



**American Brain Foundation
Research Advisory Committee Meeting
April 25, 2017
7:45 – 8:45 a.m. ET
In Person**

In attendance: Merit Cudkowicz, MD; Robert Griggs, MD; Ralph Sacco, MD; Ira Shoulson, MD; Eugene Scharf, MD

Staff: Jane Ransom, Shelly Rucks, Suzi Sherman, Natalie Baumgartner

Excused: Carsten Bonnemann, MD; Shafali Jeste, MD; John Morris, MD; Raymond Roos, MD; Lisa DeAngelis, MD; Christy Phelps, Deputy ED AAN.

Dr. Griggs welcomed everyone and discussed the agenda for the meeting. Dr. Griggs asked that the Research Advisory Committee minutes from March 20, 2017, be reviewed.

MOTION to approve the minutes from March 20, 2017.

Approved (Unanimous).

1. **Presentations of Crowdfunding at Annual Meeting:** Dr. Griggs highlighted the crowdfunding site launch and the presentations at NINDS, the Experiential Learning Stage, and the Frontiers Plenary. He mentioned how the crowdfunding site was created, its benefits, who should apply, how to apply, and how much it costs ABF. Dr. Griggs went on to explain how crowdfunding campaigns can work and the importance of making each project publicly readable.

Discussion: The Committee could see that a lot of hard work had been put into each project and were excited to hear that projects were written for a more general audience. There was concern that the website, overall, may not be catering to the donor, which might cost ABF donations. There was a desire to make the website more user-friendly.

The Committee acknowledged that "\$24,000,000 Raised" (on the website) is an impressive number, but that it was unclear that the sum had been raised over the lifetime of ABF. They also did not understand why there was only a 90-day window for crowdfunding.

Ms. Ransom said that 90 days is the standard in the world of crowdfunding campaigns. Putting a cap on the campaign creates a sense of urgency for donors. But, she acknowledged that the ABF is learning as it progresses and is open to changing the length of campaigns. Ms. Ransom also mentioned that ABF's Digital Strategist would support marketing efforts for each project.

The Committee encouraged the ABF to present or create an early success on the crowdfunding site to prove that it is a viable donations platform. The Committee also

seemed to agree that they needed access to analytics to know where donations were coming from (i.e. social networks, organizations, individuals).

2. **Behind-the-Scenes Look at Crowdfunding Site:** Ms. Sherman highlighted the features of the new website and crowdfunding site. She featured a behind-the-scenes look at how the applications come in and how the review process is handled.
3. **Feedback on Crowdfunding Site and Next Steps:** Ms. Ransom asked the Committee for input from the Committee on establishing project milestones, rotation of projects equally on home page vs. highlighting crowd-pleasing projects, and review of instructions for application process.

The Committee agreed that application instructions will require a “wait and see” approach with awareness for applicant feedback. The Committee also felt it important to have one quick win, which would require the prioritization of an individual project over others to call attention to successes. Milestones need to be considered, but the Committee seemed to prefer a two-stage payment process to project holders to ensure oversight.

The Committee felt that it was important to look at these projects as “pilot projects” that might need revisions. However, it is important to make clear to researchers that their money is coming from people who are investing in their project and in their success.

4. **Crowdfunding & Major Donor Fundraising:** Ms. Rucks is open to questions concerning all current and future fundraising efforts.
5. **Adjourn** at 8:47 a.m. ET.