



**American Brain Foundation
Research Advisory Committee Meeting
December 18, 2017
11:00 a.m. ET/ 10:00 a.m. CT/ 9:00 a.m. MT/ 8:00 a.m. PT
Conference Call**

Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Robert Griggs, MD, Chair; Carsten Bonnemann, MD; John Morris, MD; Raymond Roos, MD; Ralph Sacco, MD; Eugene Scharf, MD; Ira Shoulson, MD

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

Excused: Merit Cudkowicz, MD; Shafali Jeste, MD; Natalia Rost, MD; Christy Phelps, Deputy ED AANI

1. **Crowdfunding:** Dr. Scharf provided a written summary of the crowdfunding project and provided feedback from the researchers about their experiences. He noted that there have not been relationships between the researchers and donors, and there might be opportunities to create more connection.

Many of the researchers noticed that interest in the projects is strong when researchers present their projects to their networks, but after a short time, interest dies out. This is to be expected, but there will be campaigns around disease awareness in 2018, which will increase interest in individual projects.

The Foundation's crowdfunding campaigns have been slow to start because there weren't the right marketing people in place. The new marketing specialist will be at the next board meeting to explain the marketing strategy.

2. **Weizmann Institute Crowdfunding Application:** Dr. Roos highlighted the Weizmann Institute application, explaining his role in formatting the application and ensuring that it would be eligible to raise funds research equipment.

The application included information about how they honor donors, which provides insights into how the Foundation might be interested in recognizing donors in the future. The researcher is the head of immunology at the Weizmann Institute, and seems to be a star. His project might spark enthusiasm amongst other Weizmann researchers.

The primary donor is a Board member, who wanted to fund the Weizmann Institute. He approached the Weizmann and encouraged them to work with the Foundation. He also recognized an opportunity in utilizing the Crowdfunding site and the importance of having an "early win."

Developing the donor base, marketing, and the general operations need to be the primary focus of the strategy around the crowdfunding site. Developing crowdfunding campaigns is a primary focus of the marketing specialist. The Committee expressed concern that the marketing campaign was supposed to be launched during the summer, and it does not seem like there is any movement. In fact, the plan was to be developed by Labor Day, and was delivered on time. The next step was to put the right personnel in place. New personnel are preparing now to launch marketing for the crowdfunding platform.

The Committee requested that the dates of projects on the crowdfunding site be reset, but that researchers also need to know that they will have to be active participants in raising money for their projects. This was unclear during the beta testing.

The Committee also wanted the Foundation to educate the public about neurology and its advances. The AAN has been very supportive, especially relating to the new AAN website. The Committee felt that the Foundation needs to have a strong presence at the Brain Health Fair, which is in conjunction with Annual Meeting 2018. It might be useful to have a young investigator there to give a face to the crowdfunding site. Dr. Scharf was volunteered to represent his project.

3. **Athlete Brain Health Fund:** The Foundation is signing an agreement with the International Sponsors Council (ISC) to create an athlete brain health fund. They will fund at least one CRTS per year, but they envision an endowed fund. They will not focus solely on concussion, but they will focus on other brain diseases relating to athlete health.

The Research Advisory Committee might have a role in overseeing and scientifically vetting special projects proposed by this endowed fund as they come up. CRTS's will continue to be vetted by the AAN – like all the others.

4. **X-Prize:** Dr. Morris was to give an update on the progress of the X-Prize but was lost during a short break during the phone call.
5. **Science Committee Meeting:** Dr. Griggs is concerned that the Foundation does not receive appropriate recognition of their contribution to CRTS's or CRTF's. He will be introducing this topic to the Science Committee in Orlando.

Dr. Sacco acknowledged that the Foundation should be given full credit for their contributions. On the new AAN website, the Foundation has been given a place to redirect visitors to the Foundation on all the research pages. Everything needs to be co-branded to ensure that all parties get full credit. The AAN is willing to help improve that.

6. **Annual Meeting Opportunities:** The Foundation has been invited to speak at the Research Symposium, which is where previous and current CRTS recipients learn about new opportunities to get additional funding. The Foundation is planning on talking about the new crowdfunding site – the opportunity, how to apply, and marketing strategy – to get people excited.

The Foundation is also being given several spaces on the experiential learning stage. This is an opportunity to talk more about CRTS applications and the crowdfunding site. Ms. Sherman will send Dr. Griggs all the dates and times of these events, and Dr. Griggs will suggest volunteers.

Adjourn 9:48 a.m. (Central).

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