To: ACTR Board Members

From: Richard Brecht & Bob Slater, ARC

Ref: Accreditation Initiative

Date: April 5, 2018

Bob Slater and I have been involved in an effort, called PLUS, to accredit language university/college language programs. We are now focused on working with two AATs to pilot the effort: AATSP & ACTR. We have presented this possibility in a previous ACTR Board meeting. As you may recall, we have adopted the engineering profession’s model that is based on their “professional societies,” which in the language case means our AATs. We very much want to have AATSP and ACTR as initial partners to undertake a feasibility phase that includes the following actions:

1. First, convening of an Accreditation Task Force (ATF) to review existing documents: History of the initiative, Accreditation Standards, and Self-Study and Peer Review Protocols, all drafted by committees of language experts in the preparatory phase of the project. Note that we are aiming for a language profession-wide process, so these documents are meant to be applicable across all languages. However, we fully expect that some adaptations will be required by each language association.
2. Second, identifying and recruiting a one or two language programs that are willing to serve as a pilot for the accreditation process.
3. Third, request that the ATF serve as the ACTR Accreditation Board Pro Tem, the responsibility of which will be to:
	1. Evaluate the self-study;
	2. Select and direct the peer-review team;
	3. Review the recommendations of the review team;
	4. Consider all the evidence of the self-study and peer review process; and,
	5. Recommend accreditation or provide formative recommendations towards reapplication.
4. Fourth, implement the pilot process with one or two willing programs;
5. Fifth, develop a ‘business plan’ for the accreditation process going forward; and,
6. Sixth, report to ACTR membership and its Board its findings concerning the initiative

These steps are recommendations, but we encourage you to adapt them to your realities.

Just to be clear, we are asking ACTR to test the feasibility of accreditation and convey to ARC its findings. We are prepared to offer modest financial support, to the extent that we are able. (ABET’s (Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology) very successful model relies on volunteer participation by the professionals in the field.)

This effort is one ARC has been working on for some time. It is one that is almost without costs and is immensely important for energizing language education programs in institutions of higher education across the country . We believe ACTR should take a leading role in this effort, as we see it as establishing a mechanism that will ensure a smooth transition from K-12 to higher education, which plays into the strength and uniqueness of ACTR as a K-16 organization from the very start.