

RESEARCH  
LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Thursday, December 10, 2020  
4:00 to 5:00 pm  
Zoom

**Attendees:** Elisa Bandera, Adam Berger, Willetta Boswell, Stephen Burley, Chang Chan, Shridar Ganesan, Carolyn Heckman, Christian Hinrichs, Howard Hochster, Anita Kinney, Edmund Lattime, Paul Novembre, Renata Pasqualini, Sarah Scharf, Zhiyuan Shen, Ioannis Stasinopoulos, Linda Tanzer, Eileen White, X.F. Steven Zheng

**Agenda**

1. Program membership alignment (Zheng/Burley)
  - Dr. Burley and Dr. Zheng discussed their concerns about the current membership in the CP Program and the interest in efforts to improve on the CP Program's membership alignment.
  - During the last CCSG competing renewal application, a disproportionate number of CP members were non-resident to CINJ, and so not cancer-focused.
  - They would like to see more recruitment of CINJ faculty who would be aligned in the CP Program.
  - Current NCI paylines are less than those of other funding sources, so CP members often find it easier to compete for funding from other sources that are not of interest to NCI.
  - The impact of translation could be higher by getting more CP members, besides helping the scores on the next CCSG competing renewal application.
  - They would also like to explore the idea of some current resident CINJ faculty being re-aligned into the CP Program, without the faculty feeling pressured or obligated into making the programmatic change.
    - o For example, Sharon Pine is in the Cancer Pharmacology Division under Dr. Zheng, but is not a member of the CP Program.
    - o It was reiterated that Dr. Burley and Dr. Zheng would like to see CINJ resident faculty change their program affiliation in a consequence-free manner.
  - It was noted that programmatic alignment changes are made routinely.
    - o The matter of consequences arises more in situations such as changing a Research Program entirely, as there are then changes in research focus, funding, inter- and intraprogrammatic publications, etc.
  - The suggestion was made to arrange for a future RLC meeting to involve going through the membership in all programs, so as to cull members, realign them, etc.
  - There was also discussion around the possibility of expanding the name of the CP Program, as a revised name could be helpful in getting investigators aligned.
    - o Dr. Burley and Dr. Zheng will consider possible new names.
    - o A change to a Program name must be presented to the EAB.
  - There was the further suggestion that the CP Program could also consider other activities to engage members beyond CINJ.
    - o A small working group, similar to the Cancer Metabolism Working Group in the CMG Program, could be organized based on where there is the critical mass of research.
  - It was noted that NCI paylines should be going up too.
  - There is also the issue of how much of the CP Program's total funding can be counted for the CCSG.
    - o In the last competing renewal application, only \$250,000 of the Protein Data Bank's (PDB's) \$7 million of funding was allowed to be counted.

- Paul Novembre noted that PDB's funding could be reassessed for cancer-relevance with additional justification given.
  - It was agreed that Dr. Burley and Dr. Zheng should review the CP Program's current numbers and then present again on plans for changes. The other Program Leaders should plan to do likewise at a later meeting.
2. Developmental Funds/Pilot Awards for research priorities (e.g. Catchment Area, Translation, etc.) (Tanzer)
- Linda Tanzer presented on the new process that will be followed for pilot awards development.
  - A reminder will be sent to the Research Leadership Council to present their concepts for pilot awards at the January 2021 meeting.
    - Full RFAs are not required to be presented. It will be acceptable to present the pilot award's scientific concept and amount needed, as well as whether there will be a particular target for the applications (e.g. members of a specific Research Program, required consortium collaboration, etc.)
    - Concepts for standard/annual pilot awards (e.g. those routinely done by a Research Program) also need to be presented at the meeting.
  - A scientific steward will also be assigned for each pilot award at the January 2021 meeting.
  - Clarification was also provided about the details and differences of NIAs and awards from AD budgets (e.g. Bridge/Gap Funding, Direct Research Support, etc.)
    - The AD budgets will hold NIA requests, and Bridge/Gap Funding and Direct Research Support requests.
    - The Research Leadership Council is not involved in the awarding of Bridge/Gap Funding and Direct Research Support, and while these awards are similar to those made with developmental funds, they are not funded by this mechanism and so not tracked for the CCSG.
    - NIAs are funded by CCSG developmental funds and linked to a nomination process. Since there is a limited amount of CCSG funding for NIAs, Operations funding can also be allocated to support an emerging opportunity.
  - There was agreement that it would be ideal for funding to be allocated for use of technology via the AD, Shared Resources budget, which would be separate from the pilot award process.
  - There needs to be some other funding available to access other expensive services that are not available through the Shared Resources, so as to be nimble and able to deploy funding in a quick and strategic manner.
  - The January 2021 meeting will be an opportunity to discuss such expensive technologies and other times when these additional funding needs would arise.
  - Use of the Shared Resources needs to be monitored, for the data can be an indicator that some services are cost-prohibitive.
    - Trends for Shared Resources use have been positive. Still, Dr. Berger and Dr. Stasinopoulos will look more in-depth at the data and report further at the January 2021 meeting.
  - The current Small Molecule Screening Center use data should also be reviewed at the January 2021 meeting, in order to plan for ongoing access.
    - The Small Molecule Screening Center has several projects going on, which could be very useful for the Cancer Pharmacology Research Program.
    - It is crucial to keep the pipeline for these projects going.
    - The process to facilitate Princeton University members' access to this Shared Resource also needs to be sorted out. Because Princeton University faculty already has some level of access to the Small Molecule Screening Center, there may be

some legal issue that precludes them from getting the “free” access through Rutgers Cancer Institute.

3. Strategic Plan updates (Londino-Greenberg/Tanzer)

- It was noted that “cancer prevention” needs to be included in the mission statement.
- Community engagement needs to be built throughout the Strategic Plan.
- Dr. Kinney advised that the CCAB’s feedback had included:
  - o the need for better branding/brand exclusivity
  - o better articulating our distinctive nature
  - o the need to better educate the public through mass communication, and other types of strategies that reach all segments of the population, about what NCI designation means

4. Other Business

- The IQB is considering offering a crash course in collaboration with Dr. Emanuel Petricoin and Dr. Lance Liotta from George Mason University, for the end of the upcoming semester.
  - o The focus would be on proteomics.
- The U01 application between Dr. Burley, Dr. Zheng, and Dr. Ganesan received an impact score of 32, and may be resubmitted.
  - o The reviewers need more information.
  - o Dr. Burley is cautiously optimistic, but will not know the outcome until June.
  - o Funding support to Dr. Burley to help generate preliminary data would be very helpful, specifically to fund personnel to generate the prototype of the website that would be used in the research project.
  - o The suggestion was made that Dr. Burley present a potential pilot award mechanism for the CP Program to support this work.