



SPINAL CORD INJURY RESEARCH BOARD

Regular Business Meeting

February 5, 2018

12:00 PM to 4:00 PM

MINUTES

Locations

NYS DOH Metropolitan Area Regional Office, Conference Room 4B, 90 Church Street, New York, NY
NYS DOH Wadsworth Center, Biggs Laboratory, Sturman Conference Room, Albany, NY

SCIRB Members Present

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

SCIRB Members Absent

Anthony Caggiano, M.D., Ph.D.
Michael E. Goldberg, M.D.
Keith Gurgui

NYS DOH Staff Present

Teresa Ascienzo
Charles Burns
Victoria Derbyshire, Ph.D.
Andrea Garavelli
Joan K. Harris, Esq.
Kerri Kluetzman, Ph.D.
Farrah O'Brien
Brian Rourke
Jeannine Tusch
Carlene Van Patten

Guests

Nurit Kalderon, Ph.D.
Harriet Katz
Hao Su, Ph.D.

Call to Order and Opening Remarks of the Chair

The meeting was called to order at 12:10 p.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. Fraser Sim, Ph.D. would join the meeting later.

Board membership

Nancy Lieberman inquired about board membership, specifically vacant seats. Dr. Mendell reported that staff are awaiting final signatures (to fill a gubernatorial seat). Note, one other vacancy is to be filled by legislative leadership.

Consideration of September 26, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Dr. Mendell asked the SCIRB to consider Exhibit 1, the minutes from the September 26, 2017 meeting.

ACTION

Bernice Grafstein, Ph.D. made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Gary D. Paige, M.D., Ph.D. seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the minutes were unanimously approved (7-0).

NYS Spinal Cord Injury Research Symposium

Dr. Mendell provided an update on the NYS Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Research Symposium. He said it will be held at The Rockefeller University on October 16-17, 2018. Drs. Faber, Grafstein and Stein are working with Dr. Mendell as part of the scientific committee to plan a stimulating symposium to promote collaboration and synergy within the NYS SCI research community. Dr. Mendell is working with Andrea Garavelli to invite International guests to deliver seminars on important SCI topics and the agenda will include panel discussions and poster sessions for NYS grantees.

Consideration of Annual Report

Dr. Mendell asked the SCIRB to consider Exhibit 3, the draft 2017 SCIRB Annual Report.

ACTION

Donald Faber, Ph.D. made a motion to approve the draft 2017 SCIRB Annual Report as presented. Adam Stein, M.D. seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the report was unanimously approved (7-0).

Program Update

Carlene Van Patten provided a review of Exhibit 4a, current and future programming of SCI research funding. A summary of these contracts/procurements is listed below.

- **Collaborations to Accelerate Research Translation (CART) and Innovative Developmental or Exploratory Activities (IDEA) in SCI:** Four (4) IDEA contracts completed their final reporting period, two (2) IDEA contracts received no cost extensions, and three (3) CART contracts conclude October 31, 2018. Final progress for each will be featured in the 2018 SCIRB Annual Report.
- **Individual Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowships in SCI (Round 1):** Contracts are in their fourth reporting period and will conclude in 2019.
- **Translational Research Projects (TRP) in SCI (Round 1):** Two (2) five-year contracts which totaled \$8.7 million are in their third reporting period.
- **Institutional Support for SCI (Round 6):** Non-competitive contracts began on February 1, 2017 and competitive contractual obligations will continue to receive SCI research funding in FY 2018-19.
- **Projects to Accelerate Research Translation (PART) and IDEA in SCI (Round 1):** Eleven multi-year contracts which totaled \$6.2 million have completed their third reporting period. These seven (7) IDEA contracts conclude December 31, 2018 and four (4) PART contracts conclude December 31, 2019.
- **Individual Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowships in SCI (Round 2):** Nine (9) multi-year contracts which totaled \$1.5 million are in their first reporting period. These contracts began on September 1, 2017.
- **PART and IDEA in SCI (Round 2) RFA:** Fourteen awards which totaled \$6.5 million are in the contract execution stage. These contracts are expected to begin on May 1, 2018.

- **TRP in SCI (Round 2):** Two (2) awards which totaled \$2.8 million are in the contract execution stage. These contracts are expected to begin on May 1, 2018.
- **Individual Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowships in SCI (Round 3) RFA:** The meeting agenda included SCIRB considering applications received in response to this RFA.
- **PART and IDEA in SCI (Round 3) RFA:** This RFA is scheduled for release in February 2018. There will be \$5 million available to support approximately 5-14 awards. Prospective applicants will be given a period of eight (8) weeks to prepare and submit their applications.

Programming Future RFAs

Victoria Derbyshire, Ph.D. reviewed the future release strategy and funding levels moving forward for the next rounds of recurring RFAs. The SCIRB ultimately decided to allocate funding for the next rounds of competitive RFAs.

ACTION

Adam Stein, M.D. made a motion to approve an Individual Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowships in SCI (Round 4) RFA with \$1.5 million available for 6 awards, for a release in May 2018. Dr. Paige seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved (7-0).

