

March 13, 2008

MEMORANDUM

To: Laura Huenneke, Vice President for Research

To: Barry L. Lutz, Interim Dean

From: Nándor Sieben
Department of Mathematics

Re: Request for Matching Funds

I am requesting funds to help support the West Coast Operator Algebra Seminar (WCOAS), to be held at Northern Arizona University on September 13–14, 2008.

The WCOAS has become a tradition among the operator algebraists in the western United States; the meeting at NAU will be the sixteenth in a sequence which includes meetings at UCLA (1991), the University of Nevada (1992), the University of Oregon (1995), and UC Santa Barbara (1997). We are fortunate in having many of the world’s most renowned operator algebraists — and a concomitantly large number of graduate students and postdocs — working in the western United States, and the Seminar provides an invaluable opportunity for these researchers to keep abreast of their rapidly-evolving subject. The WCOAS also serves to foster and reinforce ties among the various western universities, and provides a forum in which young researchers can present their latest results and discuss them with senior mathematicians.

The format of the WCOAS comprises nine one-hour addresses, roughly evenly split between younger researchers and leading figures in the field. There are also informal breaks scheduled for research collaborations, interactions, and refreshments. We expect approximately 50 participants, including some 20 graduate students and 5–10 postdocs, to attend the weekend seminar. We shall attempt to provide inexpensive accommodations for graduate students, and we shall make an extra effort to encourage under-represented minorities and women to participate.

The WCOAS has been a remarkably successful seminar, partly due to the significant concentration of operator algebraists in the west. Previous meetings of the WCOAS have been held at the University of Northern British Columbia (1996), California State University, San Bernardino (1998), the University of Victoria (1999), Arizona State University (2001), the University of Colorado (2002), the Banff International Research Station (2003 and 2005), and Seattle University (2004). The 2006 WCOAS was convened jointly with the Japan-US Operator Algebra Seminar at the University of Hawai’i in January 2007, and the 2007 WCOAS met at California State University, Long Beach in February 2008. The WCOAS was not held in 2000 due to the Special Year in Operator Algebras at the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute in Berkeley.

Holding the WCOAS at NAU will enhance the reputation of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics and NAU overall as a university, especially among our peer institutions in the west.

This year we expect the WCOAS to cost approximately \$30,980 in participant support. We are requesting \$28,980 of this total from the Division of Mathematical Sciences of the NSF (these grants are funded at 0% IDC). The Department of Mathematics and Statistics is committed \$400 in support. I request the difference, \$1600, in matching funds from the Office of the Vice President for Research and the College of Engineering and Natural Sciences.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nándor Sieben
Department of Mathematics and Statistics