



Andy Hill Cancer Research Endowment Standing Committee on Grants Meeting Minutes April 10, 2024

The following board members appointed by the CARE Board of Directors currently comprise the Standing Committee on Grants: Cliff Berkman, Thomas Brown, David Byrd, Karin Rodland

Committee Members Present and Constituting a Quorum: Cliff Berkman, Thomas Brown, David Byrd, Karin Rodland

Committee Members Absent: none

CARE Staff Attendees: Laura Flores Cantrell, Peter Choi, Pam Fujita-Yuhas, Jennifer Puttuck, Joseph Sparacio

Guest Attendees: Alison Beason (Department of Commerce)

Wednesday, April 10, 2024, 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. (PT)

1. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m. A quorum was confirmed by Karin Rodland, Committee Chair.

2. Breakthrough Research Continued Funding – Reviewer Appointments

Karin Rodland reminded the Committee the Board awarded two Breakthrough Research grants in 2019 to the Institute for Systems Biology (ISB) and the University of Washington (UW). These are multiyear grants that require annual continued funding approval by the Board.

Karin noted the progress of these grants will be reviewed by independent scientific reviewers later this year and the independent expert scientific review and advisory committee appointed by the Board must consist of individuals with nationally-recognized expertise in the scientific, clinical, ethical, commercial, and regulatory aspects of cancer research, prevention, and care.

CARE Fund contracted with the American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS) and identified candidates to evaluate the projects' progress.

Karin invited Committee members to disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest. The following disclosures we made: David Byrd, employed by the University of Washington; Tom Brown, affiliate member with the Institute for Systems Biology.

Peter Choi clarified that following the Board's Conflict of Interest Policy, board members having disclosed conflicts may evaluate and vote on appointments of reviewers to the independent scientific review committee.

Karin briefly summarized the Institute for Systems Biology project and then invited discussion of the slate of candidate reviewers for the continued funding application from ISB. Committee members voiced there were no concerns.

MOTION: David Byrd moved to appoint the reviewer candidates to the scientific review committee, including alternate reviewers as presented by AIBS to review the Breakthrough Research Continued Funding application from the Institute for Systems Biology (PI: Jim Heath). Cliff Berkman seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Karin briefly summarized the University of Washington project and then asked Peter to provide the Committee with an update on the project.

Peter noted the project has faced several hurdles. In discussion with UW, they asked about possibly changing their approach to move the project forward with the Breakthrough Research grant.

A discussion followed. The Committee members suggested that an external peer review of the progress report submitted by UW could help the Board assess the continued viability of the project. The Committee requested that CARE Fund staff ask UW to provide a report on progress to date and any proposed change in scope. If CARE Fund agrees to consider a change in scope, the progress report and proposed change in scope will be provided to AIBS for review. AIBS' independent peer review and recommendation would then be provided to the CARE Board to make its decision on continued funding.

Laura Flores Cantrell clarified for the Committee that the CARE Board delegated authority to the Committee to appoint independent reviewers. On other grants management matters, the Committee is advisory to the Board and may make recommendations to the Board.

A committee member noted the proposed panel of independent reviewers for the UW project did not include a reviewer with expertise in experimental immunotherapy which they believe would be needed to evaluate the potential change in scope proposal. The committee member noted that reviewer #4 in the ISB candidate panel did have this expertise and recommended this reviewer be added to the UW panel.

MOTION: Tom Brown moved to appoint the reviewer candidates to the scientific review committee, including alternate reviewers as presented by AIBS, with the addition of reviewer #4 from the ISB panel as an alternate, to review the Breakthrough Research Continued Funding applications from the University of Washington (PI: Andre Lieber) including an updated proposal documenting their requested change in scope. David Byrd seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

3. Grants Administration

Peter Choi presented a brief overview of changes in the composition of the CARE Fund grants portfolio. He described how changes in grants administration procedures could facilitate contract execution, assist grantees in project workflows, and align expectations regarding reimbursement-based payments.

Peter asked the Committee about when and how to appropriately communicate CARE Fund award requirements to all applicants thus enabling preparations to fulfill award agreement requirements in advance if they prefer. Committee discussion followed. The Committee agreed that award agreement requirements could be disseminated to all qualified applicants with the understanding the provision of grant award requirement information is not an indication that an award would be approved by the CARE Board. The provision of this information, once applications have been determined to be qualified and sent out for independent scientific reviews, would give applicants the option of preparing for award agreement requirements in advance.

Peter asked the Committee what a realistic timeframe should be from when a grantee invoices the Program Administrator to request reimbursement of grant expenses to when payment is made. Members were informed by staff that currently the Program Administrator remits payment 15 to 30 days from the time an invoice is submitted by a grantee. The Committee agreed that the net 30-day timeframe was reasonable.

MOTION: Thomas Brown moved to recommend to the Board that applicants, upon passing compliance review in the application process, may be provided information that describes the financial and administrative information needed to execute and initiate an award by CARE Fund. Grantees should be informed about the month and year for when they should expect to hear back about award decisions. The motion was seconded by David Byrd. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. Cancer Type and Research Area Reporting

Karin Rodland noted that as a part of strategic planning discussions and the development of grant opportunities, the CARE Fund may benefit from collecting applicant data regarding cancer research areas and cancer types implicated in their research. As a part of that effort, CARE Fund could begin asking applicants to report on the research area and type of cancer that is the focus of their project. Karin described the cancer-type categories and research areas currently being considered for recommendation to the Board for inclusion in CARE Fund's grant application.

A Committee discussion followed. Committee members noted the data collection process would likely need to address how best to capture research projects that spanned multiple cancer types and rare cancer types, as well as identify research projects that aim to address disparities in cancer research. Following this Committee's input during the meeting, Karin offered to work with CARE Fund staff to refine the lists of cancer types and research areas.

MOTION: David Byrd moved that Karin Rodland work with staff to develop a list of cancer types and research areas, incorporating the stated feedback of the Committee, to be presented for consideration by the Board at the May 22, 2024 Board meeting. Tom Brown seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

5. Public Comment

No members of the public were present to provide comment.

6. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 4:08 p.m.

I certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes approved by the CARE Board of Directors at a regular meeting of the Board on August 14, 2024.

Signed by:

Marc Cummings

Marc Cummings, CARE Board Secretary

8/23/2024

Date