March 17, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my support for the proposed Center for the Communication of Science (CCS) in the College of Arts & Architecture at Montana State University.

The mission of the proposed center is the communication and visual expression of the sciences at MSU. In fulfilling this mission CCS will facilitate cross disciplinary research between artists, filmmakers and science and engineering faculty and students at MSU in order to communicate and disseminate scientific research and learning to the wider community in Montana and beyond.

CCS will raise awareness of exciting discoveries by science faculty and students in my college. Enhanced public understanding of the work of scientists and communication of developments in science is also more important than ever for informed public debate on important issues facing our state and region. For these reasons I am enthusiastic in my support for the establishment of CCS.

Sincerely,

Nicol C. Rae
Dean
TO: Montana Board of Regents

FROM: Charles Boyer  
VP, Dean and Director

DATE: March 10, 2015

RE: Support for Proposed MSU Center for Communication of Science

Dear Montana Board of Regents:

I am pleased to offer full support for the proposed Center for Communication of Science at Montana State University.

MSU is quickly becoming a leading land-grant university with a nationally-growing research profile in the STEM fields. As the state’s largest university, MSU has both the need and the responsibility to adequately and effectively share research goals, challenges and accomplishments with our public stakeholders.

This is particularly true within the College of Agriculture and Montana Agricultural Experiment Station, who regularly garner more than $15 million annually in research expenditures. Many federal grants now require a public outreach obligation that goes beyond traditional communication methods. This year, the Association of Public Land-grant Universities effectively challenged associated institutions to bolster their communication initiatives and programs. In short, we have more science than we have the capacity to communicate.

Thus, we have already utilized film students and other services in the MSU School of Film and Photography in an effort to meet our critical need of disseminating research highlights and progress. Our most recent project involves a five-minute video showcasing an integrated farming and livestock research project which will be used for myriad outreach events.

There is great collaborative nature, student learning opportunity and possible institutional repute in this proposal. On behalf of the College of Agriculture and Montana Agricultural Experiment Station, we fully support the creation of a Center for Communication of Science at Montana State University.
March 15, 2015

Montana Board of Regents
2500 E Broadway St
PO Box 203201
Helena MT 59620-3201

Dear Members of the Board of Regents:

I am writing in support of the creation of the Center for the Communication of Science at MSU for the collaborative potential it holds to inform the people of Montana of the fine work being done at the institutions of the MUS. The Center for the Communication of Science will develop and facilitate cross-disciplinary research between scientists, engineers, artists and filmmakers, with the goal of effectively and creatively communicating science to the public and serving as a catalyst for the dissemination of science. It would be a valuable asset and ally to MSU Extension and its mission of providing unbiased, research based information to improve peoples’ lives.

I have committed Extension’s participation in the Center for the Communication of Science by helping to identify story lines, people and resources needed for success.

I thank you for your consideration of this worthy project and please feel free to contact me for more information.

Sincerely,

Jeff Bader
Executive Director of MSU Extension
March 5, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the MSU Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, I am delighted to support and endorse the proposed Center for the Communication of Science (CCS).

The new Center will capitalize on two notable strengths of our university: professional filmmaking and discovery and invention in science and engineering. Due to improvements in audio-visual technology and the increasing importance of the internet and social media, the creation of significant and compelling digital media is increasingly coming from individuals outside of the traditional domain of professional film and music production, graphic design, and journalism. The Center will provide the cross-disciplinary framework for effective collaboration between artists, filmmakers, engineers and scientists, enabling creative, compelling, and effective communication of science to the public.

We are particularly supportive of the Center’s potential to develop instructional programs for science and engineering faculty, staff, and students to work with visual and audio media to achieve our goals for broader impact of the University across Montana and around the world.

Thank you for your consideration, and for joining us in our enthusiastic support of the Center for the Communication of Science.

