

## NIST-NRC Postdoctoral Associateships

### *Building a Foundation, Building a Network*

#### **The NIST-NRC Program**

NIST works with the National Research Council (NRC) to offer awards for postdoctoral research in the diverse fields of physical science in which NIST is actively involved. The mission of the NRC's Research Associateship Programs is to provide advanced training for highly qualified postdoctoral and visiting scientists, while enhancing the research conducted in federal laboratories.

The NRC-NIST postdoctoral research associateship is a flagship program that brings value to the federal research enterprise by inviting new ideas and skills, as well as helping to build future generations of research leaders. For NIST positions, the NRC application process is very competitive and involves two application cycles starting in February and August of each year. The NRC evaluates all applications using a peer review process. Each application receives multiple reviews by scientists and engineers with expertise across the range of sponsored programs. Sponsor labs have input on the quality of applicants and the relevance to their programs.

#### **The NRC Postdoctoral Experience in MSEL**

Every year, MSEL receives more than 50 applications for NRC-NIST postdoctoral fellowships, with 10 to 15 successful appointments. MSEL programs are significantly enriched by the fresh ideas and talent brought by NRC postdocs, who enjoy close interactions with a broad range of experienced researchers and access to world class equipment and resources. MSEL has nearly 200 postdoctoral research opportunities that span the materials spectrum, from metals and semiconductors to polymers and biomaterials. These include exciting opportunities in materials measurements for applications in electronics, energy, healthcare, nanotechnology, physical infrastructure and manufacturing.

The benefits for MSEL and for the Associates from this program do not end upon completion of the two-year postdoctoral tenure. The alumni of the NIST-NRC postdoctoral program are typically in high demand because of the high quality of their work and because of NIST's excellent reputation worldwide. Because the program opens doors to a wide range of research careers, MSEL postdoctoral fellows take on leading positions in industry, academia and government agencies. Indeed, a significant fraction of the permanent staff in MSEL began their careers as NRC postdoctoral associates. In addition,

a measure of the success of the MSEL program is the large number of postdoctoral alumni who remain in contact with NIST as their careers progress, often as part of scientific collaborations or to recommend one of their own graduate students to the fellowship competition.

#### **Learn More**

To learn more about NIST-NRC postdoctoral research opportunities in the Materials Science and Engineering Laboratory, including detailed research opportunity descriptions, visit <http://www.nist.gov/mse/postdoc.cfm>. In addition, a new web video entitled *Door to the Future* features MSEL postdoctoral associates describing their experience at NIST in their own words. The video can be viewed on the NIST YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/user/usnistgov>.



Application materials and instructions for the NIST-NRC Postdoctoral Research program can be found on the NRC Research Associate Program website at <http://sites.nationalacademies.org/pga/rap/>. Applications for NRC Associateships at NIST are accepted on February 1st and August 1st of each year. Additional competitions funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) may occur in 2010. NIST-NRC Associateships are open only to US Citizens.

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