

## **Council of Principal Investigators (CPI)**

### **Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, June 16, 2021, 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m., Microsoft Teams

Members in attendance: Charles France, Bess Frost, Lynette Daws, Randolph Glickman, Asma Khan, Daniel Lodge, Susannah Nicholson, Mark Shapiro, Susan Weintraub

Members absent: Armen Akopian, Gregory Collins, Darpan Patel, Adam Salmon

Alternates: Abby Blankenship (for Katherine Dondanville), Alex Pertsemliadis (for David Libich)

Guests: John Gebhard, Ph.D., Assistant Vice President, Technology Commercialization  
John Fritz, Associate Director, Technology Commercialization

The main goal of the meeting was for CPI members to become informed about the activities and initiatives in the Office of Technology Commercialization (OTC). The meeting was opened by Dr. Lodge who then introduced Dr. John Gebhard.

1. Dr. Gebhard started with a brief summary of his background and previous employment before coming to UTHSA. He then presented slide shows outlining movement of translational research from bench to business to bedside. The presentations illustrated the academic commercialization process from research to technology development to product development to production and marketing.
- Key items related to the process and activities of OTC covered by Dr. Gebhard included the following:
  - Accelerator - assess an invention, invest in it, incubate it, and get it into the market.
  - Tech transfer - license an innovation and execute contracts for UTHSA.
  - New venture creation ("start-up") - create new companies based on institutional IP; OTC files all paperwork and incorporates companies in the state of Texas.
  - Alliances - identify new partners to collaborate with UTHSA scientists and create sponsored research agreements (arranged through OSP).
  - Patent management - manage and file patents to protect UTHSA IP.
  - Stakeholders - taxpayers/federal government, university (primary), venture capitalists/industry (secondary).
  - Impacts - enhanced patient care, prestige/eminence, faculty/clinician recruitment and retention, education, research funding, body of knowledge.
- Important steps in the process
  - Disclose ideas to OTC
  - Meet with OTC staff
  - Assess the for suitability for IP and potential market
  - Develop a commercialization strategy
- The initial disclosure form for new ideas/innovations/inventions was shown and general guidance was provide on how to fill it out.

- There was discussion about ways to encourage more investigators to work with the OTC. It's best when the OTC becomes involved early in the process in order to facilitate identification of industrial partners.
- Dr. France commented that information needs to be disseminated to researchers about what types of ideas/innovations should be considered for disclosure.
- Dr. Shapiro expressed concern about IT security and the possibility of loss of potential IP. Dr. Lodge reported that he is on a committee that is looking into ways to protect sensitive information.
- Dr. Gebhard told the committee that an added benefit of disclosure through the OTC is inclusion in their databases that are used as resources by Pharma and biotech companies. The databases are also useful for investigators to obtain information about the IP-related activities of others.
- Dr. Gebhard briefly described assistance that is now available for preparation of NIH SBIR/STTR proposals through the office of Dr. Andrea Giuffrida, Vice President, Strategic Industry Ventures.
- New initiatives and goals
  - IP Concierge - assist faculty with development of ideas and determination of commercialization potential.
  - Marketing - increase visibility of UTHSA IP.
  - Education - resources include TechNovum-GO, OTC internships, new certificate program for biomedical product development and entrepreneurship.
  - Synergy - collaboration innovation fund designed to support high-risk/high-reward ideas and innovative concepts. Announcements about Synergy should be made in early fall 2022.

There were no other questions or comments for Dr. Gebhard and Mr. Fritz, and they left the meeting at 5:10 p.m.

## 2. CPI Business

- The minutes of the May and June CPI meetings were approved.
- Communications Officer Report
  - Dr. Bess Frost summarized a meeting with Andrea Marks (Senior Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer) and Dr. Jennifer Potter (Vice President for Research) about the new leave policy. There have been problems with employees—mainly new hires—taking too much leave at times that are not good for the investigator. A contributing factor is employees' concern about loss of "PTO" hours at the end of the fiscal year. Better communication is needed so the employees understand leave carryover.
  - The results of a recent survey about MOST (EDGE) were discussed. Responses were mostly positive, but there is concern that the survey was not sent to a large enough group since there are numerous complaints about many of the MOST support functions. Examples of issues include a lack of communication between Purchasing and departments about backordered items and problems with pre- and post-award operations. Dr. Weintraub suggested that the CPI compile a list of questions/concerns about MOST and send it to Andrea Marks in advance of her next visit to the CPI so she can be better prepared to provide answers. Dr. Weintraub agreed to assemble the list if CPI members send their items of concern to her.
  - A new NIH data sharing policy will be implemented in 2023. The HSC is behind on formulating plans for compliance. Dr. Joe Schmelz will come to a future CPI meeting to discuss the NIH policy.

- A new faculty compensation plan has been formulated with the intention of removing subjective considerations when determining salary augmentation/incentives for covering more than 50% of a faculty member's salary on a grant.
  - Women in Science Task Force - Dr. Potter has initiated a six-month task force chaired by Dr. Frost with the goal of identifying barriers for women in science.
- New business
  - CPI Elections - Dr. Lodge again asked members whose terms are expiring to consider self-nomination so they can remain on the committee.
- The CPI thanked Dr. Randy Glickman for his service to the committee as CPI co-Secretary. He will be retiring on July 1.
- The CPI meeting on July 21 will be chaired by Dr. David Libich. Yeman Collier, Vice President and Chief Information Officer, will attend to discuss issues related to IMS.
- No additional new business was introduced, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:27 p.m.