

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**International Trade Administration****Application(s) for Duty-Free Entry of Scientific Instruments**

Pursuant to Section 6(c) of the Educational, Scientific and Cultural Materials Importation Act of 1966 (Pub. L. 89-651, as amended by Pub. L. 106-36; 80 Stat. 897; 15 CFR part 301), we invite comments on the question of whether instruments of equivalent scientific value, for the purposes for which the instruments shown below are intended to be used, are being manufactured in the United States.

Comments must comply with 15 CFR 301.5(a)(3) and (4) of the regulations and be postmarked on or before May 1, 2019. Address written comments to Statutory Import Programs Staff, Room 3720, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, DC 20230. Applications may be examined between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. at the U.S. Department of Commerce in Room 3720.

Docket Number: 18-010. Applicant: University of Connecticut, 91 North Eagleville Road, Storrs, CT 06269. Instrument: STED Confocal Microscope. Manufacturer: Abberior Instruments GmbH, Germany. Intended Use: The instrument will be used to study a variety of biological material related to medical research. Scientists at the University of Connecticut will be able to reveal the protein nano-structure of: mouse/rat brain tissue and cells, mouse colon tissue, fruit fly chromosomes, mouse spinal cord tissue, and mammalian or invertebrate cultured cells. The experiments to be conducted involve taking the material and examining it with various wavelengths of light to obtain fluorescent images of cellular structures with high levels of detail. The objectives pursued by research with this equipment are understanding of the normal and pathological mechanisms of cellular function relating to human health and disease. The techniques used by employing this equipment include using the method of stimulated emission depletion (STED), which enables the visualization of high resolution, microscopic structure of biological specimens. Justification for Duty-Free Entry: There are no instruments of the same general category manufactured in the United States. Application accepted by Commissioner of Customs: November 28, 2018.

Dated: April 5, 2019.

Gregory W. Campbell,
Director, Subsidies Enforcement, Enforcement and Compliance.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Institute of Standards and Technology****Alternative Personnel Management System (APMS) at the National Institute of Standards and Technology**

AGENCY: National Institute of Standards and Technology, Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice announces changes to the existing provisions of the National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) Alternative Personnel Management System (APMS) published October 21, 1997 (62 FR 54604), and August 13, 2012 (77 FR 48128). NIST is modifying its current APMS direct-hire authority to include positions in the General Engineering, 801 series; General Physical Science, 1301 series; and Information Technology Management, 2210 series at the Pay Band III and above.

DATES: This notice is applicable on April 11, 2019.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Susanne Porch at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, (301) 975-2487 or Susanne.Porch@nist.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In accordance with Public Law 99-574, the National Bureau of Standards Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1987, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) approved a demonstration project plan, "Alternative Personnel Management System (APMS) at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)," and published the plan in the **Federal Register** on October 2, 1987 (52 FR 37082). The published demonstration project plan was modified twice, once to clarify certain NIST authorities (54 FR 21331, May 17, 1989) and once to revise the performance appraisal system and the pay administration system in order to better link pay with performance (55 FR 39220, September 25, 1990). The APMS was made permanent in Section 10 of the National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act of 1995, Public Law 104-113, 110 Stat. 775 (Mar. 7, 1996) (codified at 15 U.S.C. 275 note), and the project plan and subsequent amendments were consolidated in the

final APMS plan, which was published in the **Federal Register** on October 21, 1997 (62 FR 54604). NIST published eight subsequent amendments to the final APMS plan: one on May 6, 2005 (70 FR 23996), which became effective upon publication in the **Federal Register**; one on July 15, 2008 (73 FR 40500), which became effective on October 1, 2008; one on July 21, 2009 (74 FR 35841), which became effective upon publication in the **Federal Register**; one on January 5, 2011 (76 FR 539), which became effective upon publication in the **Federal Register**; one on June 19, 2012 (77 FR 36485), which became effective upon publication in the **Federal Register**; one on August 13, 2012 (77 FR 48128), which became effective upon publication in the **Federal Register**; one on August 24, 2012 (77 FR 51518), which became effective upon publication in the **Federal Register**; and one on September 24, 2015 (80 FR 57580), which became effective upon publication in the **Federal Register**. NIST also published a correction to the final APMS plan on July 21, 2009 (74 FR 35843), which became effective upon publication in the **Federal Register**.

On March 20, 2018, the Office of Management and Budget unveiled the fiscal year 2019 Presidential Management Agenda (PMA) outlining a long-term vision for modernizing the Federal government in key areas that would improve the ability of agencies to deliver mission outcomes, provide excellent service, and effectively steward taxpayer dollars on behalf of the American people. One aspect of the PMA highlights the government need to develop and manage the workforce of the 21st century by simplifying and expediting the hiring process for top talent.

The APMS plan provides for modifications to be made as experience is gained, results are analyzed, and conclusions are reached on how the system is working. This notice formally modifies the current APMS direct-hire authority to include positions in the General Engineering, 801 series; General Physical Science, 1301 series; and Information Technology Management, 2210 series at the Pay Band III and above. The expanded direct-hire authority will allow NIST to simplify and expedite hiring for managers in mission critical occupations, and, in accordance with the PMA, take a step