



BISNIS BULLETIN

Published by the Business Information Service for the Newly Independent States
U.S. Department of Commerce • International Trade Administration



March 2001

TECHNOLOGY OFFERS OPPORTUNITIES IN TOMSK OBLAST

by Maksim Masharuyev

The Tomsk region has a long history of higher education and science that was started when Tomsk University was established over 100 years ago. The region's intellectual potential is key to its economic growth, but it must be nurtured through both development of innovative high-tech businesses within the region, and technology transfer to other Russian regions or abroad. High-tech industries represented in Tomsk include radio electronics, atmospheric optics, nuclear and strength physics, material science, petroleum chemistry, optical monitoring, geoinformation technology, cardiology, medical genetics, oncology, pharmacology, architecture and building, semiconductor devices, electromechanics, and applied mathematics. Tomsk hosts six universities and over 30 institutes, which employ over 5,000 scientists and researchers. However, there is a great need to find appropriate foreign partners to provide financing, marketing, complementary technologies, and management expertise. The region's intellectual capital and numerous scientific institutes offer a number of opportunities for U.S. companies for developing high technologies and technology transfer.

Innovation (R&D) and Commercialization

Innovation-industry linkages are recognized as one of the major difficulties to overcome and manage in the innovation process, primarily because the knowledge and motivation of "partners" are very distant from each other. Problems in Russia are undoubtedly even greater due to the fact that for several decades the innova-

tion system was designed and managed as a strongly hierarchical, compartmentalized pyramid where ideas flowed down from basic research (academic) institutes, then were developed by branch sectoral organizations—research institutes, and finally industrially applied by (state owned) enterprises. In fact, such top-down, linear systems, disconnected from customer needs are not conducive to innovation in market economies. Such inefficient structures were shut down during the recent transition, but many more changes need to take place to build a necessary infrastructure of organizations to promote the innovation-industry process.

A major project aimed at strengthening Russia's federal and regional technology policies is currently being developed with the support of the European Union's TACIS program, including the establishment of the Tomsk Innovation Support Center in 1998. The center provides consulting services in business and strategic planning, project management, marketing, financial analysis, and accountancy to small high-tech enterprises. It also is a local partner of two U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded programs: Innovative Technologies in the Tomsk Oblast and Entrepreneurial Business Service (EBS). The first program is supposed to develop a model of innovation technology commercialization for small and medium-sized technology-based enterprises and strengthen business support institutions (BSIs) in the region, among other goals. The EBS program increases the management capacity of local BSIs, while assisting small and medium-sized enterprises, including high-tech ones, through visits of U.S. volunteer-experts.

Several more innovation technological centers have been established. Technopark, which was created in So-

In This Issue

Russian Cos. to Super Show
Coping with Cultural
Differences

U.S. Exporters and Russian
Currency Regulations

Attracting Export Financing
Regional Corner: Tavush
Province, Armenia

Agency Spotlight

tion process, primarily because the knowledge and motivation of "partners" are very distant from each other. Problems in Russia are undoubtedly even greater due to the fact that for several decades the innova-

(continued on p. 4)

Enter Russia's Automotive Supplies and Services Market!!!

**Samara Motor Show
Samara, Russia
April 25–28, 2001**

The Samara region is the center of Russia's automotive industry. BISNIS will display catalogs and promotional literature from U.S. firms that supply automotive equipment, parts, accessories, and other products and services related to auto production, maintenance, and support.

For more information on the U.S. catalog booth at the Samara Motor Show, contact Judith Robinson at email: Judith_Robinson@ita.doc.gov, or visit WWW.BISNIS.DOC.GOV/BISNIS/ISA/ISA-TRANSP.HTM (events).

Participate in the Commercial Service/BISNIS Construction Industry Catalog Show!

**Cottage 2001 - Kiev, Ukraine
April 26–29, 2001**

For more information, contact Jeffrey Kamins at 202-482-3729 or email: Jeffrey_Kamins@ita.doc.gov.

