The Center for Nanotechnology in Society
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

The Yearbook of Nanotechnology in Society, Volume II: *Nanotechnology & the Challenges of Equity, Equality & Development*

For at least the past decade, nanotechnology has been touted as the Next Big Thing in technology, the successor to information and biotechnologies. Scientists and policymakers both contend that investments in nanoscale science and engineering will create revolutions in areas as diverse as materials, drug delivery, cancer treatment, and space travel. While new technologies often do provide solutions to pressing issues, the outcomes are not always distributed equally. Nanotechnology will likely prove to be no different. Nanotechnologies could alter distributional dynamics and raise important issues about fairness. They could greatly aid the economies and public health of poor countries, or they could increase the gulf between poor and rich ones. Simply put, nanotechnology will give rise to new risks and benefits, and different areas, peoples, and groups will get different amounts of each.

The second volume of *The Yearbook of Nanotechnology in Society* begins to develop a better understanding of how those changes might play out and what we should be aware of as new nanotechnologies and industries are created.

The yearbook brings together social scientists, engineers, natural scientists, policymakers, NGOs and corporate perspectives from six continents. They present a wide variety of approaches to and methods by which to address nanotechnology, equity, equality, and development. The bulk of the text is made up of academic articles written specifically for the volume. These articles represent the latest work being done in the area. It also includes a number of chapters – including a press release, an advertisement, and reports – that give the reader an idea of how major political players are dealing with and discussing equity issues in nanotechnology today.

Finally, the volume closes with lessons for the future. It includes three articles written by active participants in the policy realm that offer practical advice to both scholars hoping to develop a research plan for better understanding nanotechnology and equity and policy decision makers who want to work for more equitable outcomes.

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