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Office of the Vice President for Research

January 28, 2016

M'Lita Carr, Grants Officer  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission - Grants Office  
1155 Rockville Pike  
Rockville, MD 20852

**Subject:** *Commitment for Matching Funds*

Dear Ms. Carr,

I enthusiastically support the Office of Research Support's (ORS) activities described in the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Faculty Development grant application for the "UTSA Nuclear Research Faculty Fellows Program". The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) is a Hispanic Serving Institution with more than 62% of students from underrepresented groups. As an emerging Tier One institution, UTSA aims to diversify our research portfolio, create new and innovative partnerships and have been working diligently to build our faculty towards recognition as world leaders in areas of international interest.

As the Vice President for Research at UTSA, I lead the administrative offices (including the ORS) focused on the development, fiscal management and responsible conduct of research operations across campus. The ORS strives to provide resources and administrative support for faculty engaged in important research across campus. The ORS is dedicated to promoting all aspects of research and other creative endeavors to include supporting efforts designed to create cutting edge partnerships among regional and national academic, industry, and governmental organizations. The ORS also pivotal role in creating opportunities that aim to advance the careers of our junior faculty.

In regards to this NRC proposal, UTSA has a keen interest in expanding our research portfolio to include nuclear related research due to several key points. First, San Antonio is home to the Southwest Research Institute (SwRI), which hosts the federally funded research and development center, the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses (CNWRA<sup>®</sup>). CNWRA is solely sponsored by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and has an overall mission to resolve technical and regulatory issues related to storage, transportation, and disposal of spent nuclear fuel and high level radioactive waste. As our institution is closely located to the CNWRA facilities, it would be an incredible opportunity to engage our faculty that have the potential to contribute to the mission of the CNWRA. Secondly, Nuclear energy meets almost one-third of San Antonio's annual electrical requirements, second only to coal. UTSA has an obligation to understand and contribute to the nuclear energy community, which also presents many career opportunities for our student population.

The ORS plans to recruit and support a total of six faculty fellows under this NRC opportunity from the following UTSA departments: Engineering, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Geology, Physics and Astronomy, Chemistry and Computer Sciences. Faculty fellows that are selected under the program will have an opportunity to professionally develop through formal trainings, partnership engagement, and participation in other scholarly activities.

As the Vice President for Research (VPR), I eagerly commit funding to the below staffing and activities if awarded funding for the UTSA Nuclear Research Faculty Fellows program. The total value of matching funds dedicated from the VPR office will be ~~156,107~~.

1. The VPR will fund ~~23~~ of Dr. Bernard Arulanandam's salary and fringe benefits for a period of three years.
2. The VPR will fund a ~~20%~~ salary contribution with fringe benefits for a Program Coordinator (Mrs. Jaclyn Shaw) to support the PI in delivery of this fellowship program for a period of three years.
3. The VPR will contribute ~~26,000~~ towards faculty development training. (~~2,000 per year~~)
4. The VPR will contribute ~~5,000~~ towards the South Texas Nuclear Research Symposium in June 2019.

Once again, the VPR supports this application and is committed to providing Dr. Arulanandam the aforementioned support for this program. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact my office directly.

Sincerely,



C. Mauli Agrawal, Ph.D., P.E.  
Vice President for Research