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## Invitation to Participate in CSITC Round Trials

The ICAC Task Force on Commercial Standardization of Instrument Testing of Cotton (CSITC) is conducting the twelfth round of official CSITC Round Trials in 2018. The round trials consist of quarterly tests. Laboratories can opt to participate for the year or for any quarter to suit their seasonal schedules, but for better results **it is strongly recommended to participate in all Round Trials**, except when the laboratory is closed down seasonally. All cotton fibre testing laboratories capable of measuring cotton samples with rapid testing instruments, often referred to as high volume instruments (HVI), and based on the Universal Calibration Cotton Standards for micronaire, upper-half mean length, length uniformity index, strength, rd color, and +b color are encouraged to participate. Participation in a CSITC Round Trial is not limited to test centres using Uster HVI equipment. CSITC evaluations are based on test results and are not dependent on the manufacturer, model or kind of testing instruments used.

### Benefits of Participation

Participants will benefit **by receiving detailed diagnostic feedback** that can be utilized **to demonstrate measurement performance to customers and to address measurement related problems**. Results will confirm the participant's ability to provide reproducible test measurements that are based on the established international standards. **Participation is a recommended practice for fulfilling quality management requirements in laboratories (e.g. ISO 17025).**

Enrolment from year-to-year will be automatic until we are informed to the contrary. Invoices will be emailed once a year or by lab requirements. [New participants can enrol by visiting www.csitc.org/index.php?lien1=/rounds\\_tests/registration](http://www.csitc.org/index.php?lien1=/rounds_tests/registration) or [www.icac.org/cmte/CSITC-Task-Force/Round-Trials](http://www.icac.org/cmte/CSITC-Task-Force/Round-Trials), filling out the participation and payment forms and returning them according to instructions.

A special set of **USDA Calibration Cotton Standards (CCS)** described in the participation form can now be obtained as part of the round trials sample shipment. This CCS set is available only to active round trial participants through ICAC. For technical questions, please contact <cotton.standards@ams.usda.gov>.

### Sample Distribution and Testing

For each participating quarter (January/RT1, April/RT2, July/RT3 and October/RT4) participants receive one round trial set comprised of four cotton samples. All of the samples in a set are used for evaluation of instrument accuracy. **Each sample is tested 30 times (5 days, 6 tests per day)**. For best testing results, the CSITC Task Force recommends not using one cotton set on more than two instruments. However, the Task Force has reluctantly agreed to allow the splitting of a set to accommodate a maximum of four instruments.

For full participation (recommended), participants take part in all four round trials and obtain at least one set of USDA CCS. Please keep in mind that the calibration cotton is not specific for the RT participation. For the RT participation and for daily testing, the same calibration material and procedure should be used. A full participation option is provided on the payment form giving participants the option for participation in all four quarters in addition to one set of USDA CCS which will be included in the first quarterly shipment (January/RT1).

## Data Handling

Participants upload their results from their testing instruments to the CSITC.org website. The evaluation is done for each instrument separately. Participants submitting results will receive:

- An official recognition of their participation.
- A numeric score indicating the level of performance relative to the average of all participant results, a) Combining all properties, and b) for each of the six properties
- A detailed analysis by instrument regarding accuracy and precision to analyse measurement-related problems.
- An evaluation of the share of test results inside the CSITC recommended limits for each property.

The USDA AMS Cotton Program in Memphis, USA, and the Bremen Fibre Institute in Bremen, Germany, distribute the round trial samples and provide data analyses. Participating labs are listed without results on the ICAC website [www.icac.org](http://www.icac.org) and on the Round Trial website [www.csitc.org](http://www.csitc.org) in case there is no specific request from the lab to keep the participation anonymous. Individual results are given only to the individual participant. ICAC discloses only the overall combined results for all participating labs in a press release every quarter.

## Technical Questions about the Round Trials

For enrolment and billing questions regarding CSITC Round Trials, please contact:

- Yana Pomerants, ICAC, at [csitcsecretariat@icac.org](mailto:csitcsecretariat@icac.org)

For technical questions about CSITC Round Trials, please contact:

- Eng. Axel Drieling, Faserinstitut Bremen e.V. (Bremen Fibre Institute) at [csitc-rt@faserinstitut.de](mailto:csitc-rt@faserinstitut.de)
- Eng. James L. Knowlton, USDA at [james.knowlton@ams.usda.gov](mailto:james.knowlton@ams.usda.gov)

Disclaimer: The ICAC accepts no responsibility for errors or omissions, which in the unlikely event might occur with shipment of samples, return and analysis of the results, and the conclusions drawn or implied by the results. The evaluation and/or grading based on the results offers no commercial guarantees as to the current and future standing of the participating laboratory.

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