

Research and Development Committee

Mission

- To accept and assess submitted proposals for research projects and award funds based upon the merits of the proposals.

Introduction

AFTE was officially formed in 1969 “in recognition of the need for the interchange of information, methods, development of standards, and the furtherance of research.”

By today’s standards this would be called a mission statement.

We feel that it is time to fulfill another segment of AFTE’s mission statement by supporting R&D through assisted funding of projects. Validation of equipment, new techniques and fresh approaches to old problems must be tackled from within. Furthermore, as inspired by our mission statement, information must be collected and disseminated to the membership at conferences, workshops and through the quarterly publications of the AFTE Journal.

Purpose and Impact

The R&D Committee will accept proposals for projects and will award funds based on the merits of the proposals. Therefore, there may be years when no financial assistance is awarded and other years when one project or possibly several small projects are awarded an assistantship.

We hope to receive a balanced variety of product development, implementation, and evaluation projects regarding science and/or technology. This assistance focuses on near-term (one year or less) development. When applying, you should keep in mind the cost considerations of the technology products that may result from your research. Many of our laboratories have limited financial resources to apply toward implementation or acquisition of technology. This has a direct impact on the degree to which the new technology will be accepted by laboratory management.

Keep in mind the following criteria:

- How important is the new technology?
- What will be its impact?
- Is the proposed technique or device more effective or safer than that currently used?
- What are the expected scientific advancements?
- Is the technology or development cheaper, easier to use, and portable?
- How many new items will be needed?
- What are the hidden cost? (For example, new computers)
- What, if any, are the net savings? (In labor or other costs)
- How much training is required to use and maintain the technology?
- How will your project benefit the membership?

- How will the courts view the technology or scientific advancement?

Proposals

Proposals may address new developments, new techniques (or adaptation of the existing), methods, materials, and protective/safety equipment. Proposals must demonstrate novelty in technological developments that will result in enhanced performance, improved reliability and/or reduced costs. They must describe how or why the selected project represents the common needs of the membership as well as the new or modified requirements. Describe any new or novel applications for the project and explain the cost effectiveness or health and safety benefits of the improvement. All proposals must include a plan of implementation and address the ease of use, the cost of use, and the expected advancement of the science. It is incumbent on the applicant to articulate the expected benefits and cost trade-offs over the existing methods or approach. Devices, if any, must be sufficiently described including the principals of operation and a physical description in order to permit an assessment of its expected effectiveness and safety. All aspects of the project's safety must be considered!

The proposal abstract, when read separately from the rest of the application, is meant to serve as a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work. Applicants must concisely describe the research goals and objectives, research design, and methods for achieving the goals and objectives. Summaries of past accomplishments are to be avoided.

Selection Criteria

After review by the R&D Committee, a recommendation will be made to the AFTE Board of Directors. Upon Board approval, the R&D Committee will award the Assistantship.

Selection criteria used to evaluate the proposals are as follows:

Quality and Technical Merit

- Soundness of methodology, analytical or technical approach
- Innovation and creativity
- Feasibility of proposed project
- Awareness of pitfalls

Impact of the Project

- Understanding the importance of the problem
- Potential for significant advancement of the discipline
- Relevance of practice
- Affordability

Demonstrated Capabilities, Productivity and Experience of Applicants

- Member of AFTE, at any level, must be in good standing
- Responsiveness to the goals of the committee
- Ability to manage the proposed project

Management Plan and Budget Considerations

- Task Breakdown listing expenditures or a Line Item Budget
- Adequacy of proposed resources to perform project
- Total cost relative to perceived benefits
- Use of existing resources to conserve costs
- Cost effectiveness of application to other laboratories

Application Information

Applicants must include the following completed information to qualify for this assistantship. (Further explanation follows on the next pages of this packet):

- Project Proposal Abstract
- Signed Rule and Assurance Form
- Budget Worksheet
- Proposal of Scientific Method
- List of Reference Material
- Current Resume or CV

The completed application package should be mailed to the committee chairman.