BISNIS

*Business Information Service
for the Newly Independent States*

BISNIS is an information resource for U.S. companies doing business in the Newly Independent States of the former Soviet Union. Operated by the **Market Access and Compliance** unit of the **International Trade Administration**, BISNIS disseminates information in print form, electronically, and through consultations by its staff of trade specialists. For more information, please contact:

202-482-4655 (phone) **202-482-2293** (fax)
bisnis@ita.doc.gov (email)

To call BISNIS toll free, dial
1-800-USA-TRADE (872-8723)
press 4 and then press 2
or visit the **BISNIS Online** website at
www.bisnis.doc.gov

Director - Anne Grey

Deputy Director - Trevor Gunn

Managing Editor - Ellen S. House

Assistant Editors - Kelly Raftery, Melissa Walters

Contributors - Philip H. de Leon, George Isayan,
Maksim Masharuyev, Alla Mavrina, Kelly Raftery,
Oganes Sarkisov

Articles by non-U.S. government employees express the views of the authors and should not be construed as a statement of U.S. government policy.

BISNIS ASSISTS RUSSIAN COS. AT SPORTING GOODS SHOW

BISNIS Moscow representative Alla Mavrina led a delegation of five Russian companies to the "Super Show" sporting goods trade show in Las Vegas during January 21–24. The delegation included representatives of R-tine, a Moscow distributor of U.S.-made fitness equipment; Lima In, a Moscow distributor of Pakistan-made products for team sports; Alpindustria, a Moscow company involved in retail and wholesale trade of sporting goods for outdoor activities; Sportstroyindustriz, which is building a new sports center in Moscow; and Unis Plus, a Rostov-on-Don retailer of U.S.-made and other sporting goods. BISNIS has identified the Russian sporting goods market as one of the more dynamic and promising for U.S. exports.

Russian Market Facts

Russia has always been a country where a lot of attention is devoted to sports, but until recently all major sporting goods shops were either empty or were selling mainly low quality products. Currently, the demand for sporting goods in Russia is rapidly growing, and U.S. products are of particular interest due to their overall high quality.

Fitness is a booming industry in Russia right now. There are more than 40 sports and health centers in Moscow, a market of over 9.3 million people.

More than 80 sporting goods companies operate in Moscow. Such large chains as SportMaster, Delta Sport, and Trial Sport actively promote their products in the regions.

The most popular sports in Russia are soccer, swimming, basketball, ping pong, volleyball, cycling, billiards, tennis, aerobics, skiing (both downhill and cross-country) ice-skating, and outdoor activities. Rollerblading, bowling, and golf are also catching on.

According to research, people tend to buy in specialized sporting goods stores where a service warranty and high quality are guaranteed.

*For more info. on the sporting goods sector in Russia, contact Alla Mavrina, **BISNIS** representative in Moscow, tel: +7 (095) 737-5021, email: Alla.Mavrina@mail.doc.gov.*

COPING WITH CULTURAL DIFFERENCES: WOMEN AND BUSINESS PRACTICES IN THE NIS

by Kelly Raftery

Most of the countries of the former Soviet Union have very traditional ideas about gender roles. Some countries are more traditional than others on what a woman's role in society should be. Western women who chose to work in the NIS often find themselves fighting an uphill professional battle against the norms and standards of these societies. This is particularly the case because, although women are increasingly becoming successful entrepreneurs in the NIS, politics is still dominated by men (meaning that federal and local officials are mostly male) and the majority of large and medium-sized companies and organizations are run by males. As a result, typical complaints among women who have worked in the NIS include not being taken seriously, not being given the respect and deference due their position, being treated like the secretary or interpreter, and being held to a different standard than local women.

Tips for Success

There are a number of ways that a Western woman can counteract the traditional norms in the cultures of the NIS and be effective in business situations. One way to gain instant respect and attention is to ensure that an appropriately impressive title is listed on bilingual business cards. Also, all professional women should be particularly diligent about ensuring that their male colleagues listen to them and defer to them when appropriate. Your NIS colleagues will take their signals from your team initially. Western women will also want their male colleagues to reinforce that the company has entrusted her with the project and that any questions that are diverted to a male, whether a supervisor or colleague, will be redirected back to the female staff member.

