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To: amtech
Subject: answers to questions

1. Should AMTech consortia focus on developments within a single existing or prospective industry, or should its focus be on broader system developments that must be supplied by multiple industries?

Broad Problems that support multiple industries.

2. Who should be eligible to participate as a member of an AMTech consortium? For example, U.S. companies. i.e., large, medium, and/or small; institutions of higher education; Federal agencies; state, local, and tribal governments; and non-profit organizations?

All should be able to participate. – Management authority should be given to US based not for profits. Management authority should not be given to universities. I think there should be a requirement that any consortium should have least some small business participation.

3. Should AMTech place restrictions on or limit consortium membership?

See question two.

4. Who should be eligible to receive research funding from an AMTech consortium? For example, U.S. companies i.e., large, medium, and/or small; institutions of higher education; Federal agencies; state, local, and tribal governments; and non-profit organizations?

All should be eligible – Should require a cost share or a limit to overhead charges.

5. What criteria should be used in evaluating proposals for AMTech funding?

Solutions to difficult technical problems that if achieved will result in significant economic impact to multiple industries.

Solutions to difficult problems not currently being focused on by the government.
(Don't fund solar or wind projects because everyone else is)

6. What types of activities are suitable for consortia funding?

Basic and applied research to meet stated objectives

7. Should conditions be placed on research awards to ensure funded activities are directed toward assisting manufacturing in the U.S.?

Yes!!!

8. What are ways to facilitate the involvement of small businesses in AMTech consortia?

Require consortia to have small businesses – Reduce cost share requirements for small business.

9. What are best practices for facilitating the widest dissemination and adoption of knowledge and technology through consortia?

Allow some patent costs to be paid for with consortia funds. – A patent is an excellent way to disseminate know-how to the world.

10. While it is expected that the research efforts of AMTech consortia (including participants from the Federal, academic, and private industry sectors) will take place largely at the pre-competitive stage in the development of technologies, the generation of intellectual property is possible, and even likely. What types of intellectual property arrangements would promote active engagement of industry in consortia that include the funding of university-based research and ensure that consortia efforts are realized by U.S. manufacturers?

Do not allow universities and not for profits to hold IP generated at/by the consortia. IP should be assigned to the for profit business.

11. Would planning grants provide sufficient incentive for industry to develop roadmaps and initiate the formation of consortia? If not, what other incentives should be considered?

Planning grants to not-for-profits to facilitate industry planning would probably work.

12. Should each member of an AMTech consortium be required to provide cost sharing? If so, what percentage of cost sharing should be provided?

I think the best type of cost sharing is to limit the amount of overhead a company is allowed to charge. It should be a sliding scale with small companies required being allowed to charge a greater percent of overhead than large institutions.

13. What criteria should be used in evaluating research proposals submitted to an AMTech consortium?

Idea

Economic Benefit

Soundness of Plan

Team

Resources they bring to the project

14. What management models are best suited for industry-led consortia?

Depends on the magnitude of the project, the number of participant, and the project duration.

15. Should the evaluation criteria include the assessment of leadership and managerial skills?

Of course

16. Should limitations be placed on the duration of consortia?

Probably

17. How should an AMTech consortium's performance and impact be evaluated? What are appropriate measures of success?

Performance should be evaluated based on achievement of stated objectives. Objectives should be technical and economic.

18. What are the problems of measuring real-time performance of individual research awards issued by an industry-led consortium? What are appropriate measures of success?

Individual research awards should be evaluated based on achievement of objectives. Objectives should be technical and economic.

19. How should the NIST AMTech program be evaluated?

It should be evaluated based on its achievement of its stated objectives.

20. What are lessons learned from other successful and unsuccessful industry-led consortia?

One thing that I do not like about industry led consortia is that there is often a group of "founders" that have control of all the resources and direction of the projects. There is often no place for "new comers" who may have become aware of the consortia after its formation. Often consortia resources effectively become personal the personal property of one or two companies.

If you can figure out how to avoid that, it would be nice.

21. How can AMTech do the most with available resources? approaches that will best leverage the Federal investment?

Although it is difficult to manage, I think it is better to spread funds over many different consortia rather than to give a lot of funds to just a few for the following reasons:

- Less funding per consortia will spur more creativity.
- Funding more consortia will increase the likelihood of some outstanding success stories.
- Competitive landscape changes very quickly. This may cause some established consortia to become irrelevant. It would be wasteful to put a lot of money into irrelevant consortia.

Cost share is also a good way to stretch available resources.

Funding established consortia is a good way to stretch resources because they already have an infrastructure in place. However NIST should be careful not to fund a “clique -ish” consortium in which resources go to the same few over and over again.

22. How should AMTech interact with other Federal programs or agencies?

23. What role can AMTech play in developing, leading, or leveraging consortia involving other Federal agencies?

To the extent that federal programs or agencies have missions that are inline with a given consortium, dollars obtained from those agencies by consortium members should be considered a cost share to the consortium program. If other federal agencies are willing to support similar research as a consortium, it is a good indication that the research is important.