



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
Directorate for Engineering
4201 Wilson Boulevard, Room 575
Arlington, Virginia 22230

MEMORANDUM

Date: December 3, 2009

To: 2010 Industrial Innovation and Partnerships Division
Committee of Visitors

Cc: Dr. Michael Reischman
Deputy Assistant Director for Engineering

Dr. Kesh Narayanan, Division Director
Industrial Innovation and Partnerships

Joanne Culbertson
Staff Association for Planning and Evaluation

From: Dr. Thomas Peterson
Assistant Director for Engineering

Subject: Charge to the IIP Committee of Visitors

Thank you for agreeing to serve on the Committee of Visitors (COV) for the Division of Industrial Innovation and Partnerships (IIP) of the Engineering (ENG) Directorate of the National Science Foundation (NSF). By NSF policy, programs that award grants or cooperative agreements are reviewed at three-year intervals by a COV. The COV is an *ad hoc* subcommittee of the Advisory Committee for the Directorate for Engineering. Professor Louis Martin-Vega and Tom Knight will serve as Co-Chairs. The COV reviews the proposal and award process, advises ENG on significant impacts and advances from IIP investments, and identifies emerging challenges and opportunities. The COV charge is to address:

- The integrity, efficacy, and quality of the processes used to solicit, review, recommend and document proposal actions;
- The quality of project management, monitoring, and evaluation of funded proposals.
- The quality and significance of the results of the Division's programmatic investments in terms of program, division, and NSF-wide goals;
- The Division's balance, priorities, and strategies for realizing the potential of the Division (as background, please refer to the most recent IIP plan, the Directorate's plan for broadening participation, and the NSF FY 2006-2011 Strategic Plan), and
- Any other issues you think are relevant to the review.

This IIP COV shall use the attached NSF 2010 Core Questions and Report Template in preparing its report and will be provided on the IIP COV web page.

Decisions to award or decline grant proposals are based on the informed judgment of program officers and the Division Director following merit review. Systematic examination of proposal files by qualified external parties provides an independent mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the quality and pertinence of proposal decisions. This examination is part of the responsibility of the COV.

The review will assess the operations of the IIP Division in fiscal years 2007, 2008 and 2009 as they support the Foundation's strategic outcome goals regarding discovery, learning, and research infrastructure. The COV will examine a sample of files for both awarded and declined proposals in each program.

IIP is home to the two congressionally mandated small business research programs, the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program and the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) program. The Small Business component contains four clusters: Nanotechnology, Advanced Material, and Manufacturing (NAM), Biotechnology and Chemical Technology (BCT), Information and Communication Technology (ICT), and Education Applications (EA). The IIP also manages several programs with non-academic partnerships as an important component to facilitate the engineering innovation process. Thus, IIP also manages the Partnerships for Innovation (PFI) program, which stimulates innovation by building partnerships across the scientific and engineering community. Additionally, IIP leverages industrial support through two research programs, the Industry/University Cooperative Research Centers (I/UCRC) program and the Grants Opportunities for Academic Liaison with Industry (GOALI) program.

The review of jackets for this COV will be accomplished through eJacket, and we would like all committee members to complete their review of the electronic jackets by March 19, 2009. The information that you will need to perform this review is conveniently accessible through the IIP COV web site. You will be given electronic access to a sampled set of proposal actions, and you may request access to additional actions as you deem necessary. Also, you will have access to the IIP Division Director, Senior Advisors and Program Directors for additional information.

The meeting of the COV will take place Wednesday April 28 through Friday April 30, 2010, at the National Science Foundation in Stafford I, Room 580. The COV Committee co-chairs will present an overview of the COV process and discuss specific assignments at a teleconference to be scheduled in early November, 2009.

No later than June 30, 2010, the COV should transmit its report addressing the charge to the Chair of the Engineering Advisory Committee (AdCom), for review. The report will be discussed at the fall, 2010 AdCom meeting. The AdCom chair will forward the report to me with any comments from the Engineering Advisory Committee. In accordance with NSF policy, the Directorate will provide a response setting forth any actions to be taken on each suggestion or recommendation. Both the COV report and the response will be forwarded to the Director of the NSF, and ultimately posted on the NSF web site (www.nsf.gov/eng/general/COV/).

We very much appreciate your service in this important NSF activity, and we hope that you will find the process both interesting and informative.