UAHuntsville Leads “Team Huntsville” Proposal to Bring the National Solar Observatory Program to Alabama

with NASA/ Marshall, Alabama A&M University, Team Redstone, Sci-Quest, the Chamber of Commerce, and corporate partners.

KEY POINTS

HUNTSVILLE: A WORLD-LEADER IN SOLAR AND SPACE PHYSICS
The Huntsville region is a world-leader in solar and space physics, dating back to the dawn of the space program. We aim to leverage this position to bring the National Science Foundation’s NSF Program to North Alabama.

RESEARCH AS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Relocation of NSO Headquarters to Huntsville would bring ~70 PhD/MS-level scientists, engineers, and program managers, and an annual budget of nearly $20M to our community, connecting it more deeply to the world’s best and brightest.

COST, QUALITY-OF-LIFE, AND REGIONAL-ASSET DRIVERS
Huntsville’s low cost-of-living, high quality of life, community support, and superior strengths in research and technology are winning factors in a proposal.

ENGAGING OUR ENTIRE COMMUNITY
We seek engagement and support from all private, government, and not-for-profit, sectors throughout the Huntsville region and the State of Alabama, to generate the most competitive proposal possible.

A National Program and Laboratory for Alabama
Through a process of competing proposals to be submitted by leading research universities in the US, the National Science Foundation (NSF) will relocate the National Solar Observatory (NSO) Program Headquarters from its current dual-location in Tucson, AZ and Sunspot, NM. UAHuntsville, with partners in government, industry, and academia, will lead the development of a proposal to make Huntsville the chosen site.

The NSO is the nation’s premier ground-based solar physics research program, with broad-reaching impacts in understanding space weather, communications, navigation, satellite design, optics, and education. It is operated on behalf of the NSF by the Association of Universities for Research in Astronomy (AURA), an organization of over 40 universities and 1,000 scientists, with annual revenues in excess of $160 million.

The decision to relocate the NSF HQ is driven in large part by the development of the new Advanced Technology Solar Telescope (ATST) on Haleakala, Maui. This new observatory, scheduled to become functional in the 2016 timeframe, will be far more capable than the NSF’s two current observing facilities. ATST’s greatly increased capabilities will enhance scientific output, and NSO will realize cost-savings by unifying the Headquarters into a single new location, while closing the facilities in New Mexico and Arizona.

Huntsville’s Unique Opportunity
The NSF is America’s premier funding source of cutting-edge scientific and engineering research. The relocation of the NSO to Huntsville would provide academic institutions, NASA, US Army, and Research Park companies with unprecedented access to some of the best minds in America. Expertise includes pioneering optical designs to eliminate atmospheric effects, scientific research, data center operations and networking, space weather, and education. It promises to bring additional avenues of growth between the Huntsville community and the NSF, with strategic ties that will last for decades.

Corporate Partnership
A vibrant and diversified R&D base is critical for Huntsville. Engagement in this proposal is one way to help build our community and economy, and to bring important elements of R&D needed for your company’s future success to Huntsville. Letters of support, participation in the site visit, contributions of products and services, or support for research staff, faculty, or students are all ways in which your company can directly fortify Huntsville’s plan to bring this high-visibility, high-impact, technology-based national-laboratory program to our community.

CONTACTS
Dr. Gary Zank - zank@cspar.uah.edu
Dr. John Horack - john.horack@uah.edu

www.uah.edu