

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST TO TERMINATE INSTITUTE FOR COMBINATORIAL DISCOVERY
AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY**

Action Requested: Consider approval of the request by Iowa State University to terminate the Institute for Combinatorial Discovery in the Office of the Vice President of Research.

Executive Summary: Funding for the Center was not renewed in 2010. This proposal was reviewed by the Board Office and the Council of Provosts and is recommended for approval. The proposed closure addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan Goal #8 "Iowa's public universities and special schools shall be increasingly efficient and productive."

Background:

- ◇ **Description of institute.** The Institute for Combinatorial Discovery was approved by the Board of Regents in March 2003 (Agenda Item ISU-3) as one of six Presidential Academic Initiatives and focused on the development of computational techniques for the rapid discovery of new materials. The purpose of the Institute was to build a cross-disciplinary program to establish ISU as an internationally-recognized center for excellence in research, technology development, and technology transfer in the combinatorial sciences.

"Combinatorial science transforms the tradition of one sample-one experiment at a time processes used to create new materials by enable scientists and engineers to perform a large number of experiments in parallel. In so doing, the rate in which new drugs, catalysts, adhesives, and other materials are discovered is markedly enhanced."
- ◇ **Rationale for proposed termination.** The proposal indicated that funding would be made available for salary and benefits of two faculty positions, graduate assistants, and program support. Base funding provided in FY 2003 was \$150,000 and base funding to be provided in FY 2004 was \$160,000 to cover these expenses. The Office of the Vice President of Research (VPR) funded the institute until 2010 when university budget cuts led to loss of support and the transfer of the institute to the Institute for Physical Research and Technology (IPRT). In 2015, IPRT was dissolved and all associated centers were transferred to either a college or VPR oversight. Also in 2015, the director of the institute left ISU. Over time, the community of users changed and diminished. With the departure of the director in 2015, the institute has had no staff associated and it has become inactive.
- ◇ **Description of transition following closure.** The equipment space allocated to the institute will be transferred to the Office of Biotechnology.
- ◇ **Administrative structure.** The institute reports to VPR and no longer has a director or staff.
- ◇ **Cost savings.** Limited funds remain; they will be reinvested in the Office of Biotechnology to support the use of equipment.
- ◇ **Anticipated impact on units.** No impact is anticipated on other units at ISU as a result of the proposed closure.

- ◇ Internal review. The proposed termination was discussed by the Office of the Vice President for Research with the Colleges of Engineering and Liberal Arts and Sciences, whose faculty used the center, appropriate departments, and the provost.

- ◇ Date of implementation. The proposed closure is June 30, 2016.