From the Directors of Photon Science and SIMES: Planning a New Home at SLAC

You may have heard of the Stanford Institute for Materials and Energy Sciences, but you may not have seen many of the SIMES researchers around the SLAC campus. SIMES has had no focused footprint at SLAC. Its activities in magnetism and catalysis have been located at SSRL; its computational theory activity just started in the Central Lab; and still many researchers have offices and labs located on the Stanford main campus. That's all about to change as plans are underway to create a home and central focus for SIMES with offices and labs in the Central Lab Building 40 complex.

When the renovation and construction are complete in 2011, SIMES will have a significant presence and enhanced materials science research program physically located at SLAC in Building 40. There will be a focus on materials research, a move that will bring to SLAC students, postdocs, scientific staff and faculty with expertise in materials and energy science. This is being made possible by new funding (~$8M) provided by the Department of Energy Office of Basic Energy Sciences.

SIMES staff are working closely with the Facilities Department at SLAC to plan the space. Labs and offices are currently being designed to house SIMES' principle investigators, staff, postdocs and graduate students. An architectural firm will soon be engaged to begin detailed design. Construction is planned to begin by June of 2010, and SIMES hopes to have beneficial occupancy of the space by around June, 2011.

SIMES is an actively collaborative group, thus the third floor of Central Lab will be renovated to create offices and meeting areas that foster interactions. A goal is to create an environment much akin to the hotbeds of innovation "mini-Bells" idea discussed by Secretary of Energy Steve Chu during his recent visit to SLAC to facilitate the best science in energy research. Also located on the second floor of Building 40 will be a set of new core laboratories shared among SIMES researchers, to serve as catalyst for collaborations.

A chemistry and materials synthesis lab will provide for growth and preparation of samples in a number of forms and enable characterization of their structures. A "transport" lab will have an array of physical property measurement systems that can measure charge flow—the key feature of semiconductive and superconductive materials. An ultra-high vacuum lab will support the study of samples using a suite of modern tools, including scanning probe microscopes connected to an advanced array of nanoscale and surface sensitive instruments.

With the completion of the SIMES laboratory and office space as well as the now-ongoing PULSE renovation, the Photon Science Directorate at SLAC will for the first time all be co-located in one area. Conference rooms and interaction regions are being planned to facilitate interaction among all the PS staff as well as to provide opportunities for engaging staff in SLAC's two light source Directorates, LCLS and SSRL, as well as other SLAC staff.

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