A good way to prepare for cultural differences is by being knowledgeable about local culture, history, geography, art, or literature. Such knowledge may help you realize that, in the NIS, when men insist on holding open the door, helping you on with your coat, carrying your bags, or offering you food and drink ahead of the men, it is often a culturally ingrained behavior, rather than an overture or condescension.

Remember that, in general, doing business in the NIS is more personal than is typical in the United States. Don't shy away from answering personal questions or getting involved in conversations that aren't about the business at hand. Of course, use your judgment about how much personal information to reveal, but it is a good idea to find commonalities with the people you are working with, whether male or female. Another cultural difference is that you can't be superficial when pursuing business relationships in the NIS.

Other words of advice from women who have worked in these markets include: don't ever lose your sense of humor

and don't ever forget that this is just part of the society, it isn't directed at you personally. One former expatriate states, "I would emphasize that American women should try to avoid becoming upset when Russian colleagues patronize or condescend to them. Charm, humor, and persistence go a long way in getting things done in Russia. I think visible anger and power (change of tone, voice, etc.) are worth more when they are used sparingly."

Western women who work with or in the countries of the former Soviet Union have developed ways of coping with the traditional attitudes towards gender. Long-term expatriate women may eventually reach a point at which they accept or completely reject the cultural norms of the society around them, as it is too large and draining an issue to fight on a daily basis. Basically, a woman must learn to pick her battles wisely and stand up for the issues that are important or have a direct impact on her work. Other women simply accept the cultural norms and work within them in order to attain professional goals. In the words of one long-time expat living in Russia, "I have found that in order for people to take you seriously, you have to play the game. Most Russian men will proudly state: A woman's strength is in her weakness.... even Russian women will look down upon you if you do not act 'feminine.' It is not just the men. Yet, I do not think that this is necessarily bad. When in Russia do as the Russians do."

The traditional cultures and norms of the countries of the NIS can be a challenge to navigate for Western businesswomen. Certainly, there will be times when an American woman will be confused, shocked, and occasionally angry at the differences in culture and attitudes toward women. However, a woman who is knowledgeable about the culture can at least understand how better to operate in an environment that treats women differently from her own.

Kelly Raftery works for BISNIS in Washington, D.C.

Learn about NIS Events!

You can receive email announcements on business-related events and conferences relating to the NIS that take place both in the United States and abroad. Register for these emails at bisnis@ita.doc.gov.

Also, BISNIS has upgraded and made searchable the events page on its web site, visit WWW.BISNIS.DOC.GOV/EVENTS.CFM

(TOMSK, continued from p. 1)

viet times to develop and market new technologies, currently hosts trade fairs, including those dedicated to high-tech, and rents its facilities to small companies. There is a relatively new center in Predtechensk (a Tomsk suburb) that is intended to be a technology incubator. It also provides office and manufacturing facilities for rent.

Current Innovative Activities in Tomsk

Large projects connected with applying scientific research to production in Tomsk industrial enterprises are implemented directly under the supervision and financial support of the Tomsk Oblast Administration's innovation program. Beginning in 1999, the innovation activity of large industrial enterprises in the Tomsk region started to grow. The number of enterprises including innovations into their manufacturing processes grew to 18 in 1999, and the volume of investment in R&D grew from \$6.72 million in 1998 to \$7.96 million in 1999. The most active enterprises are: Vostokgazprom, Tomskneft, Kontur, NIIPP (Institute of Semiconductor Devices), Virion, Tomskenergo, and the Tomsk Instrumental Plant. About \$50 million of their exports are connected with innovation products. However, the total innovation activity of large enterprises is still at a very low level.

Some 1,576 small enterprises registered in Tomsk have innovative projects as their main activity, but only 220 of them work actively in the market at the present time. Small R&D businesses have the maximum potential for production volume growth, as well as maximum export potential. One-third of all small innovation enterprises operate in the sphere of biotechnology and medicine; another third designs high-tech instruments and equipment. The number of enterprises developing computer software and designing consumer goods is 8 and 6 percent, respectively. The number of enterprises producing telecommunications equipment and dealing with technology transfer are rather insignificant—3 percent in each of the sectors.

