

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
4201 WILSON BOULEVARD
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22230



March 25, 2013

Dear Colleagues:

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the upcoming virtual meeting of the Mathematical and Physical Sciences Directorate Advisory Committee (MPSAC) on Thursday afternoon and Friday morning, April 4-5, 2013. This will be my first AC meeting as AD, as well as the first one following our new model of shorter, more frequent meetings. By now, you should have received instructions for remote participation; please contact Keith Bennett (kebennett@nsf.gov; 703-292-8802) if you need any technical assistance. The agenda is posted on the [MPSAC website](#), and I am attaching a copy. I look forward to our discussions, some of which I would like to preview in this letter.

- **Staffing:** Our thanks to Dr. Cindy Dion-Schwarz, Dr. Scott Horner, and Dr. Claudia Rankins, who have completed details in the MPS Front Office and moved on to other assignments within (Scott and Claudia) and outside (Cindy) NSF. I am very pleased to announce that Ms. Liz Pentecost from the Division of Astronomical Sciences and Dr. Tom Russell from the Division of Mathematical Sciences have joined us in the Front Office on detail to work on facilities and the DataWay and INSPIRE programs, respectively. We have also named Dr. Clark Cooper as Head, Office of Multidisciplinary Activities/Senior Science Advisor (OMA); Dr. Patricia Knezek as Deputy Division Director for the Division of Astronomical Sciences; and Dr. Mary Galvin as Division Director for the Division of Materials Research. We are in the process of selecting and interviewing candidates for the positions of Director for the Divisions of Physics and Mathematical Sciences.
- **AC Leadership:** We are grateful to Dr. Jim Berger for his excellent service as Chair of this Committee. Dr. Juan de Pablo has generously agreed to become the Chair effective with the July 17, 2013 meeting.
- **Budget:** The budget for the remainder of the FY 2013 has just passed the Congress, and we hope to provide more details during our meeting.
- **Agenda:** There are several items that I would like to highlight.
 - **Reports:** In February, Committees of Visitors (COVs) were convened for the Divisions of Chemistry and Mathematical Sciences. The members of these COVs have produced reports which will be submitted to you at the meeting. In accord with NSF policy, their reports focus on implementation of merit review processes, but they may also address broader questions of portfolio balance and Divisional operations. We are indebted to both of these COVs for thorough and broad assessments and look forward to your discussion of their reports. The AC will forward these reports to OAD for my formal response. We will also hear organizational reports from our nascent subcommittees on Synchrotron Science,

Optics and Photonics, and Food Systems, as well as an update from the StatsNSF subcommittee. Our liaisons to four Foundation-wide advisory committees (Cyberinfrastructure, Environmental Research and Education, Equal Opportunities, and International) will present short reports Friday morning.

- Meeting with Acting Director Cora Marrett: Our meeting with Dr. Marrett will be on Friday morning. Although this meeting has traditionally been a question-and-answer exchange, we would like to ask you to take a more active role and to use the opportunity to offer advice and address other issues you feel are critical to MPS. We will share some preliminary thoughts about those issues at the end of the Thursday session, and we will ask you to devote some time that evening to organize your thoughts for the planning session that we will have on Friday morning before our meeting with the Acting Director. We will use the final hour of our Friday meeting to identify and discuss issues and opportunities on which we should focus going forward.

Dr. Kelsey Cook is the liaison between the MPSAC and the MPS Directorate. If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact him at 703-292-7490 or at kcook@nsf.gov. Mrs. Cedil Morgan has sent you information concerning logistical arrangements for participating in the meeting, including registration (which you must complete each day in order to receive payment). You may reach her at 703-292-7512 or at cemorgan@nsf.gov.

I look forward to a productive meeting.

Sincerely,



F. Fleming Crim
Assistant Director for Mathematical and Physical Sciences