



OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT
DIRECTOR FOR
MATHEMATICAL AND
PHYSICAL SCIENCES

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
4201 WILSON BOULEVARD ARLINGTON,
VIRGINIA 22230

November 2, 2012

Dear Colleagues:

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the upcoming meeting of the Mathematical and Physical Sciences Directorate Advisory Committee (MPSAC) on Thursday and Friday, November 8 and 9, 2012, at the National Science Foundation (NSF) in Arlington, Virginia. The agenda is attached. I look forward to our discussions, and I would like to preview some of the topics in this letter.

Membership: I want to welcome Dr. Emily Carter (Princeton University) to the MPSAC. I thank those members who recently completed their terms for all of their efforts on behalf of MPS over the last three years: Dr. Taft Armandroff (Keck Observatory), Dr. Kevin Corlette (University of Chicago), Dr. Juan de Pablo (University of Wisconsin-Madison), Dr. Joseph DeSimone (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), Dr. Sharon Glotzer (University of Michigan), Dr. Jerzy Leszczynski (Jackson State University), Dr. Luis Orozco (University of Maryland), and Dr. Fred Roberts (Rutgers University).

Staffing: I am very pleased to inform you that the MPS front office has added the following staff on detail: Dr. Kelsey Cook from the Division of Chemistry as Staff Associate, Dr. Cynthia Dion-Schwarz from the CISE Directorate as Senior Advisor, Dr. Scott Horner from the Large Facilities Office as Facilities Advisor, and Dr. Claudia Rankins from the EHR Directorate as Program Officer. With respect to the other senior staff positions, we have recently named Dr. Jacquelyn Gervay-Hague (UC Davis) as Division Director for the Division of Chemistry, and she will start her term in July 2013. We are in the process of naming a Division Director for the Division of Materials Research and a Deputy Division Director for the Division of Astronomical Sciences. A search has begun for the Division Director for the Division of Physics. We are also in the process of hiring the Head, Office of Multidisciplinary Activities/Senior Science Advisor.

Dr. Matt Platz (Division Director, Division of Chemistry) and Dr. Ian Robertson (Division Director, Division of Materials Research) will be completing their terms at NSF in December. I thank both of them for their exemplary service and commitment, and wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

Budget: The FY 2013 budget is still pending, and so NSF is operating under a short-term resolution that expires in March 2013.

Agenda: There are several agenda items that I would like to highlight.

- *Incoming Assistant Director for MPS:* Dr. Fleming Crim will join us for the first part of the meeting.
- *Engineering Directorate Presentation:* We have invited Dr. Tom Peterson, the Assistant Director for Engineering, to give us an update on current activities and potential areas of partnership with the Engineering Directorate.
- *Exciting scientific opportunities:* We will have a brief presentation from the NSF working group on optics and photonics, which has been established in response to the recent National Academy of Sciences (NAS) report on “Optics and Photonics: Essential Technologies for Our Nation.”
- *Collaborations with the Education and Human Resources Advisory Committee (EHRAC):* Dr. Elsa Reichmanis and Dr. Bryant York will update us on the joint activities between the MPSAC and the EHRAC, which have centered on NSF’s cross-cutting initiative “Expeditions in Education (E²).”
- *Reports:* At the previous meeting in August, the MPSAC accepted the reports of the Astronomy Portfolio Review and the Materials 2022 subcommittees. We will hear updates from the Division Directors for Astronomical Sciences and Materials Research on responses to these reports and next steps.
- *Meeting with the Director and Deputy Director:* We will have a meeting with the Director and the Deputy Director of NSF on Thursday afternoon. They will discuss new and existing NSF initiatives, and be available for general discussion. We have set aside time to prepare for this meeting.

Dr. Mark Suskin, Deputy Assistant Director (Acting), is currently serving as the liaison between the MPSAC and the MPS Directorate. If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact him at 703-292-7254 or at msuskin@nsf.gov. Ms. Nichol  Johnson has sent you information concerning logistical arrangements for participating in the meeting. You may reach her at 703-292-8806 or at njohnson@nsf.gov.

I look forward to seeing you next week for a productive meeting.

Sincerely,

Celeste M. Rohlfing, Ph.D.
Assisting Director (Acting)