Research Planning and Decision Making

Richard Haber, Director
Ceramic and Composite Materials Center

Joint Center with
Rutgers University
The Pennsylvania State University and
The University of New Mexico
Research Vision

It is a challenge to update the research agenda of the Center

• Maintain a Core Set of programs of broad interest
  – Within CCMC there are 5 Thrust Areas, within each Thrust Area we target at least 1 project to be a Core/General Interest Project

• Establish Specific Targeted Thrust Area with a sufficient number of programs
  – A Thrust Area will have at least 3 projects

• Establish a means of introducing a new Thrust Area
  – Follow “Alex’s Rules for creating a Center”

• Establish means of terminating a Thrust Area
  – Tread very carefully! Try to consolidate projects
The long term program vision is a blend of Partner University interests AND the ability to recruit companies.

CCMC has been able to establish Thrust Areas that are of interest to a sufficient percentage (approximately one third) of existing members while recruiting new members to that thrust.

Don’t neglect existing members or programs when New Thrust
Short Term Objectives/Targets

- Project evolution has been challenging! Do Not assume that members will volunteer project ideas.
- Our procedure has been to request input 6 months out.
- Most input comes from one on one visits or off-line discussions. Once these are established, the Director has to be careful not to shift interest from ongoing projects to new projects.
- Make sure Companies know which projects are important to them!! It is not always obvious.
Managing Projects

- Don’t let projects last forever!

- CCMC has shifted to a 2 year/4 year project management scheme. Once a project begins it is funded for 2 years, but can be redirected on an annual basis. At the 2 year Check Point, the IAB decides whether to continue the project or terminate.

- The project is ended at 4 years, subject to a little flexibility. If the topic is of sufficient interest, it can be re-proposed to the IAB and continued.
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Life forms provide the basis of project management.

Ceramic and Composite Materials Center
An NSF Industry/University Cooperative Research Center
IAB Comments

How do we use Life Forms? We advise our IAB to vote as follows:

• **Very Interested** – Relevant from your companies perspective and would allocate funding to this project: THIS PROJECT IS KEY TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP

• **Interested** – Relevant from your companies perspective and would allocate funding to this project

• **Interested with change** – Relevant from your companies perspective, would allocate funding to this project with the following changes: PLEASE INDICATE YOUR CHANGES

  ➢ **Not Interested** – Not Relevant from your companies perspective, approve of CCMC funding of the project as a core project

  ➢ **Abstain** – Not Relevant from your companies perspective, do not wish to see CCMC funding for this project
Project Funding

- CCMC has a 2 tier membership: $15/40K. We funding projects at $45K, so it is imperative to gain widespread support for projects or to leverage funding with outside support.

- As examples:
  - The US Army Material Center of Excellence in Armor. This program leverages the CCMC funding at 3:1. The MCOE is Rutgers based but partners with Penn State.
  - 30% of CCMC members provide one on one contract support in similar areas to CCMC projects.

- In Reality, with the small levels of funding, Center funding tends to supplement faculty with research initiatives in similar topical areas. It is challenging to get faculty buy-on without leveraged funding opportunities.