

**REPORT OF THE TECHNOLOGY GRANT  
PROGRAM (TGP) REVIEW PANEL**

**Background, Personnel, and Process**

The Technology Grant Program (TGP) Review Panel met on November 20, 2002, in Columbia, SC, at the offices of the Commission on Higher Education. The members of the Panel were:

- Dr. James Mingle, Chairperson, former Executive Director of the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) group
- Dr. Janet Poley, President, American Distance Education Consortium
- Dr. Bruce Chaloux, Director of the Southern Regional Education Board's Electronic Campus
- Mr. Michael Abbiatti, Associate Commissioner for Learning Technology, Louisiana Board of Regents
- Dr. Philip Moss, Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
- Mr. Larry Johnson, Chief Technology Officer, South Carolina Budget and Control Board
- Ms. Shannon Wilder, Instructional Design and Technology Specialist, Office of Instructional Support and Development, University of Georgia

Biographical abstracts of each member of the Review Panel are attached to this report as *Appendix 1*.

The purpose of the meeting was to make recommendations to the Commission for awarding funds for proposals submitted by eligible public teaching universities in South Carolina for upgrading and innovative uses of technology. This program was established by the General Assembly in 2002. After discussion with and approval by the institutions themselves, the Commission issued a set of *Guidelines* for the TGP process. A total of \$10.5 million dollars is expected to be available under the provision.

Prior to arrival in Columbia, the members of the Review Panel were mailed 19 proposals which had been submitted by the eligible institutions. Each of the ten eligible four-year teaching universities submitted at least one proposal. Eight of the ten (i.e., all but Francis Marion University and South Carolina State University) had submitted two proposals. In addition, the three four-year teaching university campuses of the University of South Carolina submitted a consortial proposal. The TGP Review Panel, after a full day of deliberation, study, and discussion, recommended awarding funds to 12 of the 19 proposals. All twelve of these proposals were recommended for full funding. Each public university received at least one fully funded award. Two institutions (The Citadel and Coastal Carolina) received full funding for both proposals which they submitted.

Those proposals recommended for funding by the Review Panel were the following twelve, divided into two groups. First, five proposals were evaluated as the strongest group of all those recommended for funding, on the basis of the criteria found in the *Guidelines*. Consistent with that evaluation, the Selection Panel recommends that the Commission fully fund these five proposals first as lottery funds become available. In that way, if some of the lottery funds which were appropriated are not actually realized for purposes of this grants competition, these five projects will at least be able to be fully implemented

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| 1. Coastal Carolina: Enhancing Interactivity in Teaching and Learning Beyond the Classroom     | \$797,100   |
| 2. South Carolina State: Expanding the Use of Technology in Teaching and Management            | \$1,066,300 |
| 3. The Citadel: Expanding Multimedia Resources to Improve Teaching and Learning at the Citadel | \$498,500   |
| 4. The Citadel: Integrated Library Management System   | \$150,000   |
| 5. USC-Beaufort: Network Infrastructure to Support Increased Technology Use                    | \$623,700   |

Secondly, a group of seven proposals were recommended for funding, as follows:

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| 6. USC-Aiken: Ubiquitous Campus Computing  | \$798,000   |
| 7. Lander: Enhancing Student Learning via Technology Improvements at Lander University                                       | \$550,000   |
| 8. USC-Spartanburg: Campus Networked Computing Infrastructure Upgrades   | \$1,183,000 |
| 9. College of Charleston: Building Learning Communities  | \$998,000   |
| 10. Winthrop: Technology Replacement/Upgrade   | \$854,400   |
| 11. Francis Marion: Enhancement of University-Wide Teaching and Learning Through Discipline-Specific Technology Enhancements | \$799,600   |
| 12. Coastal Carolina: Reaching Students Through Distance Learning  | \$730,400   |

In the view of the Review Panel, when lottery funds become available, this second group of proposals should be funded only after the first five are fully funded.

Abstracts of all the proposals recommended for funding by the Review Panel are attached to this report as *Appendix 2*.

### **Unfunded Proposals**

Seven proposals (six from individual institutions and the single one from a consortium) were considered unfundable in their current forms. In general, the Panel found this group of proposals to have lacked sufficient narrative and supporting budget

material to convey the objectives to be achieved from the requested investment. Although declining to fund the consortial proposal for the reasons listed, the Review Panel nevertheless unanimously wished it to be known that they are philosophically in favor of consortial efforts for competitive processes like the TGP.

The Review Panel is of the opinion that the institutions might find it beneficial to receive feedback on their proposals, regardless of whether these proposals were recommended for funding or not. Accordingly, we have attached to this report the Review Panel's summary of comments on individual proposals. These are found as *Appendix 3* for the Commission staff to consider sharing with the individual institutions.

