August 18, 2008

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

FROM: Joseph A. Alutto, Executive Vice President and Provost
Caroline C. Watacre, Interim 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 we did last year, we invited the President's and Provost's Advisory Committee (PPAC) to review the second-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 of accomplishment?
- Are there significant threats to success? If so, what might those be?
- Are there opportunities to enhance success? If so, what might those be?
- Does it appear that the anticipated impact and influence of the TIE is being and/or will be achieved?
- Are there concerns regarding the projected allocation of funds for the next academic year? If so, what are those concerns, and what are possible steps for remediation?

The reactions to the second 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 second year of the TIE, the following points should be taken into account for the balance of the program:

- A fiscal officer and a lead communicator should be identified for each TIE;
- Activities directly 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.

We have also indicated to the PPAC the following:

- We will schedule a workshop led by TIE leaders on lessons learned and strategies for success;
We will consider if and how an external review process might enhance the overall TIE program or specific TIE programs;

- The TIEs will work with university relations and the communicator for each TIE to develop a coordinated communications strategy for the overall TIE program and for specific TIE programs; and

- We will continue to work with the TIE programs and PPAC regarding the review process for year three activities.

The next review of the TIE by PPAC will build on this year’s review. Your report for the third year of the TIE should be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs no later than Friday, April 17, 2009. PPAC will evaluate your report and submit its review by mid-June at the latest. We will consider the reports, assessment by PPAC, and our own analyses and will make funding decisions for FY10 by mid-August, 2009.

For the next review, PPAC will focus more energy on assessing whether the anticipated impact and influence of the TIE has been achieved. PPAC will also consider the primary factors for the continuing success of the TIE programs over the next ten years.

In consideration of PPAC’s and our own review, we are approving the release of the third year of projected TIE funding in the following amounts: $0 in continuing funds and $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 third year report, we will continue to use the general ledger fiscal tracking mechanism that was put in place last year to assure that the colleges are meeting their TIE commitments. For questions about this issue, please ask your senior fiscal officer to contact Donna Hobart at hobart.1@osu.edu. She can provide information on the general ledger reports that will be used to track sources and uses.

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 lead communicator for your TIE. Mike will also contact you to schedule a meeting with you and your TIE faculty team before the end of the quarter to discuss the results of the review and any issues associated with the success of the TIE. If you have questions, please contact him at sherman.4@osu.edu.

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

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
Acknowledgement to PPAC