

SPINAL CORD INJURY RESEARCH BOARD

Regular Business Meeting

October 9, 2026

10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

DRAFT AND UNADOPTED

Location

NYS DOH, Wadsworth Center, Biggs Laboratory, Sturman Conference Room, Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY
MARO Conference Room 4C, 90 Church St, New York City, NY

University at Buffalo, Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, 955 Main Street, 3rd Floor, 3256

SCIRB Members Present

Adam B. Stein, MD, Chair
April B. Coughlin, PhD
Jessica K. Daigle, MA, OTR/L
Keith Gurgui
Miguel Escalon, MD, PhD
Ramin Rak, MD, FAANS
Rachel Santiago, MD
Fraser Sim, PhD
Lauren A. Varriale, MS, OTR/L

SCIRB Members Absent

Shelly Hsieh, MD
Avinash Mohan, MD
Ann M. Spungen, EdD

NYS DOH Staff Present

Michele Kilmartin, Executive Secretary
Farrah M. O'Brien
David Googins
James Magen

Members of the Public

Caitlin Hill
Chevaughn Graham
Chung-Ying Tsai
Disha Gupta
Edmund Hollis
Hillary McDonald
Jacob Goldsmith
Leo West
Lynda Murray
Maria Knikou
Nicole Mercer-Lindsay
Nishtha Ranawat
Ona Bloom
Sarah Torres
Tommy Sutor
Treena Arinzeh
Wenjie Ji
Xiaofei Guan
Yutaka Yoshida

Call to Order, Welcome Members and Opening Remarks

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. with a welcome from the Chair, Adam B. Stein, M.D., followed by introductions of New York State Spinal Cord Injury Research Board (SCIRB) members. Note, three (3) members were absent and there is one (1) vacancy to be filled by legislative leadership.

Board Membership Updates

Dr. Stein introduced new member, Dr. Miguel Escalon, from the Ichan School of Medicine. Dr. Escalon gave a summary of his work with SCI.

Consideration of April 10, 2026, Meeting Minutes

Dr. Stein asked the SCIRB to consider Exhibit 1, the minutes from the April 10, 2026, meeting. Dr. Stein reminded the Board that Dr. Escalon must abstain from voting on the previous minutes as he was not a member at the time of the meeting.

ACTION

Ms. Varriale made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Daigle seconded. A roll call vote was taken, and the minutes were approved; Dr. Escalon abstaining (8-0-1).

Public Comment

There were no requests for public comment.

ACTION

Ms. Daigle moved to adjourn into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the applications received in response to the PART/IDEA Round 8 applications and other discussions. Ms. Varriale seconded. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was approved (9-0-0).

After discussion, the SCIRB reconvened in Public Session.

SCIRB vote on PART and IDEA (Round 8) Applications

In summary, SCIRB recommended forwarding nine (9) applications for funding using the peer review results as the basis for the decision.

ACTION

A vote was held on the IDEA application under consideration submitted by Dr. Tsai of Icahn School of Medicine. A roll call vote was taken, and the application was approved with Drs. Escalon and Rak recusing (7-0, 2 recusals).

ACTION

A vote was held on the IDEA application under consideration submitted by Dr. Zou of Icahn School of Medicine. A roll call vote was taken, and the application was approved with Drs. Escalon and Rak recusing (7-0, 2 recusals).

ACTION

A vote was held on the PART application under consideration submitted by Dr. Martin of Research Foundation of CUNY. A roll call vote was taken, and the application was approved (9-0-0).

ACTION

A vote was held on the IDEA application under consideration submitted by Dr. Rao of Research Foundation of SUNY. A roll call vote was taken, and the application was approved (9-0-0).

ACTION

A vote was held on the IDEA application under consideration submitted by Dr. Solomon of Research Foundation of SUNY. A roll call vote was taken, and the application was approved (9-0-0).

ACTION

A vote was held on the IDEA application under consideration submitted by Dr. Sutor of Bronx Veterans. A roll call vote was taken, and the application was approved with Drs. Escalon and Rak recusing (7-0, 2 recusals).

