

Regenerative Medicine Minnesota Board Meeting

Rochester, Minnesota - January 11, 2017 – 9:00 AM

Attendees: Andre Terzic, Jakub Tolar; via teleconference – Roberta King, Margaret Anderson Kelliher

Guests: Beth Borg, Nancy Morgan

The meeting was called to order at 9:22 AM and began by reviewing the past history of the grant making (1st year divided by organ system, 2nd year by three categories, 3rd year – education and retention of young faculty – limited to Asst Prof or new PhD – helping people at onset of their careers and steering them toward RM).

Board was charged with awarding the group of grants, and deciding whether to maintain direction or make changes to the grant process.

Distribution graphs show that there were 91 applications the first year, 82 the second, and 41 this year. Without any artificial weighting, the number of awards is proportional to the number of applications by institution.

This year there were 41 research grant applications, 4 Clinical Trials, 8 in Translational Research, 39 in Discovery Science. All reviewed by three or more reviewers. Reviewers evaluated six areas. Names of reviewers available at RMM website under FAQs (all approved by Board). Recommend awarding the top-scoring grants as follows: two Clinical Trials, two Translational Research, and six Discovery Science proposals. It is of note that the top 10 scoring grants were divided equally between male and female researchers.

A motion was made and seconded to accept recommendations for funding the grants. The motion to approve the grants was unanimously approved.

The Board discussed how to structure the grants for the following year:

- Suggest splitting funding between young 50% and other 50%.
- Suggest flexibility, less restrictive and go for best science. Emphasis in a new field continues to be on the youngest, so idea is appealing. Add research associate, associate consultant to the term assistant professor. Consider broadly opening the grants. Encourage the young, but not closed to more established investigators.
- Suggest making it up to a certain percentage or a goal of a certain percentage, rather than a hard 50%; allows for more flexibility. If funds are not used on the “up to” side, funding will roll to the other side of the research. Don’t limit ourselves.
- In the first two years how many young investigators were funded? Success rates were low although the application rates were there.
- Members of the Board unanimously agreed to use the “up to a percentage” plan.
- Consider adjusting the focus from individual PI to team science approach, allowing awards to teams (including and led by young individuals). Thereby more people receive benefit of one award, while also building interdisciplinary teams. This may be complicated by the funding mechanisms, but it increases funding reach.
- Team science is a good idea, not categorical, but a weighted criteria in the proposals – a plus if you have a team built around application.

Next set of grants; RFA released 1/3/2017. Educational part in 2nd year has been one of the most successful bits. Board has a request from an applicant to open the applications to K-12 from 3-12. This was unanimously approved. It was also suggested to add Workforce Development to the Education Programs and Outreach categories.

The legislature required in the bill that we submit an audit in odd years. It was submitted by Deans Gore and Jackson on Jan 4, 2017. Random selection of proposals were deeply reviewed – results favorable. This has fulfilled our commitment.

Summer meeting/celebration will be June 1 in Rochester. Save the date, please.

The business of the meeting being completed, it was adjourned at 10:40 AM.