Technology Transfer

There are important technology assets in Tomsk, with thousands of potential applications. Metal alloys with shape memory, which have a number of medical applications (surgery, vascular treatments, etc.), armored structures for civil aircraft applications, and clean nuclear reactors (plutonium burning) with heating and other energy applications, are the most often cited as having worldwide significance.

There are, however, major obstacles preventing the development of such projects. These obstacles include the fact that financing conditions for such projects are poor, although some resources are available, and that the linkages between the sources of technology and potential developers are problematic. In addition, there are obstacles to the transfer of technologies, including (1) information about them is poorly presented and disseminated; (2) the legal framework related to industrial property is not properly established or enforced;

Russia's Surge into the IT Global Marketplace

April 13, 2001

Seattle, Washington

Organized by: the Foundation for Russian American Economic Cooperation (FRAEC)

For more info., visit WWW.4GLOBALIT.COM

and (3) little effort is being made to attract potential foreign partners, which is significant because these projects, by their very nature, require the involvement of foreign partners to provide norms, know-how, and access to global markets.

Information

Currently, information about existing technologies and their potential applications is undeveloped, with no definitive source available on those technologies in Tomsk that appear to be "developable." However, some consulting and engineering companies have begun to collect such information. Also, the following organizations can be worthy sources of information: Tomsk Oblast Administration's Department of Science and Innovation Policy, Scientific Center of Siberian Branch of Russian Academy of Sciences, Scientific and Education Center, Tomsk Innovation Center at the State University, Tomsk Center of Scientific and Technological Information, and the scientific and research institutions themselves.

Opportunities for U.S. Companies

U.S. companies can find opportunities in several ways, including establishing

- joint ventures or their own affiliates to develop already existing technologies. The regional administration welcomes foreign investment and has a database of prospective projects that lack financing;

- R&D affiliates in Tomsk and hiring highly qualified and relatively cheap Russian personnel to work on assigned projects with western management supervision; and

- consulting practices specializing in technology transfer—few local organizations or companies know the necessary requirements to enter Western markets.

It is recommended that interested U.S. companies begin by working intensively on a pilot project that will allow them to develop a better understanding of Russian capabilities, needed foreign qualifications, and barriers to be eliminated.

For more information on Tomsk, including a longer report on technology transfer with key contacts, visit **BISNIS Online** at WWW.BISNIS.DOC.GOV/BISNIS/COUNTRY/SIBERIA.HTM.

Maksim Masharuyev is the **BISNIS** representative in Tomsk.

U.S. EXPORTERS AND RUSSIAN CURRENCY REGULATIONS

by Oganés Sarkisov

Russia maintains strict legislation imposing currency controls and regulations on foreign currency-denominated transactions, and penalties for violations are strict. This legislation regulates the export and import of goods through a system of “passports for deals,” which is a currency control vehicle designed to monitor and discourage capital flight from Russia via falsely invoiced import transactions. The purpose of the passport is to ensure that importers are actually bringing to Russia goods of the value equivalent to the amount paid for them in foreign currency. For each import contract, a passport account must be established by an importer of goods, and subsequently certified by a local authorized bank, which handles payment under this contract. The passport of import transaction is one of the most important documents required for customs clearance of imported goods. Imported goods are not released by customs until the importer has provided the passport for the deal. After the goods are released the authorized bank is required to exercise control over the payments and ensure that the contract terms are met and the payments credited to the exporter’s account.

A Central Bank of Russia (CBR) permit is required for certain trade transactions classified as capital flows:

- in export transactions, a deferral of payment for over 90 days after the actual date the goods were exported;
- in import transactions, a foreign supplier transferring advance payment if over 90 days pass between the transfer and the actual import of goods;
- for the assignment of an exporter’s or importer’s payment right and the assignment of an importer’s or foreign supplier’s debt to a third party; and
- for any offsets of mutual claims of an exporter with an importer and third parties, and of the importer with foreign suppliers and third parties.

Russia requires residents engaged in the export of goods, including the “export” of services, to remit all foreign currency proceeds to a transit account in Russia and to sell 75 percent through their authorized bank in exchange for rubles. Residents may reconvert the rubles back into foreign currency immediately after the compulsory sale; however, foreign currency thus purchased can only be held for a maximum period of seven days before it must be reconverted to rubles.