### **Observations of the Members regarding the Process and the Opportunity**

In the course of its work, the Review Panel made several observations concerning the process and opportunity afforded by the TGP initiative. Generally, Panel members were positive about the TGP initiative both in terms of the process and with respect to the potential it presented the state of South Carolina to do something which would enhance the productivity, efficiency and effectiveness of South Carolina's public four-year teaching universities through the development of their technological base.

The Review Panel was in agreement that the language of the law which created the TGP competitive grants process provided a framework to permit development and implementation of institutional plans capable of promoting the statewide goals for higher education as found in the Commission on Higher Education's statewide plan. The Panel also agreed that the proposals—even those to which the Panel chose to award funding--did not very adequately address these same statewide goals.

The Review Panel found the *Guidelines* consistent in spirit with the broad outlines of the law creating the TGP competitive grants process, but was of the opinion that the *Guidelines* could have served better as a spearhead for addressing the elements of the State Plan of the Commission on Higher Education if they had been more focused. Despite this critique of the *Guidelines*, the Review Panel found this document to contain sufficient references to promote development of proposals for addressing statewide need, including:

- A priority for consortia to promote development of a statewide electronic library for higher education institutions
- A priority placed upon proposals directed toward historically underserved populations
- A priority placed upon proposals for reaching off-campus student populations of all types

Despite the opportunities found in the *Guidelines*, the proposals submitted were generally weak in, or devoid of reference to, addressing these concerns. Instead, the

Review Panel saw the proposals focused almost exclusively on campus-based, full-time residential students and campus-based faculty members.

The question of efficiency also arose during the Review Panel's consideration of the proposals. The Panel noted an unexplained, significant range in prices for the purchase of all types of teaching technology from smart classrooms to individual computers. (For example, purchase prices for personal computers varied from \$1,700 to \$3,600, a wide range even allowing for different firms' estimates or pc capabilities.) The Panel was similarly concerned about the lack of effort demonstrated in the proposals to acknowledge the importance of statewide contract pricing for the purchase of technology. Moreover, in the opinion of the Panel, the proposals demonstrated a high degree of institutional disuse and disregard for collaborative efforts in purchasing equipment which rivaled their disregard for interinstitutional collaboration in the achievement of statewide higher education goals.

A second issue of concern to the Review Panel was the weakness of the evaluation component found in all the proposals. Given the language of the *Guidelines*, not to mention issues of standard accountability both within institutions and to the General Assembly, the Review Panel expected that the proposals would show significant specificity in terms of measured outcome variables by which they would evaluate the degree of success achieved from implementing their technology upgrades. The Panel was, therefore, surprised by the virtual lack of reference to these instruments in any specific way and by their complete omission in a number of the proposals.

Still another issue of concern was the apparent absence in most proposals of a plan to cover personnel costs in the future, whether for temporary, part-time or full-time employees since it is not reasonable to expect personnel costs to be covered by future grants. The stronger proposals reflected institutional commitment by covering personnel costs of new hires.

Finally, few of the proposals were explicit with respect to overall institutional commitment and sustainability beyond the life of the grant. While this was especially true with respect to personnel costs, it was also an issue which was generally noted.

### **Summary**

The Review Panel agreed there is great merit in the legislative purposes for which the TGP was created. Moreover, the Panel recommends that the General Assembly consider providing this avenue for the dispersal of lottery funds on a long-term basis.

On the other hand, the Review Panel has concluded that the institutional proposals submitted for this first round of proposals were lacking in strengths in several significant ways. Thus, in the future, assuming that the General Assembly sees fit to reauthorize this competition, it is the Review Panel's view that the process and the outcomes should be strengthened by the addition of the following measures:

- The *Guidelines* for the competition should indicate clearly that in order to be funded proposals must show significant promise of achievable, measurable outcomes.
- The achievable, measurable outcomes should be linked to a specific element of an approved institutional plan for development of teaching and learning processes.
- The achievable measurable outcomes should also be linked explicitly to a specific statewide goal of the *State Plan for Higher Education*.
- The proposals should also be required to be reviewed by the State's Chief Information Officer to approve both their feasibility and their budgetary requests to the extent the latter are in areas affected by state contract purchase plans, when they can realize savings in purchasing equipment.
- The *Guidelines* should include a requirement for a final report containing both narrative and fiscal sub-reports in which the successes and shortcomings of the funded project's implementation are included.
- Institutional commitment of funds (including identification of the source of those funds) to maintain the processes for which the TGP is "seed money" should be an explicit requirement in all grant proposals.

