The National Academy of Engineering was established in 1964 as a partner organization to the National Research Council, the Institute of Medicine, and the National Academy of Sciences, originally chartered by Congress in 1863. The purpose of the National Academy of Engineering is “to promote the technological welfare of the nation by marshalling the knowledge and insights of eminent members of the engineering profession.” Election to the Academy is considered to be the highest honor the profession bestows on its practitioners.

Iowa State University Materials Science and Engineering is pleased to announce the election of

R. Bruce Thompson, Anson Marston Distinguished Professor of Materials Science and Engineering, to the National Academy of Engineering.

“...for outstanding contributions to nondestructive evaluation, materials processing, and life-cycle management, and for the development of novel ultrasonic technology.”

—NAE citation

Department of Materials Science and Engineering
IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Iowa State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, sex, marital status, disability, or status as a U.S. Veteran or Veteran with disabilities. For more information, see Equal Opportunity and Diversity, 3600 Beardshear Hall, 515-294-7012.
R. Bruce Thompson received his B.A. from Rice University in 1964 and his master’s in physics and Ph.D. in applied physics from Stanford University in 1965 and 1971, respectively. He began his work in nondestructive evaluation as soon as he left graduate school in 1970, applying expertise that had been originally developed using ultrasonic phenomena in signal processing devices. Thompson’s early work was performed at the North American Science Center (later acquired by Rockwell International), where he investigated the use of ultrasonic waves to detect flaws in materials. He came to Iowa State University in 1980, where in 1986 he helped establish the Center for Nondestructive Evaluation (CNDE), today the second-oldest research center in the National Science Foundation’s Industry/University Cooperative Research Program. Thompson joined Iowa State’s Department of Materials Science and Engineering in 1986.

Thompson was named CNDE director in 1997. During his tenure, the CNDE has continued to distinguish itself as the world’s foremost NDE research center. From an original base of fourteen, today more than twenty companies and government agencies support the center’s “generic pre-competitive research” on a subscription basis.

In 2001 Thompson received the David R. Boyle Eminent Faculty Award for Research, the highest recognition conferred by the Iowa State University College of Engineering.