**Council of Principal Investigators (CPI)**

**Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, September 16, 2022

4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m., Microsoft Teams

Members in attendance: Armen Akopian, Jean Bopassa, Gregory Collins, Lynette Daws, Katherine Dondanville, David Libich, Daniel Lodge, Georgia McCann, Susannah Nicholson, Marzieh Salehi, Casey Straud, Tara Karns-Wright

Members Absent: Asma Khan, Darpan Patel, Susan Weintraub

Guests: Office of Sponsored Programs

Chris Green (Assistant Vice President for Research)

Valerie Hutchison (Assistant Director)

Rae Schofield (Manager, Sponsored Program Contracts)

**Discussion: Contract Management System Initiative/Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP)**

Dr. David Libich welcomed the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) team and explained that they were going to provide information about a new contract management system initiative. Chris Green noted he would like to continue to keep the CPI aware of policies that will affect researchers. Dr. Dan Lodge suggested setting up a standing meeting with OSP, and Mr. Green said that a quarterly meeting with the CPI Executive committee would be sufficient. Mr. Green noted that Rae Schofield and Valerie Hutchison will be the leads on the new contract management system initiative. The system is in its initial planning stages and OSP is asking for volunteers to provide input before roll out. Mr. Green handed the presentation over to Rae Schofield. Ms. Schofield noted that the OSP agreement team is not set up to handle the massive expansion of research at the university. With support from leadership over the past few years, Ms. Schofield noted that her team has doubled in size. The current system her team uses is an Excel spreadsheet to track agreements. However, with research expansion from approximately 100 agreements per year to 1,000 per year, there is a need for a comprehensive management system. OSP is divided into three main sections: pre-award; post award; agreements. The agreements section handles contracts and agreements that are not funded through traditional proposal submission processes, such as agreements for clinical trials, sponsored research, material transfer, confidentiality and nondisclosure. The new comprehensive system would monitor an agreement from start to finish, minimizing administrative burden and allowing efficient status checking. OSP worked with Purchasing and evaluated 10 proposals. After review and discussion with IMS, *Click* was selected. *Click* is specifically tailored for research administration and is intuitive. It will require minor alteration out of the box. The reporting functions will show how long agreements take, where they spend the most time, making it possible for OSP will be able to predict timelines. The project is expected to take approximately 22 weeks. At the initial stage, OSP is asking for volunteers from the CPI, faculty and administrative staff across all schools to provide feedback while testing. *Click* fully integrates the internal approval process. With this system, a Certificate of Proposal (COP) would no longer be needed. Dr. Lodge noted issues that arise when agreements are being held up by either the PI or the sponsor. Ms. Schofield replied that the system will allow PI’s to easily check on status and contact OSP if there appear to be problems. Dr. Lodge asked if the new system will assist with sponsor invoicing. Mr. Green noted it does not, however he is working with the Long School of Medicine to provide invoice training for MOST personnel in the next few weeks. Ms. Schofield noted that her agreement team handles the front portion of agreements such as negotiation and routing for signatures. The new system will integrate DocuSign as well as potentially communicate with eVelos (web-based system for management of clinical trials) which will make it easier to set up budgets through the Clinical Trials Office. The goal is to improve the entire process, provide easy access for tracking status and minimize the need for email communication.

Dr. Libich asked if the new system will be used for Material Transfer Agreements (MTA). Ms. Schofield replied that it will. Dr. Lodge asked about the processing time for a standing MTA with Addgene. Ms. Schofield replied that a master MTA is already set up, so they [Addgene] have been granted prior approval to all of the pending requests that meet certain conditions. If there are particular terms and conditions that are not specified in the blanket agreement, approval is contingent upon review by Addgene. Dr. Libich suggested that users with specific needs for the MTA approval and billing system contact OSP and Mr. Green to discuss their requirements. Ms. Schofield noted that Dr. Meredith Zozus has agreed to assist with the testing phase of the system rollout. Dr. Libich also suggested that OSP request input and feedback from PIs who have needed to set up MTAs in the past. Mr. Green added that anyone who is interested in helping to test the system should send an email Ms. Schofield. Other user groups that will have the need to use *Click* include the OSP Research Administrative Services (RAS) Center, Clinical Trial Office (CTO), Long School of Medicine RAS Center and IT which will allow one place to process billing among departments. Mr. Green noted that research has grown 50% since 2018 and leadership has invested resources in the last few years in order for OSP to provide better assistance. Dr. Libich thanked the OSP representatives for joining and providing valuable information.

**CPI Business**

* The August minutes will be reviewed at the next meeting.
* Dr. Libich thanked Dr. Lodge for his commitment in serving as CPI chair the last fiscal year and welcomed the new CPI members: Dr. Jean Bopassa, Dr. Gregory Collins, Dr. Georgia McCann, Dr. Marzieh Salehi, Dr. Casey Straud, and Dr. Tara Karns-Wright.
* Dr. Libich noted the need to fill several open CPI positions. Dr. Lodge noted that according to the CPI bylaws, an election is needed to select the new officer. Voting can be handled by email. Self-nominations and suggestions are welcome. The open positions are:
  + Vice Chair. The Vice Chair serves one year as Vice Chair, one year as Chair and then one year as Past Chair.
  + Secretary. Dr. Sue Weintraub has agreed to continue to serve as Secretary and requested selection of a Co-secretary to assist with review of the meeting minutes
  + Communication Officer. The Communications Officer provides summaries of CPI meeting to department chairs and center/institute directors and requests input about topics for future CPI meetings and initiatives.
* Dr. Libich explained that the CPI Executive Committee meets with the VPR (Dr. Jennifer Potter) and the COO (Andrea Marks) every two months and with President Henrich every six months. Regular meetings with Mr. Green (OSP) will be set up, per earlier discussion at the meeting.
* Dr. Libich discussed the need for CPI representation on the Research Compliance Subcommittee. In the past the representative has been the CPI Chair. However he has a time conflict due to his role as BMM discipline director. The Research Compliance Subcommittee meets monthly for an hour and is currently discussing a new policy for visiting scientists. Dr. Libich said that he will continue working on the subcommittee until the testing phase of the system rollout is complete. Dr. Libich noted that there are no basic science researchers on the committee other than the CPI representative.
* Dr. Libich asked for suggestions for agenda ideas for future CPI meetings. Possibilities that have been brought up include: a proposed increase in graduate student stipends; open access publishing arrangements; postdoctoral fellows (recruitment, career paths); leave/vacation policies; the inability of OSP to speak with IACUC for animal protocols instead of coming to the PI. As in previous years, President Henrich, Dr. Potter (VPR), and Dr. Hromas (Dean LSOM) will be invited. Dr. Salehi suggested that there should be follow-up of topics covered at previous meetings so members could be updated about current status and continue any needed discussion. Dr. Libich will work on schedules for upcoming CPI meetings.
* Dr. Libich noted that the link to the CPI website is hard to find.

No additional new business was brought up, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:23 p.m.