



SPINAL CORD INJURY RESEARCH BOARD

Regular Business Meeting

September 7, 2016

11:00 AM to 5:00 PM

MINUTES

Locations

NYS DOH Metropolitan Area Regional Office, Conference Room 4A/B, 90 Church Street, New York, NY

NYS DOH David Axelrod Institute, Auditorium A&B, 120 New Scotland Avenue, Albany, NY

SCIRB Members Present

Thomas N. Bryce, M.D.
Anthony Caggiano, M.D., Ph.D.
Donald Faber, Ph.D.
Bernice Grafstein, Ph.D.
Keith Gurgui
Nancy Lieberman
Lorne Mendell, Ph.D.
Gary D. Paige, M.D., Ph.D.
Fraser Sim, Ph.D.
Adam Stein, M.D.

SCIRB Members Absent

David A. Carmel
Michael E. Goldberg, M.D.

NYS DOH Staff Present

Teresa Ascienzo
Charles Burns
Kathy Chou, Ph.D.
Andrea Garavelli
Joan K. Harris, Esq.
Matthew Kohn, Ph.D.
Victoria Derbyshire, Ph.D.
Jeannine Tusch
Carlene Van Patten
Diana Yang, J.D.

Guests

Kristen Murphy
Tracy Tress

Call to Order and Opening Remarks of the Chair

The meeting was called to order at 11:05 a.m. with a welcome by Chair, Lorne Mendell, Ph.D. followed by introductions of Spinal Cord Injury Research Board (SCIRB) members and the New York State Department of Health (DOH) staff. Dr. Mendell said Bernice Grafstein, Ph.D. would join the meeting later.

Dr. Mendell noted that Mark Menniti Stecker, M.D., Ph.D., of Winthrop University Hospital Department of Neuroscience, concluded his time as a member. The SCIRB thanked him for his service during this essential time. Dr. Mendell said the SCIRB members should email potential candidate names for membership consideration to his and Victoria Derbyshire, Ph.D. attentions.

Dr. Mendell announced that Diana Yang, J.D., who has worked closely with the SCIRB will no longer be the DOH Counsel. Dr. Mendell welcomed Joan K. Harris, Esq., on her recent appointment to represent DOH at SCIRB meetings.

Consideration of January 20, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Dr. Mendell asked the SCIRB to consider Exhibit 1, the minutes from the January 20, 2016 meeting.

ACTION

Gary D. Paige, M.D., Ph.D. made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Anthony Caggiano, M.D., Ph.D. seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the minutes were unanimously approved (9-0).

Consideration of Annual Report

Dr. Mendell asked the SCIRB to consider Exhibit 2, the draft 2016 SCIRB Annual Report.

ACTION

Donald Faber, Ph.D. motioned to approve the draft 2016 SCIRB Annual Report as presented. Adam Stein, M.D. seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the report was unanimously approved (9-0).

Program Update

Dr. Derbyshire provided an update on recently SCIRB approved Request for Applications (RFAs) and the release of the Solicitation of Interest for the Institutional Support for Spinal Cord Injury (Round 6). A summary of these procurements is listed below.

- 1. Translational Research Projects in SCI (Round 1) RFA:** The SCIRB previously recommended awards from Columbia University and the Research Foundation of CUNY at the City College of NY, CUNY School of Medicine. These five- year contacts began in August 2016 and total more than \$8 million to be used through August 2021.
- 2. Projects to Accelerate Research Translation (PART) and Innovative, Developmental or Exploratory Activities (IDEA) in SCI (Round 1) RFA:** The SCIRB previously approved the release of the PART/IDEA (Round 1) RFA. 31 applications were received. The multi-year contracts (three years for PART and two years for IDEA) are expected to begin January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2019. Approximately \$6 million is available for 11 awards. The SCIRB's agenda included considering the applications for funding later on.

The SCIRB discussed the peer review panels' scores from the Cellular Regeneration and Therapeutics (Cellular Regeneration) Panel and Rehabilitation Panel.