According to CBR Ruling No. 519-U, effective since March 1999, importers making advance payments in foreign currency for imported goods are required to deposit an equivalent ruble amount at the bank, which is authorized to transact the advance payment. This deposit is then reimbursed only after documents are produced by the importer confirming that goods have been imported into Russia (by producing a copy of the customs cargo declaration confirming that the goods have been imported into Russia).

Exporters should be aware of the two most often used methods of payment by Russian importers to U.S. exporters.

➤ Prepayment

Currency control regulations now require that the period between payment under any export-import contract and the date when goods cross the Russian border must not exceed 90 days. This rule applies to both possible cases, i.e., when the importer pays in US\$ or it pays in rubles and then the Russian bank converts the payment into US\$ and pays the U.S. exporter. Moreover, an obligation of the exporter to return the amount prepaid in case of nondelivery of goods has to be stated in the export-import contract. As such, unless the importer receives special permission from the CBR, this method of payment may not be optimal.

➤ Letter of Credit (L/C)

For a letter of credit (confirmed or unconfirmed), the rule is the same. Overall, the validity of an L/C can be longer than 90 days, but the period between a payment and the date when goods cross the border has to be less than 90 days. However, this instrument looks preferable since it gives much more comfort to the exporter. An unconfirmed L/C will be less expensive, but it might be a requirement of the exporter to have the L/C confirmed by a first class international bank. The confirmation commission depends on the details of the particular transaction and usually is subject to negotiation.

Oganés Sarkisov is a commercial specialist with the U.S. Commercial Service in Moscow.

For more information on exporting to Russia, visit the Commercial Service’s website at WWW.EXPORT.GOV.

Fifth Annual Conference INVESTING IN RUSSIA & THE CIS

March 15, 2001
The Plaza Hotel, New York

Organized by:
Sachs Associates & Bloomberg LP

For more information, contact
Sarah Isberwood, Sachs Associates
Tel: +44 (207) 379 1919; Fax: 379-9555
Email: info@sachsforum.com
Web site: WWW.SACHSFORUM.COM

TRICKS OF THE TRADE**ATTRACTING EXPORT FINANCING FOR NIS TRANSACTIONS**

by Philip H. de Leon

Many U.S. exporters are confronted with the challenge of finding financing for exports to the Newly Independent States (NIS). Sometimes, this can seem like an insurmountable obstacle, but the reality is that there is financing available as long as expectations are realistic and proper preparation is undertaken. A winning approach is to consider your deal from the standpoint of a finance provider who is consulting his checklist of key items of information needed to seriously consider the deal. Failure to address any item on this checklist can seal the fate of your request for financing.

o Do you have an identified buyer and in which country? This is an essential element to start with since the reliability of the buyer will be a key selection criterion and his location (country/city) a good indication if repayment can reasonably be expected. The absence of an identified buyer can be perceived as an indication that there is no market for the export considered.

o Has the company/buyer been audited? By a Western firm? Although the chances of getting a positive answer are limited, it does not hurt to ask because some NIS companies have been audited, even per IAS/GAAP standards. A look at the buyer's financial statements can enable an assessment of his repayment capabilities over time.

o What is the amount involved? Since the NIS is a risky market, processing a finance request can be costly and time consuming for a trade finance provider. Small transaction amounts (less than several hundred thousand dollars) will simply not be considered because of the low return they will generate. In these instances, you should recommend that your buyer try to work out a loan arrangement with its local bank. The buyer's best bet is to look for a local bank that is participating in a program with a multilateral financial institution, such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), that aims to help NIS banks strengthen their capacity to lend to micro and small businesses.

o Who does your client bank with in the NIS? There are many small and/or unreliable banks in the NIS that do not have correspondent relationships with Western banks. Letters of credits from these banks are unlikely to be confirmed by western banks, so you should encourage your buyers to seek out larger or more stable banks, particularly those with relationships with Western banks. Also, U.S. exporters should be aware that in December 2000 the U.S. Export-Import Bank (www.EXIM.GOV) announced a new partnership with 15 Russian banks considered creditworthy partners to work in financing Russian purchases of U.S. goods and services.

