agendas

Each committee shall have its own charter, which will set forth the purpose, membership requirements, authority and responsibilities of the committee. Annually, the chair of each committee should review the existing committee charter and determine, in consultation with the rest of the committee, whether any amendments are required. Committee charters should be within the scope of authority granted by the Board and should be approved by the Board. The chairman of the committee, in consultation with appropriate members of management and staff, should develop the overall annual agenda to the extent it can be foreseen. In addition, each committee chair should prepare an agenda prior to each committee meeting and should consult with appropriate members of management for additional items which should be included in the agenda. Any committee of the Board is authorized to engage its own outside advisors at the Company's expense, including legal counsel or other consultants, as required, provided that the committee shall promptly advise the full Board of such engagement.

8. Code of Business Conduct and Ethics, Conflicts of Interests, Related Party Transactions and Complaints Process

The Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee shall periodically review and approve the Company's Code of Business Conduct and Ethics, which is applicable to directors, officers and employees. In accordance with the Code of Business Conduct and Ethics, the Audit and Finance Committee shall consider questions of possible conflicts of interest of Board members and executive officers; review actual and potential conflicts of interest (including corporate opportunities) of Board members and executive officers; and approve or prohibit any involvement of such persons in matters that

may involve a conflict of interest or corporate opportunity. Directors may be asked from time to time to leave a Board meeting when the Board is considering a transaction in which the director (or another organization in which the director is a director or officer) has a financial or other interest.

The Audit and Finance Committee shall review and approve any proposed related person transactions in compliance with the Company's policies and must report material related person transactions to the full Board, monitor compliance with the Company's Code of Business Conduct and Ethics and review and approve the Company's procedures for handling complaints regarding accounting or auditing matters.

9. Board Meetings and Agenda Items

The Board shall have no less than four regularly scheduled meetings each year at which it reviews and discusses leadership continuity, management development, management reports on the performance of the Company, its plans and prospects, as well as more immediate issues facing the Company. The Chairman of the Board (in consultation with the CEO if not the same person) will set the agenda for each Board meeting. Each Board member is free to suggest inclusion of items on the agenda. A representative from the Company's outside counsel should be available to attend Board meetings. The Board will review the Company's long-term strategic plans during at least one Board meeting per year.

10. Board Materials Distributed in Advance

To the extent possible, information and data which is important to the Board's understanding of matters to be discussed at the meeting and the current status of the Company's business should be distributed in writing to the Board before the meeting to enable the directors to read and prepare for the meeting.

11. Board, Committee and Stockholder Meetings

Directors are expected to prepare for, attend and actively participate in all Board and committee meetings. As a general rule, preparation material on specific subjects should be sent to the Board members in advance so that the Board meeting time may be conserved and discussion time focused on questions that the Board has about the material. On those occasions when the subject matter is too sensitive to be distributed, the subject will have to be introduced at the meeting. The Company encourages, but does not require, directors to attend the annual meeting of stockholders.

12. Regular Attendance of Management at Board Meetings

It is anticipated that certain members of management (e.g., the Chief Financial Officer ("CFO") and such other members of the executive staff as the CEO may from time to time designate) will attend Board meetings on a regular basis. Other members of management and staff will attend meetings and present reports from time to time. Specifically, the Board encourages management to schedule managers to be present at Board meetings who can provide additional insight into the items being discussed because of personal involvement in these areas. It is understood that Company personnel and others attending Board meetings may be asked to leave the meeting in order for the Board to meet in executive session.

13. Executive Sessions of Non-Employee Directors and Audit and Finance Committee

It is the policy of the Board to have separate meeting times for non-employee directors without management. Such meetings should be held following regularly scheduled meetings and at such other times as requested by a non-employee director. The Chairman of the Board (if a non-employee director) or the Lead Independent Director shall preside at executive sessions.

In addition, the Audit and Finance Committee of the Board should meet periodically with the Company's outside auditors without management present at such times as it deems appropriate.

14. Board Access to Company Employees

Board members should have full access to members of management, either as a group or individually, and to Company information that they believe is necessary to fulfill their obligations as Board members. The directors should use their judgment to ensure that any such contact or communication is not disruptive to the business operations of the Company.

15. Board Compensation Review

The Compensation Committee should conduct an annual review of director compensation. This review will include input from the Company's Human Resources department in order to evaluate director compensation compared to other companies of like size in the industry. Any change in Board compensation should be approved by the full Board. Ownership of stock by the directors is encouraged.

