October 22, 2007

TO: Dr. Matthew S. Platz
Interim Dean, College of Mathematical and Physical Sciences

FROM: Joseph A. Alutto, Executive Vice President and Provost
Robert T. McGrath, Senior Vice President for Research

SUBJECT: Targeted Investment in Excellence review

Thank you for the report on the Cosmology and Astro-Particle Physics Targeted Investment in Excellence (TIE) initiative. As you know, we invited the President's and Provost's Advisory Committee (PPAC) to review the first-year TIE reports. The committee was asked to provide feedback considering the following questions:

- Are the accomplishments as expected, and is there an appropriate trajectory for success?
- Are there significant threats to success? If so, what might those be?
- Are there opportunities to enhance success? If so, what might those be?
- Are there concerns regarding the projected allocation of funds for the next academic year?

The reactions to the first year report by PPAC are attached for your use in optimizing the success of your TIE. We have also attached our own comments emphasizing and expanding upon the feedback provided by PPAC. Our comments, where appropriate, link two-year cumulative expectations to decisions about the next year's allocation of funds. PPAC will continue to provide you and our offices with feedback regarding the yearly and the overall effectiveness of the TIE.

Based upon PPAC's feedback for the first year of the TIE, the following points should be taken into account for the balance of the program:

- A "lead" dean and principal investigator(s) should be identified for each multi-college TIE;
- Activities included as part of the TIE, both college and central components, should be identified as such and distinctly differentiated from activities that are merely aligned with the TIE;
As appropriate, there should be a clear illustration of faculty recruitment and hiring progress, particularly in comparison to the implementation plan, and Metrics for each TIE should be reconciled as appropriate and reported over subsequent years of the TIE.

The next review of the TIE by PPAC will build on this year's review. Your report for the second year of the TIE should be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs no later than April 18, 2008. PPAC will evaluate your report and submit its review by the end of May. We will consider the reports, assessment by PPAC, and our own analyses and will make funding decisions for FY09 by July 7, 2008.

In addition to the above questions, PPAC will be asked to respond to the following question in 2008: Has the anticipated impact and influence of the TIE been achieved?

In consideration of PPAC's and our own review, we are approving the release of the second year of projected TIE funding in the amount of $956,000 in cash. Please keep in mind that the timing of the actual release of funds into the general ledger system should not be a factor in carrying out the objectives of the TIE, particularly since the colleges are contributing substantial matching funds.

For the second year report, we will begin to focus more closely on tracking the commitments made by the colleges through the general ledger fiscal tracking mechanism that was put in place in consultation last year with the senior fiscal officers of the colleges. Assistant Vice President Kevin King will be contacting the senior fiscal officers involved in your TIE with information on the general ledger reports that will be used to track sources and uses.

For those TIEs with multi-college collaborations, as a follow-up to this letter, please let Vice Provost Mike Sherman know within the next week who is to be designated as the TIE lead dean. We have asked Mike to contact you to schedule a meeting with you and your TIE faculty team before the end of the quarter. If you have questions, please contact him at sherman.4@osu.edu.

c.c.: President E. Gordon Gee
      Vice Presidents
      Vice Provosts
      PPAC

Encl: PPAC review of the TIE transmittal letter, PPAC review of the TIE, PPAC protocol to review the TIE, OAA review of the TIE, report outline for 2008