



FY 2025 Indiana Spinal Cord and Brain Injury Research Fund - Annual Fiscal Report



Indiana Spinal Cord and Brain Injury Research Fund (ISCBIRF)

Annual Report for State Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 - July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

The ISCBIRF was created by the 2007 Indiana General Assembly under [Indiana Code \(IC\) 16-41-42.2](#). Recommendations for grant funding are made by the Spinal Cord and Brain Injury Research Board (Board) to the Indiana Department of Health (IDOH). Board members are appointed by the governor, Indiana University, Purdue University, Brain Injury Association of Indiana, National Spinal Cord Injury Association and Rehabilitation Hospital of Indiana. This report is in compliance with [IC 16-41-42.2-5](#). The report was compiled by the IDOH Division of Trauma and Injury Prevention.

The ISCBIRF was established to support research on spinal cord and brain injuries. The fund, administered by the state department, is financed through appropriations, donations, fees, and grants. The Board evaluates policy matters, reviews research applications, awards grants for research and healthcare clinics, monitors project efficacy, establishes policies, and oversees fund expenditures. This report has been created to provide an update on funding to the Governor and the Indiana General Assembly.

The state appropriates revenue to this fund that is utilized for operational costs by the Board to carry out its statutory duties. The table below summarizes actual fund expenditures for FY25:

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| Grant funding | \$ 920,604 |
| Peer review contract (CTSI) | \$ 48,184 |
| IDOH staff support | \$ 456,061 |
| Operating costs (non-personnel) | \$168,525 |
| Total | \$ 1,593,374 |

Revenues collected during the year amounted to \$1,862,758. The fund ended the fiscal year with a cash balance of \$269,384. The fund's cumulative available cash balance is \$1,464,746.

The Board met during the following FY2025 dates:

- August 6, 2024
- August 26, 2024
- March 12, 2025

During those meetings, the Board conducted official business including:

- Preparation for the release of the FY26 and FY27 biennial request for application process
- Reviewing FY24 and FY25 research and activity-based therapy project progress reports, including extensions/revisions
- Board elections
- Bylaws review and update
- Statewide conference planning

The Board issued the research request for proposals in September 2024 with a deadline of Dec. 9, 2024. Twenty-four proposals were received, and all were peer reviewed. Howard Zelaznik attended the peer review committee meeting as Board liaison. The peer reviewers ranked the proposals with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) scoring system and shared applications with the Board for funding consideration, via a tiered approach that accommodated funding based on financial availability. The applications were reviewed by the Board, with guidance from the peer review comments. Eleven were selected for funding. The total commitment for the proposals was valued at \$976,370.50 for FY2026.

The Board issued the activity-based therapy request for proposals September 2024 with a deadline of Nov. 1, 2024. Two proposals were received and were peer reviewed. Michael Freeman, as Board liaison, attended the peer review committee meeting. Reviewers ranked the proposals with the NIH scoring system and shared applications with the Board for funding consideration, via a tiered approach that accommodated funding based on financial availability. Based on the peer reviewers' comments, the Board agreed to fund both, one spinal cord injury (SCI) application and one traumatic brain injury (TBI) application at the full amount requested. The total commitment for the proposals was valued at \$145,253 for FY2026.

The list of FY25 research awards is included in Appendix I. The list of FY25 activity-based therapy awards is included in Appendix II.

Additional highlights from current and past awards include the following:

- Lingxiao Deng and IU School of Medicine recognized for research in Spinal Cord Injury (2024): <https://medicine.iu.edu/blogs/neuroscience/spinal-cord-injury-survivor-story>
- NeuroHope recognized for their work in paralysis and activity-based therapy (2024): https://www.insideindianabusiness.com/articles/former-indycar-driver-sam-schmidt-opening-facility-to-help-people-with-paralysis?utm_source=inside-edge-morning-briefing&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_campaign=2024-10-01
- Nick Port recognized for TBI/concussion research (2022): https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/iu-leads-concussion-research-safety-student-athletes-pamela-whitten?trk=public_post

- Xiaomong Jin recognized for TBI research and non-invasive brain simulation technique (2021): <https://medicine.iu.edu/news/2021/06/iu-researchers-pioneering-noninvasive-technique-for-neurological-conditions>
- Brian Dixon recognized for work on TBI registry (2021): <https://www.regenstrief.org/article/tbi-patients-care-utilization-study/>
- Keisuke Kawata recognized for TBI/concussion research (2021): <https://www.insideindianabusiness.com/articles/dollar3m-iu-study-tackles-young-football-players-head-impacts>

Board Membership:

The Board successfully maintained full representation during FY2025. A complete list of Board members is provided in Appendix III.