16. Size of the Board

The number of directors cannot be less than five nor more than nine, as fixed from time to time by resolution of the Board. The size of the Board may vary based upon the size of the business and the availability of qualified candidates. Board size should facilitate active interaction and participation by all Board members. The Board will review from time to time the appropriateness of its size.

17. Composition of Board

The Board believes that as a matter of policy there should be a majority of independent directors on the Board. Within that policy, the mix of Board members should provide a range of expertise and perspective in areas relevant to the Company's business.

18. Board Definition of "Independence" for Directors

A director shall be considered "independent" for purposes of serving on the Board if he or she meets the criteria for independence established by the SEC Rules and the rules and regulations of the Nasdaq Stock Market, Inc. ("Nasdaq"), as in effect from time to time. Even though the Company's common stock is no longer listed on Nasdaq, the Board has determined to continue using the Nasdaq rules and regulations to determine independence. A Director shall be considered "independent" for purposes of serving on a Board committee based on the definition of independence used in that committee's charter, which shall conform to any requirements established for such a committee by any applicable SEC Rules.

19. Board Membership Criteria and Selection

The Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee should review on an annual basis, in the context of recommending a slate of directors for stockholder approval, the composition of the Board, including issues of character, judgment, diversity, age, independence, expertise, corporate experience, length of service, understanding of the Company's business and other commitments. Selection of new directors requires recommendation of a candidate by the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee to the full Board, which has responsibility for naming new members in the event of a vacancy or expansion of the Board between annual meetings of stockholders.

20. Notifying a Director of Non-Inclusion on a Proposed Slate of Directors

Any proposal to decrease the size of the Board, or to substitute a new director for an existing director, should be made first by the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee, then approved by the full Board. After receipt of a recommendation from the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee, the Chairman of the Board or the Lead Independent Director should notify the director of such recommendation prior to the meeting of the Board at which the slate of nominees is proposed to be approved.

21. Assessing Board and Committee Performance

The Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee should establish an annual process for permitting the Board and each committee to conduct an assessment of its performance during the prior year. This assessment should focus on areas in which the Board or the committees believe contributions can be made going forward to increase the effectiveness of the Board or the committees. Each committee and the full Board will consider and discuss the findings of the assessments.

22. Director Orientation and Continuing Education

Meetings of the Board shall be designed to provide orientation for new directors to assist them in understanding the Company's business as well as an introduction to the Company's senior management. Further, the Company encourages directors to participate in continuing education programs focused on the Company's business and industry, committee roles and responsibilities and legal and ethical responsibilities of members of the Board. The Company shall reimburse the directors for customary and reasonable expenses incurred in connection with their participation in such continuing education programs.

23. Formal Evaluation and Compensation of the CEO and Other Executive Officers

The formal evaluation of the CEO and the other executive officers should be made in the context of annual compensation review by the Compensation Committee, with appropriate input from other Board members, and should be communicated to the CEO by the Chairman of the Board or the Lead Independent Director and the Chair of the Compensation Committee. The evaluation should be based on objective criteria, including performance of the business and accomplishment of long-term strategic objectives and annual operating plan performance in accordance with the principles and criteria established by the Compensation Committee. Ownership of the Company's stock by the CEO and other executive officers is encouraged and will be reviewed by the Board.

24. Succession Planning

The Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee, in consultation with the full Board, is primarily responsible for CEO succession planning. In addition, it shall monitor management's succession plans for other key executives. Succession planning can be critical in the event the CEO or other key executives should cease to serve for any reason, including resignation or unexpected disability. In addition, however, the Board believes that establishment of a strong management team is the best way to prepare for an unanticipated executive departure.

25. Management Development

In addition to its responsibilities related to executive succession planning, the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee shall confer with the CEO to encourage management's employee development programs.

26. Board Interaction with Third Parties

The Board believes that management speaks for the Company. Individual Board members may, from time to time, meet or otherwise communicate with various constituencies that are involved with the Company, but it is expected that Board members would do this with knowledge of management and, in most instances, only at the request of management.

In cases where stockholders wish to communicate directly with the non-employee directors, correspondence can be sent in the care of the Secretary at Nanophase Technologies Corporation, 1319 Marquette Drive, Romeoville, Illinois 60446. These messages will be forwarded to the appropriate committee of the Board or non-employee director. **[See the Policies and Procedures for Stockholder Communications to Non-Employee Directors for more information regarding such communications.]**

The Company's directors should not accept any gift of value that indicates an intent to influence improperly the normal business relationship between the Company and any supplier, customer or competitor.

27. Formulation of Strategy

The Board should provide oversight to management in formulating corporate strategy.

28. Periodic Review of Principles

The Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee and the Board should review these principles no less than annually.