NSF Materials Research Science and Engineering Centers (MRSEC)
Internal Statement of Interest: Due March 29th, 2016

Internal Selection Process
The MRSEC program supports large, multidisciplinary, collaborative efforts. We are calling for a Statement of Interest to assess who across the University is interested. With large grants of this type, proposals are more successful when faculty are able to bring strengths across disciplines to collaborate. Early assessment will allow ORD to facilitate collaboration, if possible. If the interested parties are not well suited for collaboration or proposed teams already include strong collaboration, then there will still be time for an internal selection process.

This internal Statement of Interest is in response to NSF’s Preliminary Proposal Deadline of July 1, 2016.

Description of the MRSEC Program
Materials Research Science and Engineering Centers (MRSEC) provide sustained support of interdisciplinary materials research and education of the highest quality while addressing fundamental problems in science and engineering. A MRSEC may be located at a single institution, or may involve multiple institutions in partnership.

MRSECs
- address research of a scope and complexity requiring the scale, synergy, and interdisciplinarity provided by a campus-based research center.
- support materials research infrastructure in the United States
- promote active collaboration between universities and other sectors, including industry and international institutions
- contribute to the development of a national network of university-based centers in materials research, education, and facilities

MRSECs address fundamental problems in materials science of a scope and complexity requiring the scale and synergy provided by a campus-based research center. They are expected to have strong links to industry and other sectors, as appropriate, and to contribute to the development of a national network of university-based centers in materials research. The MRSEC program reinforces NSF’s commitment to excellence in research and education; it is national in scope and significance, requiring coordination of the overall effort among Centers.

MRSECs require:
- Outstanding research quality
- Intellectual breadth
- Multidisciplinarity
- Flexibility in responding to new research opportunities
- Support for research infrastructure
- Foster the integration of research and education in the materials field.
Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization: 1

Only one MRSEC preliminary proposal may be submitted by any one organization as the lead institution in this competition. An institution proposing research in several groups should submit a single MRSEC proposal with multiple Interdisciplinary Research Groups (IRGs). A MRSEC proposal must contain a minimum of 2 IRGs and a maximum of 3 IRGs. The IRGs in a center may be thematically related, or they may address different aspects of materials research. A single center at an organization allows efficient usage of resources, including common infrastructure, and better coordination of education and other activities of the center.

Important Revision from previous solicitations
A major difference between this solicitation and the previous one (NSF 13-556) is the reduction to a maximum of 3 Interdisciplinary Research Groups (IRGs) per Center. This change is designed to encourage proposers to focus on a smaller number of research topics with highest potential impacts while allowing NSF to provide sufficient resources for each funded IRG.

Estimated number of awards: 6-8
Anticipated funding amount: $23 Million

NSF Required Preliminary Proposal Deadline: July 1, 2016 (required)

Full Proposal Deadline: December 02, 2016

To view the full solicitation please click on the link below.

Please submit the following information to Denise Lindley, Limited_Submissions@unc.edu by close of business on March 29th, 2016 in ONE file (Word or PDF):

1. Name, rank and all University affiliations
2. 1 paragraph project description or description of how you would contribute to a MRSEC team
3. List of potential collaborators (internal and external to UNC)
4. Only required for potential PIs-
   Names of three internal (to UNC) faculty who could speak knowledgeably about the project, in the event of an internal review. Please do not include the names of faculty named on the project, chairs or deans, direct reports or others who have an obvious conflict of interest.

Please do not hesitate to contact Denise Lindley with questions or assistance at Limited_Submissions@unc.edu or 962-7503.