scanning electron microscope, x-ray spectrometer, light microscope, x-ray spectrometer.

(p) Comparable domestic instrument means a domestic instrument capable or potentially capable of fulfilling the applicant’s technical requirements or intended uses, whether or not in the same general category as the foreign instrument.

(q) Specifications means the particulars of the structural, operational and performance characteristics or capabilities of a scientific instrument.

(r) Guaranteed specifications are those specifications which are an explicit part of the contractual agreement between the buyer and the seller (or which would become part of the agreement if the buyer accepted the seller’s offer), and refer only to the minimum and routinely achievable performance levels of the instrument under specified conditions. If a capability is listed or quoted as a range (e.g., “5 to 10 nanometers”) or as a minimum that may be exceeded (e.g., “5 angstroms or better”), only the inferior capability may be considered the guaranteed specification. Evidence that specifications are “guaranteed” will normally consist of their being printed in a brochure or other descriptive literature of the manufacturer; being listed in a purchase agreement upon which the purchase is conditioned; or appearing in a manufacturer’s formal response to a request for quote. If, however, no opportunity to submit a bid was afforded the domestic manufacturer or if, for any other reason, comparable guaranteed specifications of the foreign and domestic instruments do not appear on the record, other evidence relating to a manufacturer’s ability to provide an instrument with comparable specifications may, at the discretion of the Director, be considered in the comparison of the foreign and domestic instruments’ capabilities. Performance results on a test sample run at the applicant’s request may be cited as evidence for or against a guaranteed specification.

(s) Pertinent specifications are those specifications necessary for the accomplishment of the specific scientific research or science-related educational purposes described by the applicant.

Specifications of features (even if guaranteed) which afford greater convenience, satisfy personal preferences, accommodate institutional commitments or limitations, or assure lower costs of acquisition, installation, operation, servicing or maintenance are not pertinent. For example, a design feature, such as a small number of knobs or controls on an instrument primarily designed for research purposes, would be a convenience. The ability to fit an instrument into a small room, when the required operations could be performed in a larger room, would be either a cost consideration or a matter of convenience and not a pertinent specification. In addition, mere difference in design (which would, for example, broaden the educational experience of students but not provide superior scientific capability) would not be pertinent. Also, characteristics such as size, weight, appearance, durability, reliability, complexity (or simplicity), ease of operation, ease of maintenance, productivity, versatility, “state of the art” design, specific design and compatibility with currently owned or ordered equipment are not pertinent unless the applicant demonstrates that the characteristic is necessary for the accomplishment of its scientific purposes.


§ 301.3 Application for duty-free entry of scientific instruments.

(a) Who may apply. An applicant for duty-free entry of an instrument under subheading 9810.00.60, HTSUS must be a public or private nonprofit institution which is established for educational or scientific purposes and which has placed a bona fide order or has a firm intention to place a bona fide order for a foreign instrument within 60 days following a favorable decision on the institution’s application.

(b) Application forms. Applications must be made on form ITA–338P which may be obtained from the Statutory Import Programs Staff, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, DC 20220, the Web site at http://ia.ita.doc.gov/sips/index.html, or from the
§ 301.4 Processing of applications by the Department of the Treasury (Customs and Border Protection).

(a) Review and determination. The Commissioner shall date each application when received by Customs and Border Protection. If the application appears to be complete, the Commissioner shall determine:

(1) Whether the institution is a non-profit private or public institution established for research and educational purposes and therefore authorized to import instruments into the U.S. under subheading 9810.00.60, HTSUS. In making this determination, the Commissioner may require applicants to document their eligibility under this paragraph;

(2) Whether the instrument or apparatus falls within the classes of instruments eligible for duty-free entry consideration under subheading 9810.00.60, HTSUS. For eligible classes, see U.S. Note 6(a), Subchapter X, Chapter 98, HTSUS; and

(3) Whether the instrument or apparatus is for the exclusive use of the applicant institution and is not intended to be used for commercial purposes. For the purposes of this section, commercial uses would include, but not necessarily be limited to: Distribution, lease or sale of the instrument by the applicant institution; any use by, or for the primary benefit of, a commercial entity; or use of the instrument for demonstration purposes in return for a fee, price discount or other valuable consideration. Evaluation, modification or testing of the foreign instrument, beyond normal, routine acceptance testing and calibration, to enhance or expand its capabilities primarily to benefit the manufacturer in return for a discount or other valuable consideration, may be considered a commercial benefit. In making the above determination, the Commissioner may consider, among other things, whether the results of any research to be performed with the instrument will be fully and timely made available public.