o Will sufficient cash flow be generated from the project to repay the loan? If your buyer is purchasing raw materials to process, is there a market for the finished good? If the purchase is for equipment, is there a market for the goods manufactured because of the increased or new production capabilities?

o Have all the aspects of shipment been considered? Have you and the buyer agreed on the best way to ship the goods and predetermined who will pay the freight and insurance costs? Are you familiar with the necessary certification requirements and shipping documentation? Have you determined a timeline for the transfer of ownership? These are all important considerations that will have to be addressed before the contract is signed.

o What is the status of your contract? Is your contract more of a protocol of agreement, a preliminary contract, or a full-fledged contract? Was it prepared by you or by a law firm familiar with NIS business practices? Does it contain an arbitration clause enabling the settling of any dispute outside the local court system? It is highly recommended not to leave any points of your contract to be determined at a later date. Your agreement should be as exhaustive as possible.

To conclude, no item on this list should be left unanswered prior to contacting a finance provider. Uncertainty on key issues will be treated as a warning signal not to proceed.

Philip H. de Leon covers bank/finance issues for BISNIS in Washington, D.C.

REACH OVER 960 FINANCE PROVIDERS IN ONE STRIKE!

BISNIS created the **BISNIS FinanceLink** in 1998 to help U.S. companies find financing by distributing summaries about transactions or projects where the U.S. company has already identified an NIS buyer/partner.

U.S. companies are invited to use this free service by completing a form that is available at WWW.BISNIS.DOC.GOV/BISNIS/FINLIN3.HTM. The form will be forwarded to participating financial service providers that are incorporated and active in the United States and have expressed an interest in doing business in the NIS.

REGIONAL CORNER: Tavush Province, Armenia

by George Isayan

Tavush province (population 156,000) is located in north-eastern Armenia. The province was formed in 1996 by the merging of three former administrative regions: Ijevan, Noyemberyan, and Tavush. The province shares a border with Azerbaijan to the east and Georgia to the north.

International transportation routes run through Tavush province, making it a transit point for road and rail traffic to and from Georgia. One of Armenia's largest customs posts is located near the village of Bagratashen, a transportation hub that connects Yerevan, Armenia's capital, with the Georgian black sea ports Poti and Batumi. The post is responsible for the majority of goods entering Armenia through Georgia.

Best Prospects

Tavush's industrial potential is concentrated in its four largest cities—Ijevan, the capital, Dilijan, Berd, and Noyemberyan. The province has 45 large and medium-sized enterprises involved in electronics, building materials production, apparel, and food processing industries.

Since 1996, food processing has been the fastest growing sector of the province's economy. Tavush has a long history of wine making. The Ijevan wine factory was established in 1976 and privatized in 1995. The factory is equipped with modern grape processing and wine bottling lines imported from Germany. It produces six types of wines, which it exports to France and the United States. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Marketing Assistance Project (MAP) office in Yerevan plans to help the winery find new markets.

Tavush cannery was founded in 1993 and turned into an open joint stock company in 1996. It is located in the village of Varagavan, which is famous for its tasty fruits and vegetables. The cannery produces preserves, natural juices, and pickles produced from fruits and vegetables supplied by local farmers. The company exports its products to the United States

and Canada, and has plans to expand its exports by upgrading its production lines.

The Dilijan joint stock company, established in 1949 and privatized in 1995, operates a mineral water bottling plant located in the town of Dilijan. The plant's capacity is 4,000 bottles of mineral water per hour. Almost 90 percent of Dilijan's production is exported to Russia and Latvia. The company seeks a partner to help upgrade its production lines.

The province's leading industrial enterprise is the Ijevan rug factory, which was established in 1964 and privatized in 1995. The factory produces a wide range of wool rugs using German-made machines. During Soviet times, it was one of the country's largest rug producers and exporters. The factory currently exports wool rugs to Arabic countries, China, and eastern Europe. Currently, the factory is not utilizing its full capacity, and needs working capital to increase purchases of raw materials and renovate its facilities. The company has established distribution channels in the NIS and elsewhere.

