

18 June 2014

Dr. Neil Swanberg
Program Director, Arctic System Science
Division of Polar Programs

Subj: Hiring and Supervision of Executive Director of SEARCH Science Support Office

Dear Dr. Swanberg,

The proposal "*Research, Synthesis, and Knowledge Transfer in a Changing Arctic: Science Support for the Study of Environmental Arctic Change (SEARCH)*", under consideration for funding support by NSF includes the provision for an Executive Director (ED) of the SEARCH Science Support Office (SEARCH Secretariat). The ED would be hired through the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) and – at least initially – be situated at the International Arctic Research Center (IARC) at UAF.

As IARC Director, I would like to provide additional information on the hiring process and supervisory structure for the ED position. Specifically, the IARC and university administration recognize that the ED is meant to serve the overarching goals of the SEARCH program within the SEARCH governance structure. As with other NSF-supported research efforts, goals and activities are within the purview of the project principal investigator (PI) and co-investigators (both from within and outside of UAF). The role of the university is to provide the resources and facilities to ensure that the project aims can be met as laid out in the original proposal or revisions thereof agreed to by the PIs and the funding agency.

Due to the nature of the ED position which is meant to serve the broader research community and report to the SEARCH Science Steering Committee (SSC), hiring and supervision of the position will be arranged as detailed below.

(1) ED position description and hiring process: The position description will be developed by the SEARCH SSC, in consultation with UAF Human Resources (HR) to ensure compliance with equal-opportunity/non-discriminatory regulations. The search committee for the hire will be chaired by the SEARCH SSC Chair, and will include two SSC members (selected by the SSC), one additional UAF faculty member (to be identified by the IARC Director) and a representative from ARCUS (identify by the SSC). The hire will be based on the ranking of candidates established by the search committee using criteria approved by the SSC.

(2) Supervision of ED and workload: The ED will be hired into a senior staff position at IARC-UAF. If the ED has qualifications that allow for a hire as IARC research faculty and the SEARCH SSC deems this approach appropriate, the ED may be hired as research faculty. In

either case, the sole administrative supervisor for the ED position is the IARC Director. As administrative supervisor, the IARC Director approves the annual workload and completes an evaluation of performance with respect to the workload on an annual basis. In this particular case, the workload will be developed by the ED in consultation with the SEARCH SSC (typically represented through the SSC Chair), and submitted to the IARC Director for approval. As long as the workload meets the formal requirements of UAF with respect to number of work units and other relevant criteria applicable to all UAF senior staff or research faculty, the ED workload will then be approved by the IARC Director and will serve as the benchmark for the annual performance evaluation.

(3) Annual performance evaluation: Each year, an annual performance evaluation of the ED will be completed by the SEARCH SSC (typically represented through the SSC Chair), relative to the workload submitted prior. This evaluation will be conducted following guidelines by the university with respect to satisfactory or unsatisfactory performance and will be submitted to the IARC Director as the formal approver. As with the workload, as long as the evaluation meets the formal requirements of UAF applicable to all UAF senior staff or research faculty, the ED evaluation will then be approved by the IARC Director.

(4) Role of ED within NSF grant framework: As laid out in the grant proposal and accompanying documentation, the role of PI for the grant would be transferred to the ED approximately one year after her or his hire. The ED would then assume all responsibilities of PI for the remainder of the project. If the ED were not to meet the SEARCH SSC's expectations as documented by failure to achieve a satisfactory annual performance evaluation, the role of PI could be transferred to the SSC chair or a designated SSC member. We acknowledge, the transfer of PI duties must first be approved by NSF.

(5) Place of work and potential transfer of location: As laid out in the grant proposal, initially, i.e., at least through the first two years of the grant until the first external review of SEARCH, the ED's primary workplace would be located at UAF in Fairbanks, with significant travel to other locations in the country where SEARCH activities are underway. If during the course of the project, the ED's portfolio of activities and responsibilities would require a continued presence in another location within the country, then a relocation of the ED from Fairbanks would be possible under the terms of the employment contract.

We appreciate your confidence in IARC and the SEARCH program and we welcome your questions, comments and input at any time.
Sincerely,



Larry Hinzman, Director
International Arctic Research Center