- SCIRB opinions varied; some members believed there was statistical significance, whereas others did not. The DOH staff will continue to provide a chart comparison of each panel's scores along with the mean, median and mode.
- 3. Individual Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowships in SCI (Round 2) RFA:** The SCIRB previously approved the release of this RFA. 12 applications were received. These three-year contracts are expected to begin in May 2017 and \$1.5 million is available for approximately 6 awards. The SCIRB plans to meet in early 2017 to consider these applications for funding.
 - 4. Institutional Support for SCI (Round 6):** The SCIRB previously approved the release of this non-competitive funding mechanism. 18 eligible organizations are expected to receive an equal share of the awards, as much as \$242,500, which will support the expansion of SCI research within their organization.
 - The SCIRB requested to receive a copy of the progress reports to review the scientific impact of the Institutional Support awards.

- Teresa Ascienzo stated that each institution is required to submit a progress report as part of their contract. Institutions who received Institutional Support funds (Round 5) will submit a progress report by October 31, 2016.
- As noted in Exhibit 2, the scientific progress from the Institutional Support (Round 5) awards will be included in the 2016 SCIRB Annual Report.

Carlene Van Patten, reviewed Exhibit 3, SCI research programming by procurement type. Dr. Mendell stated the goal is to issue more RFAs for competitive SCI research projects and reduce the Institutional Support funding.

Future RFAs

The SCIRB members were provided programming options for the next round of the above mentioned RFAs. Dr. Derbyshire noted that the SCIRB needed to consider the possibility of issuing the Translational Research Projects in SCI (Round 2) RFA earlier and asked the SCIRB to consider Exhibit 4, a draft of this RFA.

The SCIRB discussed programming options and ultimately decided to allocate funding for the next rounds of competitive RFAs. The SCIRB decided to keep the PART and IDEA mechanisms as part of the same RFA for programming flexibility. Dr. Derbyshire stated that the Institutional Support funding mechanism would still be used as needed.

The SCIRB discussed their authority to vote in favor or against any application that was peer reviewed. Ms. Yang noted that the Office of the NYS Comptroller's review may request further explanation justifying the SCIRB's decisions.

ACTION

Dr. Paige made a motion to approve the draft Translational Research Projects in SCI (Round 2) RFA with \$6 million available for award, to be released in November 2016. Nancy Lieberman seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved (9-0).

ACTION

Dr. Stein made a motion to approve a PART and IDEA in SCI (Round 2) RFA with \$5 million available for 10-15 awards, to be released in October 2016. Dr. Caggiano seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved (9-0).

ACTION

Dr. Faber made a motion to approve an Individual Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowships in SCI (Round 3) RFA with \$1.5 million available for 6 awards, for a release in May 2017. Dr. Stein seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved (9-0).

Dr. Grafstein joined the meeting.

Andrea Garavelli, provided an overview of the applications received in response to the PART and IDEA in SCI (Round 1) RFA. As per the RFA, she noted that the SCIRB may vote in favor or against any application submitted for funding. She stated that if the SCIRB recommends the top 11 applications, funding of \$6.3 million would be spent through State Fiscal Year 2019-2020. She suggested the SCIRB could recommend up to 11 awards and "approve, but not fund" other meritorious applications.

Dr. Paige motioned to move into Executive Session and Dr. Caggiano seconded. The SCIRB unanimously voted to adjourn into Executive Session for the purpose of considering applications for research funding. Members of the public and non-essential staff were asked to leave the room.

After discussing the PART and IDEA in SCI (Round 1) applications, the SCIRB reconvened in Public Session.

Award Recommendations

Dr. Mendell began the process of considering the applications, noting that the final award amounts will be contingent on correction of any arithmetic errors and administrative issues. He explained the final recommendations will be forwarded to the Commissioner of Health and upon his acceptance, the contract award process will be initiated.

After the SCIRB recommended ten (10) awards, Ms. Lieberman motioned to move into Executive Session to continue application discussion and Dr. Faber seconded. The SCIRB unanimously voted to adjourn into Executive Session for the purpose of continuing application discussions. Members of the public and non-essential staff were asked to leave the room.

After further discussing the PART and IDEA in SCI (Round 1) applications, the SCIRB reconvened in Public Session.

The SCIRB recommended an additional award for funding. In summary, \$6.2 million, 4 PART and 7 IDEA applications were recommended for funding. Details are provided on pages 5-7.

Keith Gurgui exited the meeting.

Future Meetings

At its next meeting in early 2017, the SCIRB will consider Individual Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowships in SCI (Round 2) applications for funding and continue these types of discussions.

Adjournment

The SCIRB unanimously voted to adjourn and the meeting ended at 4:50 p.m.

