



Department of Energy  
Office of Science  
Washington, DC 20585

Office of the Director

October 5, 2016

Dr. Gary Stacey  
Endowed Professor of Plant Science  
Divisions of Plant Sciences and Biochemistry  
271E Christopher S. Bond Life Sciences Center  
University of Missouri  
Columbia, MO 65211

Dear Dr. Stacey:

By this letter I am charging the Biological and Environmental Research Advisory Committee (BERAC) to assemble a Committee of Visitors (COV) to assess the processes used by the Biological Systems Science Division (BSSD) within the Office of Biological and Environmental Research (BER) to manage BSSD research programs and its user facility, the Joint Genome Institute (JGI).

The COV should assess the operations of the BSSD's programs for fiscal years 2014, 2015, and 2016. This includes funding at national laboratories and universities and other activities handled by the program during this time period. It should also assess the quality of the resulting scientific portfolio, including its breadth and depth and its national and international standing. Additionally, the COV should also assess the division's management and oversight of the JGI user facility for the same time period. Specifically, I would like the panel to consider and provide an evaluation of the following:

1. For both the DOE national laboratory projects and university grants, assess the efficacy and quality of the processes used by BSSD programs during the past three years to:
  - a) solicit, review, recommend and document application and proposal actions, and
  - b) monitor active awards, projects and programs.
2. Within the boundaries defined by DOE mission and available funding, comment on how the award process has affected:
  - a) the breadth and depth of the portfolio elements, and
  - b) the national and international standing of the portfolio elements.

COV members will be given access to all program documentation completed during the period under review including applications, proposals, review documents and other requests. COV members may also request, at their discretion, that a representative



sample of the program portfolio be provided. In response, BSSD may suggest a sample of actions, including new, renewal and supplemental applications and proposals, awards, and declinations. In addition, COV members may also choose to review files through a random selection process. The guidance for all COV reviews within the Office of Science can be found at <http://science.energy.gov/sc-2/committees-of-visitors/> and attachments therein.

The COV should take place in the third quarter of FY 2017 (Summer 2017) at the BER/DOE Germantown location at 19901 Germantown Road, Germantown, Maryland 20874-1290. A discussion of the COV report by BERAC should be held no later than the Fall 2017 BERAC meeting. Following acceptance of the full BERAC membership, the COV report with findings and recommendations is to be presented to me, as the Director, Office of Science.

If you have any questions regarding this charge, please contact Todd Anderson, 301-903-3213 or by email [Todd.Anderson@science.doe.gov](mailto:Todd.Anderson@science.doe.gov).

Sincerely,



C. A. Murray  
Director, Office of Science

cc: Sharlene Weatherwax  
Todd Anderson  
Tristram West