Appendix I

FY2024- FY2025 Indiana Spinal Cord and Brain Injury Grant Recipients

Basic Research

- Amol Yadov, Indiana University, \$160,000
 - A high-density spinal cord dorsal column stimulation-based sensory neuroprosthetic
- Xiaoming Jin, Indiana University, \$160,000
 - Neuroprotection followed by neuroactivation for the prevention of posttraumatic epilepsy
- Chandler Walker, Indiana University, \$159,785
 - A novel target for neuroprotection and regeneration following traumatic spinal cord injury
- Cody Smith, University of Notre Dame, \$160,000
 - Identification of glial targets that enhance regeneration after traumatic injuries
- Maria Dadarlat, Purdue University, \$160,000
 - Effects of traumatic brain injury on cortical physiology and visual perception
- Lingxiao Deng, Indiana University, \$160,000
 - Changes in inflammatory biomarkers from locomotor exercise-induced sex-based recovery after contusive spinal cord injury
- Fletcher White, Indiana University, \$160,000
 - Therapeutic Strategies for Posttraumatic Pain Due to Mild Traumatic Brain Injury
- Naikui Liu, Indiana University, \$160,000
 - Carnitine palmitoyltransferase 1 as a novel target for therapeutic intervention after spinal cord injury

Appendix II

FY2024 - FY2025 Activity-Based Therapy Grant Recipients

- Elliott Cohee, NeuroHope, \$74,893.50
 - Extended Care Programs and Hospital Readmission for SCI
- Christina Baumgartner, Rehabilitation Hospital of Indiana, \$74,763
 - Activity-Based Therapy for Individuals with Spinal Cord Injury
- Christina Baumgartner, Rehabilitation Hospital of Indiana, \$149,526
 - Activity-Based Therapy for Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury

Appendix III

Indiana Spinal Cord and Brain Injury Fund Board Members

1. **Physician/Neurosurgeon***
Dr. Hank Feuer (Board chairman)
2. **Spinal Cord/Head Injury Person or Family Member***
Kira Hudson, MBA
Clinical Data Analyst, Ascension St. Vincent Indianapolis Hospital
3. **Physiatrist, Board Certified APMR***
Dr. Whitney Pratt, MD PhD
Assistant Clinical Professor, Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
Indiana University School of Medicine
4. **Technical Life Sciences Industry***
Wade Lange, MS
Vice President, Lange Advisors
5. **Owner or operator of a facility that provides long term activity-based therapy services***
Michael Freeman
Director, Pat's Pals Therapy Ranch, Inc.
6. **Physical Therapist***
Ross Nelson, PT, DPT, CSRS, CBIS
Board Certified Clinical Specialist in Neurologic Physical Therapy
Parkview Hospital Randallia – Parkview Rehabilitation Center
7. **Indiana University**
Bruce Lamb, PhD
Executive Director, Stark Neuroscience Research Institute
Indiana University School of Medicine
8. **Purdue University**
Howard Zelaznik, PhD
Associate Vice President for Research
9. **National Spinal Cord Injury Association**
Janeen Earwood
Director of Rehabilitation, American Senior Communities
10. **Rehabilitation Hospital of Indiana**
Dr. Sheryl Katta-Charles, MD
Medical Director, Brain Injury Rehabilitation Services, Rehabilitation Hospital of Indiana
11. **American Brain Injury Association/Brain Injury Assoc. of Indiana**
Sachin Mehta, MD
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Franciscan Health

* Designates governor-appointed position