Projects to Accelerate Research Translation (PART) and Innovative, Developmental or Exploratory Activities (IDEA) in Spinal Cord Injury (Round 1): A total of \$6.2 million, 4 PART and 7 IDEA awards were made. These projects are three- and two-year awards, respectively.

Funding Mechanism	Organization	Project Title	Investigators	Recommended Award	Votes (Y-N)
IDEA	Cornell University	Imaging Neural Activity in the Spinal Cord of Awake Mice After Spinal Cord Injury	Chris B. Schaffer, Ph.D.	\$350,876	9-0 Dr. Bernice Grafstein recused
IDEA	Winifred Masterson Burke Medical Research Institute	Visualizing New Synapses and Their Activity in the Injured Spinal Cord	Jian Zhong, Ph.D. Dylan Edwards, Ph.D.	\$360,000	9-0 Dr. Bernice Grafstein recused
IDEA	Bronx Veterans Medical Research Foundation, Peters VA	Role of T cells in Bone Loss After Spinal Cord Injury	Hesham Tawfeek, M.D. William Bauman, M.D. Christopher Cardozo, M.D.	\$356,999	7-2 Dr. Thomas Bryce recused
IDEA	The Trustees of Columbia University in the City of New York	Pumilio 1 and 2 Control Axon Regrowth by Shaping the Axonal Transcriptome	Ulrich Hengst, Ph.D.	\$360,000	10-0
IDEA	Research Foundation for SUNY Stony Brook	Therapeutic Potential of Mild to Moderate AIH on LUT and Respiratory Function in SCI	Irene C. Solomon, Ph.D. William F. Collins, Ph.D.	\$355,111	9-0 Dr. Lorne Mendell recused

Funding Mechanism	Organization	Project Title	Investigators	Recommended Award	Votes (Y-N)
PART	Research Foundation for SUNY Stony Brook	Effects of Spinal Electromagnetic Stimulation and Locomotor Training on Motor Recovery and Walking in Incomplete SCI	Sue Ann Sisto, Ph.D. Victor Arvanian, Ph.D. Hayk Petrosyan, Ph.D. Janice Sniffen, Ph.D.	\$989,199	9-0 Dr. Lorne Mendell recused
PART	The Research Foundation of CUNY obo College of Staten Island	Transspinal-Transcortical Paired Stimulation for Neuroplasticity and Recovery After SCI	Maria Knikou, P.T., Ph.D.	\$947,004	9-0 Dr. Adam Stein recused
IDEA	Winifred Masterson Burke Medical Research Institute Sub-applicant: Massachusetts Institute of Technology	Improving Hand Function in Chronic SCI with Combined Robot Training and Transcranial Direct Current Stimulation	Dylan J. Edwards, Ph.D., P.T. Mar Cortes, M.D. Sub-applicant: Hermano I. Krebs, Ph.D.	\$359,000	9-0 Dr. Bernice Grafstein recused
IDEA	Research Foundation for SUNY, University at Albany	Functional Analysis of Genes Implicated in Successful CNS Axon Regeneration	Ben G. Szaro, Ph.D.	\$359,738	10-0

Funding Mechanism	Organization	Project Title	Investigators	Recommended Award	Votes (Y-N)
PART	Research Corporation of Long Island, Inc., Northport VA Sub-applicant: Houston Methodist Research Institute	Neuroplasticity Integrting Human Induced Neuralized Pluripotent Stem Cells (NiPSCs) in SCI Animals	Victor L. Arvanian, Ph.D., D.Sci Sub-applicant: Philip J. Homer, Ph.D. Hayk Petrosyan, Ph.D.	\$935,867	9-0 Dr. Lorne Mendell recused
PART	Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai	Improving Sclerostin Antibody-Based Therapeutics for Bone Loss after Subacute SCI	Weiping Qin, M.D., Ph.D. William A. Bauman, M.D.	\$0	3-6 Dr. Thomas Bryce recused
PART	Weill Medical College of Cornell University Sub-applicant: Winifred Masterson Burke Medical Research Institute	NAD-Augmenting Agents to Enhance Neural Survival and Function Following Spinal Cord Injury	Anthony Sauve, Ph.D. Sub-applicant: Brett C. Langlely, Ph.D. Caitlin Hill, Ph.D.	\$890,241	9-0 Dr. Bernice Grafstein recused