

## INTERAMERICAN MATERIAL SCIENCE COLLABORATION (CIAM)

CONICYT, has been part of this Program from the beginning, as Material Sciences is a discipline that crosses almost the whole spectrum of scientific and technological knowledge, as well as, the essential role that international collaboration plays in its development

Materials and process will play an ever increasing role in improving energy efficiency, promoting environmental protection, lowering health-care costs, developing an information infrastructure, and providing modern and reliable transportation and civil infrastructure systems. Advances in materials science and engineering enable progress across a broad range of scientific disciplines and technological areas with significant impacts on society.

Continued progress in materials science and engineering is increasingly dependent upon collaborative efforts among several different disciplines, as well as closer coordination among funding agencies and effective partnerships involving universities, industry, and national laboratories. Because of the interdependence of countries' national priorities, partnerships are not only important at the national level but from an international point of view as well.

From 1995 the United States National Science Foundation (NSF) has been interested in promoting and supporting the establishment of a network in material sciences. To this a series of workshops were organized

The recommendations that emerged from these workshops included: identifying and supporting cooperative research projects that leverage the strengths of each country's scientific community; the extensive use of electronic communications, information exchanges, and databases to promote and facilitate research collaborations; and education activities at the international levels.

In January 2002, representatives from research funding agencies in the Americas met in Brasilia, Brazil, to explore ways to implement the workshop recommendations. A coordinated multi-agency program for Inter-American Materials Collaboration was created to support materials research collaborations and networking efforts between scientists in participating countries.

The participating agencies currently include CONICET (Argentina), CNPq (Brazil), NSERC (Canada), CONICYT (Chile), COLCIENCIAS (Colombia), CONACYT (Mexico), and NSF (USA).