

**MINUTES OF THE
MARYLAND STEM CELL RESEARCH COMMISSION**
Thursday, August 18, 2022
Virtual Meeting

Members:

Mary Armanios
Rachel Brewster, Vice Chair
Margaret Conn Himelfarb
Diane Hoffmann, Chair
Debra Mathews
David Mosser
Barbara Nsiah
Linda Powers
Avram Reisner
Ira Schwartz
Curt Van Tassell

Staff:

Ben Antebi, MSCRF
Amritha Jaishankar, MSCRF
Sabrina Spinner, MSCRF

The Commission meeting was called to order at 2:03 p.m.

I. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The Commission reviewed the meeting minutes, from the July 11, 2022 Commission meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the meeting minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

II. Executive Director Report

Dr. Amritha Jaishankar presented the Executive Director's Report, which focused on the following:

A. Scientific Peer Review Meeting (FY '23 1st Funding Cycle)

The FY'23 RFAs for 4 funding programs (Launch, Validation, Commercialization, and Clinical) were released. The application deadline was July 14, 2022. The Scientific Peer Review Committee meeting was held in August 2022 and the Commission will meet in September 2022 to review the Committee's recommendations for funding.

B. Awardee Updates

We are continuously engaged with our current awardees through individual meetings and various cohorts regarding research activities, milestone progress, budgets, and project timelines. We are also working on a collaboration to provide MSCRF awardees with free access to cell lines and other shared resources to help advance their awarded research.

C. Marketing and Business Development

Dr. Jaishankar highlighted MSCRF's key initiatives, collaborations, thought leadership and outcomes over the past year. We also continue to showcase our awarded scientists through various campaigns to highlight advances in stem cell research, technologies, treatments, and cures. Please feel free to subscribe/follow us ([LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#))

D. MSCRF Accelerating Cures Initiative – Update

In 2017 the Commission launched the Accelerating Cures initiative, to foster the transition of promising technologies from the Universities to the commercial sector, where they can be developed into products and services that meet identified market needs. Since 2017, this initiative has supported 26 companies, funded 165 projects, moved over 100 awarded projects towards clinical, commercial, or validation outcomes.

III. RFA Discussion

The Commission briefly discussed the existing MSCRF RFAs. After the discussion, there was a consensus to retain the existing funding amounts and the term durations for 5 grant programs (*Clinical, Discovery, Commercialization, Launch, and Post-Doctoral Fellowship*) and to increase the budget and extend the term duration for the Validation program. A motion was made and seconded to increase the Validation budget and term from \$230k and 18 months to \$250k and 2 years, with up to \$10,000 of which shall be a separate line item to be used towards consulting fees for technical/commercialization assistance. The motion passed 9 approved 1 abstained.

IV. Other

Ms. Himelfarb gave a brief update regarding her participation on the TEDCO Legislative Committee. Ms. Himelfarb indicated that the Committee is currently working on a strategic plan to address the legislature for the upcoming fiscal yr. She will continue to serve on the Committee to represent the Commission and the Fund. Ms. Himelfarb will keep the Commission informed of their progress.

V. Statement for Closing the Meeting

A motion was made and seconded that the Commission go into closed session. The motion stated the following:

STATUTORY AUTHORITY TO CLOSE SESSION:

TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED:

The discussion will involve obtaining the legal advice of its General Counsel on the creation and purposes of a proposed manufacturing assistance program.

REASON FOR CLOSING:

The Commission believes that confidentiality is necessary to obtain advice of counsel and preserve attorney-client privilege in the discussion of the legal permissibility of one or more options for the creation and purposes of the aforementioned program.

The motion passed unanimously. The Commission went into a closed session at 3:05 p.m.

Following a discussion with counsel on the legal implications of various issues surrounding its formation and terms, a motion was made and seconded to approve the establishment of a new Manufacturing Assistance Program to be funded with a portion of the MSCRF's FY 2023 appropriations, and to issue an RFP soliciting applications for the new program.

Meeting adjourned at 4:07 p.m.