Tourism is an attractive sector for investments in Tavush province. The city of Dilijan, located in the mountainous part of the province, one of the most famous tourism centers in Armenia during Soviet times due to its numerous spas and health centers. Recently, Armenian-American businessman Vahagn Hovnanian began a \$17 million tourism development program in Armenia, which calls for the construction of bed-and-breakfasts in 10 regions of Armenia. The first such facility was inaugurated in April 2000, and several cottages of this type are planned for Dilijan and Ijevan.

*For more info. on Tavush and key contacts, visit **BISNIS Online** at WWW.BISNIS.DOC.GOV/BISNIS/COUNTRY/001206TAVUSH_AM.HTM.*

*George Isayan is the **BISNIS** Representative in Armenia.*

AGENCY SPOTLIGHT

National Science Foundation (NSF)/American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)—The Women's International Science Collaboration (WISC) program, which is funded by the NSF and administered by the Program on Europe and Central Asia of the AAAS, provides grants to individual U.S. scientists who plan to establish new research partnerships with their colleagues in Central/Eastern Europe and the NIS. Because the application rate of women scientists and engineers to NSF international programs has been disproportionately low, the goal of the WISC program is to increase the participation of women as principal investigators (PIs) and co-PIs in international research projects. The grant,

up to \$4,000, will provide travel and living support for the U.S. woman scientist and, when appropriate, an additional grant of \$4,000 to her American male or female co-PI. U.S. scientists can spend up to four weeks in the partner country to develop a research program or design. Only scientific research fields funded by the NSF and interdisciplinary research cutting across these fields are eligible. For more information on eligible fields, visit WWW.NSF.GOV.

For more information, contact Elizabeth Kirk, AAAS, at email: ekirk@aaas.org, or visit the AAAS website at WWW.AAAS.ORG/INTERNATIONAL/ECA/WISC.SHTML.

Sender **BISNIS**
USA Trade Center
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Stop R-BISNIS
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20230

FIRST-CLASS MAIL
PRE-SORTED
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
ITA/DOC
PERMIT No. G-54

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
Penalty for Private Use, \$300

TRADE EVENTS CALENDAR

Yaroslavl Intl. Exhibition	March 20–24, 2001	Yaroslavl
Organized by:	Yaroslavl Investment Ctr.	
Telephone:	+7 (0852) 728-623	
Facsimile:	+7 (0852) 307-533	
Email:	iic@iic.yar.ru	
Sectors:	Food processing, consumer goods, medical/cosmetics, chemicals	
MoldConstruct 2001	March 28–April 1, 2001	Chisinau
Organized by:	MoldExpo	
Telephone:	+373 (2) 74-74-19, 74-57-96	
Facsimile:	+373 (2) 74-74-20	
Email:	moldexpo@ch.moldpac.md	
Website:	WWW.MOLDEXPO.MD	
Sectors:	Construction, architecture, materials and services, machinery and tools	
Strategies for Success in the Russian Internet Industry	April 3–4, 2001	St. Petersburg
Organized by:	Adam Smith Institute	
Website:	WWW.ASI-CONFERENCES.COM	
Medtehnika	May 28–June 1, 2001	Moscow
Organized by:	Expocentr	
Telephone:	+7 (095) 255-3760	
Facsimile:	+7 (095) 255-6055	
Email:	gorb@expocentr.ru	
Website:	WWW.EXPOCENTR.RU	
Sectors:	Medical equipment	

Development Partnerships in Russia/CIS: Opportunities for Cooperative R&D

April 9–10, 2001
Newton, Massachusetts

Organized by: **the International Science and
Technology Center, Moscow**

In cooperation with: **the Mass. Software and
Internet Council** (WWW.MSICOUNCIL.ORG) and the
U.S.-Russia Chamber of Commerce of Boston

April 9 - Computational Tools for Life Sciences
April 10 - Computation Tools for Technology-
intensive Businesses

Institutions represented include: FIAN Lebedev
Physics Inst. (Moscow) and NeurOK.com, St. Peters-
burg Inst. for Informatics and Automation (SPIIRAS),
and the Yerevan Physics Institute (Armenia).

**For more information, visit WWW.ISTC.RU or
WWW.USRCCB.ORG.**