Sincerely,

Robert C. Maher
Professor and Department Head
March 17, 2013

Kathy Kasic  
Assistant Teaching Professor & Producer  
School of Film & Photography  
Visual Communications Building  
Montana State University  
Bozeman, MT 59717

Dear Kathy,

I write to express my enthusiastic support for the creation of the Center for the Communication of Science at Montana State University (MSU). Communication has been an extremely important part of the success of the Center for Biofilm Engineering (CBE) and I believe our story is a perfect case study of the value of the new center you are proposing. This year we are celebrating the 25th anniversary of the founding of CBE as a National Science Foundation Engineering Research Center. We are the oldest, largest, and best known center for biofilm research, education, and technology anywhere in the world. I am convinced that investments in communicating our science through professional graphic illustrations, journal covers, short films made in collaboration with students in MSU’s Science and Natural History Filmmaking program, and innovative art/science collaborations, have been instrumental in elevating the international visibility of CBE and MSU. See a few illustrative examples below.

The prospect of an organized Center for the Communication of Science is thrilling. I know CBE students and faculty will be very interested in partnering with you on proposals, workshops, films, artist-in-residence programs, and other activities.

Sincerely yours,

Philip S. Stewart  
Director, Center for Biofilm Engineering  
Professor of Chemical and Biological Engineering

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Center for Biofilm Engineering  
366 EPS Building  
PO. Box 173980  
Bozeman, MT  59717-3980  
http://www.erc.montana.edu

Tel  (406) 994-4770  
Fax  (406) 994-6098  
Email  user@erc.montana.edu
March 8, 2015

TO: Board of Regents

FROM: Patrick Hatfield

RE: Support for Enter for the Communication of Science

I whole heartily support the development of the Center for Communication of Science at Montana State University. It is critical that a Land Grant Institution like Montana State University effectively communicate the value of our research and related teaching and extension endeavors to the public by more than the traditional means of scientific publications and extension outreach activities. Although these means of communicating the results of our research are affective and appropriate for target audiences, they do little to engage the general public in the depth and breadth of the work being done at their land grant institution.

Recently our research group of agro-ecologist, weed ecologist, animal scientist, agricultural economist, soil scientist, and a community development specialist contracted with students in the school of Film and Photography to produce a 5 minute informational video that highlights the goals and results of our research on incorporating livestock into farming systems. The video is a part of my letter of support and I think you will see how effective this type of media is in reaching a very broad based audience.

If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

[Signature]

Patrick G. Hatfield
Professor
113 Animal Bioscience Building
Montana State University
P.O. Box 172900
Bozeman, MT 59717-2900
Tel (406) 994-7952
Fax (406) 994-5589
hatfield@montana.edu
Dear Kathy,

March 19th, 2015

Montana Space Grant Consortium enthusiastically supports the proposal for the creation of the Center for the Communication of Science. We see this as an asset at MSU and the state of Montana.

Our program is part of a national network of 52 consortia that focuses on strengthening aerospace research and education and we know first-hand the importance of effectively and creatively communicating science to various audiences. The goals of the center mirror many of the objectives we have established within our consortium and would positively impact the work we are doing to reach students and researchers not only at our home institution but across the state.

There is a growing need in our state to engage both K-12 and university students in experimental learning of the sciences and other STEM-related (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) areas. The center proposes to develop these learning tools and disseminate information by effectively communicating with a wide audience. Montana Space Grant is excited about the deep impact this opportunity can have on Montana students and looks forward to potential collaboration with the center to identify specific areas of need in STEM education.

Sincerely,

Angela Des Jardins, PhD
Director, Montana Space Grant Consortium and Montana NASA EPSCoR
Assistant Research Professor of Physics
Angela.DesJardins@montana.edu
17 March 2015

Kathy Kasic  
MFA Program in Science and Natural History Filmmaking  
School of Film & Photography  
Montana State University  
P.O. Box 173350  
Bozeman, MT 59717-3350

Dear Ms. Kasic:

This letter is in support of the creation of a Center for the Communication of Science. Communicating science, especially to the public and policy makers, is becoming increasingly important as funding for science is being reduced at federal and state levels. I believe part of the negative perception of science (therefore reduced funding) is a function of policy makers not understand what scientists contribute to society. This is largely a function of scientists doing a poor job of communicating their knowledge to the public and policy makers. Scientists are highly skilled at communicating among their colleagues given the “publish or perish model” in academia, but communicating their work to people outside their discipline is often difficult. Thus, having a program at Montana State University that focuses on communicating science will help scientists get their important message out and greatly increase the visibility of the University’s science programs, which I believe will result in more funding opportunities. In addition, it will be a great training ground for science communicators. I look forward to working with the Center for Communication of Science and will encourage my graduate students to work with the program.

Sincerely,

Dr. Christopher S. Guy  
Professor  
Assistant Unit Leader-Montana Cooperative Fishery Research Unit
March 10, 2015

Kathy Kasic  
Assistant Teaching Professor and Producer  
School of Film & Photography  
Visual Communications Building  
Montana State University  
Bozeman, MT 59717  

Dear Kathy,

I am happy to provide this letter of support for your proposal to create the Center for the Communication of Science. I would find it an important addition to Montana State University due to the collaborative potential it holds. My research and outreach in mathematics education includes a large component of communicating mathematical ideas to a public audience, and I would find the Center to be very useful in assisting me in this area. There are also grant-funded projects involving communication of mathematics that I will pursue in the coming years, and having the Center as a partner in those projects would strengthen my ability to secure funding for those projects.

Thank you for your vision in proposing this Center.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Burroughs  
Associate Professor of Mathematics Education  
Department of Mathematical Sciences
March 13, 2015

TO: Kathryn Kasic, School of Film and Photography

FR: John Sherwood, Head, Plant Sciences and Plant Pathology

RE: Center for the Communication of Science (CCS)

The center will aim to facilitate collaboration among scientists, filmmakers and artists. In practice it would foster scientific outreach opportunities in the form of documentary films, creative or journalistic writing, and artistic explorations of scientific representation.

This letter is to confirm the support by the Department of Plant Sciences and Plant Pathology for the establishment of a Center for the Communication of Science at MSU. The Film School, with its MFA in Science & Natural History, making has for many years provided our faculty the opportunity and ability to make films depicting their research. This has been an extremely effective way of communicating our work to the general public, something that not all scientists do very well.

Especially useful for our faculty members are the plans of the CCS to produce science documentary films directly related to the research of scientists, provide financial support and resources to faculty and graduate students whose produce those films (currently either a faculty grant provides that support, or a student produces the film as a class project), disseminate productions developed by CCS to the public, and develop a range of instructional programs for science faculty and graduate students focused on working with visual media and media makers to develop successful broader impact programs. The ability of researchers to more effectively communicate their findings to the public will be of critical importance in promoting the science literacy of the general public and to ensure the long term future success of our research programs.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.
March 9, 2015

Dear Kathy:

I am writing to provide the Department of Land Resources and Environmental Science’s (LRES) support for your Board of Regents proposal for the Center for the Communication of Science. There is indeed an intense need for science communication to the public in Montana and the nation. The solidification of your program through sustainable funding would be essential for MUS to move toward this goal and would help faculty incorporate approaches and principles into sharing their science. Thank you for your efforts.

Sincerely,

Tracy M. Sterling
Professor and Department Head
5 March 2015

To: Nancy C. Cornwall  
Dean of the College of Arts & Architecture

From: Cathy Whitlock  
MSU Director, Montana Institute on Ecosystems

Re: Support for the Center for the Communication of Science

I am writing in support of the creation of the new Center for the Communication of Science at Montana State University. CCS will be an important component of MSU’s infrastructure to support science communication and outreach. Specifically, CCS goals of facilitating knowledge dissemination through the creative arts, workshops, performances, and exhibitions, as well as through an Scientific-artist in Residence program will help scholars in the Montana Institute on Ecosystem achieve broader public engagement and visibility for their research. Such outreach is an important part of all of our grant-funded activity.

Good luck with your submission.