



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Advisory Committee
Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences

Dear Colleagues:

I am pleased to welcome you to the summer virtual meeting of the Mathematical and Physical Sciences Directorate Advisory Committee (MPSAC), scheduled for Friday afternoon, July 18. The agenda is on the [MPSAC website](#), and a copy accompanies this letter.

Following our usual practice, the agenda focuses on discussion of materials posted for your pre-meeting review in order for you to be able to give us advice on these issues. I look forward to the discussion, some of which I preview here.

State of the Directorate: Although we are in the early stages of developing a FY 2016 budget, I will describe the process and its current status, including some comments on the effect that recent budgets have had on our interactions with the community.

Staffing: Changes since April include the departure of Jackie Gervay-Hague, Division Director for Chemistry, on July 1 and the announced departure of Janice Hicks, Deputy Division Director for Materials Research, later in July. We thank them both for their excellent service to MPS and their communities. Tanja Pietraß will serve as acting Division Director for the Chemistry Division, and Carol Bessel will serve as acting Deputy Division Director for the Division of Materials Research, while we conduct searches to fill these positions. I am also pleased to thank the eight Advisory Committee members whose terms will end on September 30. I appreciate their important and effective service to MPS and the communities you represent.

Subcommittee Reports: All four of our Subcommittees will submit reports for your consideration and acceptance. It is critically important that you come prepared to discuss these reports and to vote on their acceptance, with or without minor revisions. As you will see on the draft agenda, we plan to use most of the time for discussion of these important documents and the recommendations they contain. Such consideration is a core function of a FACA Advisory Committee, and these reports are important to our planning for the future of MPS. In order to encourage effective discussion, I have assigned lead discussants for each report. They should be prepared to identify the elements of the report that require discussion before approval.

Merit Review Discussion: As a follow-on to the discussion of merit review that was a primary focus of our April meeting, I have asked NSF Chief Information Officer Amy Northcutt to address the group and lead a discussion of the status and direction of software modernization relevant to proposal submission and review. Your reactions and comments are particularly important to Amy and to MPS.

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. Kelsey and Science Assistant Caleb Autrey will send you information concerning the logistics for participating in the meeting, including registration (which you must complete in order to receive payment). You may reach Caleb at 703-292-5137 or at cautrey@nsf.gov. Please see the logistics message for more detailed instructions, and be sure to take advantage of the opportunity to test your connectivity before the meeting. You may contact Keith Bennett (kebennet@nsf.gov; 703-292-8802) if you need technical assistance.

I look forward to our meeting and to hearing your advice.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fleming". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'F'.

F. Fleming Crim
Assistant Director, National Science Foundation
Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences