

best further the objectives of the Department of Commerce, and whether the recommended applicants appear to be responsible. Applicants may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets and provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to award. The decision of the Grants Officer is final.

**Evaluation Criteria:** For the MSEL Grants Program, the evaluation criteria the technical reviewers will use in evaluating the proposals are as follows:

1. **Rationality.** Reviewers will consider the coherence of the applicant's approach and the extent to which the proposal effectively addresses scientific and technical issues.

2. **Qualifications of Technical Personnel.** Reviewers will consider the professional accomplishments, skills, and training of the proposed personnel to perform the work in the project.

3. **Resources Availability.** Reviewers will consider the extent to which the proposer has access to the necessary NIST or other facilities and overall support to accomplish project objectives.

4. **Technical Merit of Contribution.** Reviewers will consider the potential technical effectiveness of the proposal and the value it would contribute to the field of materials science and engineering and neutron research.

Each of these factors will be given equal weight in the evaluation process.

**Award Period:** For the MSEL Grants Program, proposals will be considered for research projects from one to three years. When a proposal for a multi-year award is approved, funding will generally be provided for only the first year of the program. If an application is selected for funding, NIST has no obligation to provide any additional funding in connection with that award. Continuation of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the total discretion of NIST. Funding for each subsequent year of a multi-year proposal will be contingent upon satisfactory progress, continued relevance to the mission of the MSEL program, and the availability of funds. The multi-year awards must have scopes of work that can be easily separated into annual increments of meaningful work that represent solid accomplishments if prospective funding is not made available to the applicant, (i.e., the scopes of work for each funding period must produce identifiable and meaningful results in and of themselves).

**Matching Requirements:** The MSEL Grants Program does not require any matching funds.

**Application Kit:** For the MSEL Grants Program, an application kit, containing all required application forms and certifications is available by contacting Ms. Marlene Taylor, (301) 975-5653.

#### **Building Research Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program**

**Dates:** The Building Research Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program proposals must be received no later than the close of business September 30, 2003. Proposals received after June 30, 2003 will continue to be processed and considered for funding but may be funded in the next fiscal year, subject to the availability of funds.

**Addresses:** For the Building Research Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program, submit one signed original and two copies of the proposal package to: Building and Fire Research Laboratory, Attn.: Karen Perry, National Institute of Standards and Technology, 100 Bureau Drive, Stop 8602, Gaithersburg, MD 20899-8602. Tel.: (301) 975-5910. Fax: (301) 975-4032.

**Authority:** As authorized by 15 U.S.C. 272(b) and (c), the NIST Building and Fire Research Laboratory conducts a basic and applied research program directly and through grants and cooperative agreements to eligible recipients.

**Program Description and Objectives:** The Building Research Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program supports the formal mission of the Building and Fire Research Laboratory, which is to meet the measurement and standards needs of the Building and Fire communities. All proposals submitted must be in accordance with the program objectives listed below. The appropriate Program Manager for each field of research may be contacted for clarification of the program objectives.

1. **Materials and Construction Research Division, 861**—The primary objective is to support laboratory programs in the areas of Structures, Construction Metrology and Automation, Inorganic Materials, and Polymeric Materials (including safety, security, and sustainability of building and physical infrastructure, service-life performance of building materials, and construction cycle time). The contact person for this division is: Dr. Shyam Sunder, and he may be reached at (301) 975-6713.

2. **Building Environment Division, 863**—The primary objective is to support laboratory programs in the areas of Thermal Machinery, Mechanical Systems and Controls, Heat Transfer and Alternative Energy Systems, Computer Integrated Construction and Indoor Air Quality and Ventilation (including cybersecurity, critical

infrastructure protection of building management and control systems, and life-cycle information management in buildings). The contact person for this division is: Dr. George E. Kelly, and he may be reached at (301) 975-5850.

For details on these various activities, please see the Building and Fire Research Laboratory website at <http://www.bfsl.nist.gov>. Note that documents describing the current programs for the two technical divisions are available through the homepage.

**Eligibility:** The Building Research Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program is open to institutions of higher education; hospitals; non-profit organizations; commercial organizations; State, local, and Indian tribal governments; foreign governments; organizations under the jurisdiction of foreign governments; and international organizations.

**Funding Availability:** Over the past three years, the building divisions of the Building and Fire Research Laboratory funded a total of approximately \$1,000,000 in grants and cooperative agreements. The amount available each year fluctuates considerably based on programmatic needs. Individual awards are expected to range between \$5,000 and \$150,000.

**Proposal Review Process:** All applications received in response to this announcement will be reviewed to determine whether or not they are complete and responsive. Incomplete or non-responsive applications will not be reviewed for technical merit. The Program will retain one copy of each non-responsive application for three years for recordkeeping purposes. The remaining copies will be destroyed.

Responsive proposals will be forwarded to the appropriate Division Chief, who will assign them to appropriate reviewers. At least three independent, objective individuals knowledgeable about the particular scientific area described above that the proposal addresses will conduct a technical review of each proposal, based on the evaluation criteria described below. When non-Federal reviewers are used, reviewers may discuss the proposals with each other, but scores will be determined on an individual basis, not as a consensus. Reviews will be conducted no less than once per quarter, and all proposals since the last review session will be ranked based on the reviewers' scores.

Next, the Division Chief or Laboratory Director will make application selections. In making application selections, the Division Chief or Laboratory Director will take into consideration the results of the