ACTION

Dr. Grafstein made a motion to approve a PART and IDEA in SCI (Round 4) RFA with \$5 million available for 5-14 awards, to be released in January 2019. Thomas N. Bryce, M.D. seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved (7-0).

ACTION

Dr. Faber made a motion to approve a Translational Research Projects in SCI (Round 3) RFA with \$6 million available for award, to be released in May 2019. Dr. Stein seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved (7-0).

Future Meetings

At its next meeting in the fall/early winter of 2018, the SCIRB will consider the PART and IDEA in SCI (Round 3) applications for funding.

Considerations of Applications:

Individual Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowships in SCI (Round 3)

Ms. Garavelli provided an overview of the applications received in response to this RFA; the procurement timeline is bulleted below:

- The RFA was approved by the SCIRB in September 2016
- The RFA was issued on August 7, 2017
- Seven (7) applications were submitted by the October 5, 2017 due date
- Independent peer review of the applications was held on December 4, 2017
- The RFA made \$1.5 million available to fund approximately six (6) training (pre- or post-doctoral) awards
- The multi-year contracts are expected to begin on September 1, 2018 for a multi-year term of three (3) years

Ms. Garavelli noted that applications were scored on a scale of 1.0-9.0 and scoring ties were resolved using the score for “Fellow and Development Plan” among those applications involved in the ties.

Dr. Grafstein motioned to move into Executive Session and Dr. Paige 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.

Dr. Sim joined the meeting in Executive Session.

After discussing the Fellowships applications, the SCIRB reconvened in Public Session.

SCIRB Recommendations

Dr. Mendell began the process of considering the applications. Dr. Derbyshire announced the organizations and principal investigator’s applications. A listing of the SCIRB’s recommendations are provided on pages 5-6.

ACTION

Dr. Mendell made a motion to recommend to the Commissioner of Health that these pre- and post-doctoral applications be funded using the peer review results in score order as the basis for this decision. Dr. Grafstein seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved (8-0).

In summary, the SCIRB recommended funding of \$1.2 million in the form of two (2) pre-doctoral and five (5) post-doctoral awards. Resulting contracts are scheduled to begin on September 1, 2018.

Public Comment

Hao Su, Ph.D., attended the meeting to observe and introduce himself. He is the Assistant Professor and Director of the Lab of Biomechatronics and Intelligent Robotics (BIRO), Department of Mechanical Engineering at the City University of New York, City College.

Adjournment

Dr. Paige motioned to adjourn the meeting and Ms. Faber seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Individual Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowships in SCI (Round 3) RFA: \$1.2 million in the form of two (2) pre-doctoral and five (5) post-doctoral awards were recommended. Projects are three (3) year awards.

Funding Mechanism/ Research Category	Organization	Project Title	Investigator(s)	Recommended Award
Predoctoral/ Cellular Regeneration & Therapeutics	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	Delivery of Neurotrophin-3 mRNA by Electrospun Fibers to Promote Axonal Growth	PI (Sponsor): Ryan J. Gilbert, Ph.D. Fellow: Devan Puhl	\$135,600
Postdoctoral/ Rehabilitation	The Research Foundation of CUNY obo The City College of New York	Harnessing Activity- Dependent Competition to Repair the Corticospinal Motor System After Cervical Spinal Cord Injury	PI (Sponsor): John Martin, Ph.D. Fellow: Lillian Yang, Ph.D.	\$184,734
Predoctoral/ Rehabilitation	Stony Brook University	Activity-dependent Closed-loop Neuromodulation of the Cervical Spinal Cord for the Recovery of Skilled Upper Limb Function After a Spinal Cord Injury	PI (Sponsor): Prithvi K. Shah, Ph.D. Fellow: Pawan Sharma	\$117,570

Funding Mechanism/ Research Category	Organization	Project Title	Investigator(s)	Recommended Award
Postdoctoral/ Rehabilitation	Winifred Masterson Burke Medical Research Institute	Combined Therapy of Forelimb Area Motor Cortex and Spinal Cord Epidural Stimulation to Improve Hand Function After Spinal Cord Injury and Identifying the Responsible Pathway	PI (Sponsor): Jason B. Carmel, M.D., Ph.D. Fellow: Qi Yang, Ph.D.	\$186,426
Postdoctoral/ Cellular Regeneration & Therapeutics	Winifred Masterson Burke Medical Research Institute	Role of Ubiquitinated Proteins in Dystrophic Axonal Endings Following Spinal Cord Injury	PI (Sponsor): Caitlin E. Hill, Ph.D. Fellow: Carolin Ruven, Ph.D.	\$186,426
Postdoctoral/ Rehabilitation	Winifred Masterson Burke Medical Research Institute	The Role of Intracortical Circuits in Motor Recovery from Spinal Cord Injury	PI (Sponsor): Edmund R. Hollis, Ph.D. Fellow: Hisham Mohammed, Ph.D.	\$175,926
Postdoctoral/ Cellular Regeneration & Therapeutics	Winifred Masterson Burke Medical Research Institute	Generation and Validation of a Transgenic Chain- amplifying Tracer (TCAT) Mouse Line	PI (Sponsor): Jian Zhong, Ph.D. Fellow: Ning Xia, M.D., Ph.D.	\$172,926