ACTION

A vote was held on the PART application under consideration submitted by Dr. Calancie of Research Foundation of SUNY. A roll call vote was taken, and the application was approved (9-0-0).

ACTION

A vote was held on the IDEA application under consideration submitted by Dr. Brangaccio of Albany Research Institute of CUNY. A roll call vote was taken, and the application was approved (9-0-0).

ACTION

A vote was held on the PART application under consideration, submitted by Dr. Jo of Research Foundation of CUNY. A roll call vote was taken, and the application was approved with Dr. Sim recusing (7-1, 1 recusal).

ACTION

A vote was held not to fund the remaining applications under consideration. A roll call vote was taken, and the decision was approved (9-0-0).

DOH PROGRAM UPDATE

Ms. O'Brien provided an update on the status of other program activities and previously awarded contracts:

- The Peer Review contract with AIBS ended on March 31, 2026. As a result of the Request for Proposal for Peer Review services, the new peer review provider for SCIRB and HRSB is Professional Management Consulting Services out of Washington DC.
- Two (2) Translational Round 4 contracts began in October 2022 and will end in September 2027.
- Thirteen (13) awards from Institutional Support Round 7 began July 2023 and will end June 2028.
- Eight (8) PART and IDEA Round 7 contracts began in July 2025 and will end in June 2027 for IDEAs or June 2028 for PARTs.
- Three (3) Fellowship Round 6 contracts began in September 2025 and will end August 2027.

- Two (2) Translational Round 7 contracts began in March 2026 and will end in February 2031.
- Five (5) Fellowship Round 7 contracts began in September 2026 and will end August 2028.

Mr. Googins stated that the Symposium has been scheduled for May 22-23, 2028, at the New York Academy of Medicine in NYC. He also noted that the amount of the Symposium would not exceed the new threshold of \$149,999.

Future Meeting & Adjournment

At its next meeting, April 9, 2027, the SCIRB will consider applications from the New Investigators Round 1 RFA. Dr. Stein thanked members of the SCIRB and DOH staff for attending. The business meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

PART and IDEA (Round 8)

\$5.03 million in the form of five (5) PART and four (4) IDEA awards were recommended.

Projects are three (3) years for PART awards and two (2) years for IDEA awards.

Contracting Entity	Funding Mechanism	Principal Investigator	Project Title	Recommended Funding	Votes (Y-N-R)
Albany Research Institute	IDEA	Jodi Brangaccio, DPT	taVNS-augmented H-reflex operant conditioning to reduce spasticity after SCI	\$359,437	9-0-0
Bronx Veterans Medical Research Foundation	IDEA	Thomas Sutor, PhD	Transcutaneous spinal cord stimulation to enhance hemodynamics and performance during upright robotic-assisted stepping	\$359,988	7-0-2
Research Foundation of City University of New York	PART	John Martin, PhD	Activity-dependent Trans-synaptic Neuron Degeneration Caudal to Cervical SCI	\$951,821	9-0-0
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai	PART	Chung-Ying Tsai, PhD	Transcutaneous Spinal Cord Stimulation in Acute Inpatient Rehabilitation to Enhance Recovery after Spinal Cord Injury - A Pilot Randomized Controlled Trial	\$352,062	7-0-2
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai	IDEA	Hongyan Zou, MD, PhD	Modulating Injury Metabolics to Enhance Spinal Cord Injury Recovery	\$360,000	7-0-2
SUNY at Buffalo	PART	Hang Jin Jo, PhD	Neurophysiological Biomarkers for Repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation in SCI	\$983,971	7-1-1
Research Foundation for State University of New York	PART	Blair Calancie, PhD	Developing a large animal model for repairing spinal nerves after cauda equina injury: An essential step towards a human clinical trial	\$972,979	9-0-0
SUNY at Stony Brook	IDEA	Irene Solomon, PhD	Assessment of Repeated Task-Specific "fill-void" bladder therapy (BT) Sessions as a Novel Strategy to Restore Bladder Function in SCI	\$357,740	9-0-0
SUNY at Binghamton	PART	Siyuan Rao, PhD	Multilaminar Intraspinal Recording to Reveal Early Circuit Reorganization After Spinal Cord Injury	\$330,060	9-0-0