**Biographical Abstracts of Members of the  
Technology Grant Program (TGP) Review Panel**

**Abbiatti, Michael**

Mr. Abbiatti is the Associate Commissioner for Learning Technology for the Louisiana Board of Regents. He holds undergraduate and graduate technical degrees from the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, Centenary College, and Northwestern State University with professional certification from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Formerly Director of Distance Education for Louisiana State University, Mr. Abbiatti has been recognized by Computerworld-Smithsonian Awards Program as a Laureate for leadership in design, deployment, and utilization of Information Technology for the benefit of Louisiana's citizens. He is a member of the EDNET Education Executive Advisory Board. He has been the recipient of the United State Distance Learning Association's Most Outstanding Achievement by an Individual in K-12 Award. Mr. Abbiatti served a tour as commander of a medical unit in Operation Desert Storm and led a "virtual laboratory" development team to design an electronic global training program for military medical personnel.

**Chaloux, Bruce**

Dr. Chaloux directs the 16-state *Electronic Campus* initiative of the Southern Regional Education Board. He earned his baccalaureate degree from Castleton State College in Vermont, an MBA from University of Florida, and a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from Florida State University. He has nearly 30 years of teaching and administrative experience in higher education at the institutional, state, and national levels, as a faculty member, dean, and doctoral student dissertation supervisor. He has published numerous articles and chapters and has been a contributor to numerous reports on technology, distance learning, and technology-based education.

**Johnson, Larry**

Mr. Johnson was selected in 2002 to fill the newly created position of Chief Technology Officer (CTO) for the Division of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) of the South Carolina Budget and Control Board. He holds a BS degree (Magna Cum Laude) from Brigham Young University. His responsibilities are to provide leadership and guidance in developing the strategic IT direction and policy for the CIO and, by extension, the State as an enterprise. Prior to his joining state government, Mr. Johnson had a long career in business, first for six years in Washington, DC, with Electronic Data Systems as an instructor, manager, and systems engineer; and, later, for 17 years at Policy Management Systems Corporation (PMSC) in Columbia, where he held the position of Vice President of Architecture and Infrastructure for PMSC's Property and Casualty Insurance Products.

### **Mingle, James**

Dr. Mingle chaired the TGP Review Panel. Currently he is an independent consultant and serves as Director of the Distance Learning Policy Laboratory of the Southern Regional Education Board in Atlanta, GA. He holds B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of Akron and the Ph.D. in Higher Education from the University of Michigan. Dr. Mingle is an advisor to the Association of Governing Board's Center for Public Higher Education Trusteeship and Governance. From 1984-2000 he served as Executive Director of the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) and in 1995 was a visiting fellow with Educom (now EDUCAUSE), the nation's leading higher education organization in information technology.

### **Moss, Philip**

Dr. Moss is Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs for the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, responsible for academic programs, planning, and policy within the State System. He holds an M.Ed. in Educational Technology and a Ph.D. in Adult and Higher Education with an emphasis in Distance Education from the University of Oklahoma. In his service with the Oklahoma Regents, he has coordinated the provision of instructional technology, electronic media, and distance education over OneNet, the Oklahoma network for education and government. Prior to his work with the Regents, Dr. Moss served as Dean of Information Services and Distance Education at Western Oklahoma State. He has been President of the Oklahoma Distance Learning Association in 1999-2000 and a member of the SREB Electronic Campus Steering Committee.

### **Poley, Janet**

Dr. Poley is CEO and President of the American Distance Education Consortium (ADEC), through which she develops collaborative distance education initiatives with 65 land grant university members working nationally and internationally. She holds three degrees from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, including a B.S. in Journalism and Home Economics, an M.S. in Nutrition, and a Ph.D. in Education. She has been involved in training, technical assistance, and program design and evaluation in more than 25 countries in Asia, Africa, and Europe. In 1994 she was recognized as one of 100 outstanding information technology leaders in government, business, and academia by Federal Computer Week. She also is the recipient of the U.S. Congress' Excalibur Award for her international aid contributions. She has been an executive administrator with the Extension Service of the US Department of Agriculture and a faculty member at University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

### **Wilder, Shannon**

Ms. Wilder is an Instructional Design and Technology Specialist at the University of Georgia in the Office of Instructional Support and Development. She holds a B.F.A. in Art, an M.Ed. in Instructional Technology, and is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Art Education at the University of Georgia. At the University of Georgia, she provides

campus-wide leadership on matters relating to instruction through a variety of faculty development programs. She teaches and designs faculty development workshops and consults with faculty seeking to integrate technology into their classrooms. She is the author or co-author of several books on technology and has made numerous presentations to groups on the incorporation of technology into higher education. Her specializations include graphics and multimedia software, web development, video streaming technology, and applications of hand-held technology in the classroom.