

# Indiana Spinal Cord & Brain Injury Research Fund Board

## Meeting Agenda

March 12, 2025 5:00 pm

Neurosciences NB Room 100 (next to Goodman Hall)

**Parking Instructions:** Park in the Neuroscience Center parking garage at 362 W 15th St. After parking, enter the IU Health Neuroscience Center from the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the garage. Walk towards the east end of the building, pass the information desk, pass Sonny's Bistro, and enter the Neurosciences Research Building (NB) near the eating area just outside of Sonny's. Upon entering NB, the conference room is on your right.

### Zoom Information

Join from computer or mobile:

<https://iu.zoom.us/j/86149615449>

Meeting ID: 861 4961 5449

Join by Telephone

One tap mobile (US): +13126266799,86149615449# or +16465588656,86149615449#

## I. Attendees

### Board Members

1. Henry Feuer - physically present
2. Janeen Earwood - excused
3. Michael Freeman – virtually present
4. Kira Hudson – not present
5. Sheryl Katta-Charles – virtually present
6. Bruce Lamb – virtually present
7. Wade Lange - physically present
8. Sachin Mehta – virtually present
9. Ross Nelson - excused
10. Whitney Pratt – physically present
11. Howard Zelaznik – physically present

### Supporting Staff:

1. Brian Busching, IDoH - physically present
2. Julie Driscoll, Indiana CTSI – physically present

### Guests

Nicholas Port, ISCBIR Review Chair – virtually present

Brenna McDonald, ISCBIR Review Chair – virtually present

## II. Agenda Topics

1. Approval of August 2024 Minutes – *All* [Attachment A]
  - Dr. Feuer, Board Chair motioned the minutes be approved as written and Mr. Lange seconded. Members approved unanimously.
2. Financial Update – *IDOH, Brian Busching*
  - IDOH reviewed the fund expenditures for FY24 from page 2 of the ISCBIR Annual Report. FY24 report can be found here - <https://www.in.gov/health/trauma-system/spinal-cord-and-brain-injury-fund-research-grant-program/>.

Total expenditures: \$ 1,315,063

Revenues: \$1,803,297.

FY end cash balance: \$488,234.

Cumulative available cash balance: \$839,395.

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The Board theoretically could award up to \$1.6m per year for the next two years of grant research and ABT funding (FY26-FY27):

Research Grants: \$1.2M  
ABT: \$400K

- FY25 legislative session is considering HB 1001 that would cap the annual expenditures at \$1.7M. The fund generally produces revenue equating to \$1.8M. If HB 1001 is approved, it is unclear where revenue above \$1.7M would be retained.
- The Board believes any revenue above \$1.7M should remain accessible to foster better proposal submissions via greater funding amounts.
- Actions below were motioned by Dr. Feuer, seconded by Dr. Pratt and unanimously approved.

### ACTIONS:

- IDOH to check with Legislative Affairs to learn how to share concerns.
  - Board members discussed submitting letters as citizens.
  - Mr. Lange plans to send CTSI a draft letter the week of March 25. CTSI will help coordinate edits and disseminate.
3. ISCBIR Funding Discussion – *Board Chair, Hank Feuer* [Attachments B & C]
- Introduction of new Review Chairs *Nicholas Port & Brenna McDonald*
  - Discussion on review process, findings, and funding recommendations
  - Funding determination
- Review chairs noted that there was good discussion during the review session and scores centered around the strongest applications. Support of both Tier 1 and Tier 2 applications provides a good mix of basic and clinical applications. Review Chairs noted that all applications, however, included at least one score in the “good” if not “excellent” range and were strong proposals. Some scores reflected the need for grantsmanship or revised approaches according to the reviewers but were considered strong proposals.
  - Motion for approval initiated by Dr. Pratt and seconded by Dr. Zelaznik. Motion approved unanimously to fund 16 applications.

**ACTION:** Indiana CTSI will send out funding announcements

4. ABT Funding Discussion – *Board Chair, Hank Feuer & Board Member, Mike Freeman* [Attachments D & E]
- Discussion on review process, findings, and funding recommendations
  - Funding determination
- Mr. Freeman, as ABT liaison, indicated that there was improvement in the applications this round although there were some grantsmanship errors and some ‘cut and paste’ actions from one application to another. Reviewers still felt that they were meritorious and worth funding.
  - Funding motion was made by Mr. Lange and seconded by Mr. Freeman. Motion passed to fund 2 ABT applications (1 TBI, 1 SCI) with one opposing vote from Dr. Zelaznik.

**ACTION:** Indiana CTSI will send out funding announcements

- Determine process for revising ABT review document
- Board Members discussed how to promote ABT funding opportunity more broadly and how to make the process more accessible for organizations that do not have personnel (such as a grant writer) to submit quality applications. Also discussed opportunities for promotion (such as conferences, group meetings) or sharing with other organizations (such as Brain Injury Association of Indiana) to highlight the benefits of ABT funding for smaller

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organizations providing these services.

- The Board noted that the need to employ a physical therapist precludes some smaller organizations.
- Board suggested ABT Subcommittee begin working on:
  - Revised review process including any review sheets needed
  - Better definition of ABT as it pertains to this mechanism
  - Recommendations for identifying and approaching appropriate organizations
  - Dr. Sachin, Mr. Lange and Mr. Freeman will meet as the revised ABT Subcommittee

**ACTION:** Indiana CTSI will connect the Board Members and assist in scheduling a meeting.

## 5. General Updates – *IDOH, Brian Busching* [Attachment F]

- Conference planning

**ACTION:** IDOH will plan to schedule meeting with the Conference Committee and add BIAI expertise from Wendy Waldman.

- Legal
  - IDOH reported that should an ISCBIR Board Member serve on the Board of another institution that is under consideration for funding, they would need to recuse themselves from voting on any motions that included that institution.
- Bylaws:
  - Request to change attendance language so that physical attendance is determined by the number of active members
- IDOH reported that a vacancy on the Board does not change the attendance requirements. For the 11 Member Board, the requirement is six present for official action, four of them must be physically present.
- Note - “no more than 50% of funds for trauma development”
- IDOH reported that any update to this language would require a change in the Statute.
- Board Chair Nominees
  - Board Members nominated Dr. Feuer as chair for calendar year 2026 and Dr. Feuer accepted the nomination
  - Nominations can also be sent electronically to IDOH until the October meeting.
- Attendance
  - IDOH noted that the Bylaws require attendance to at least one of the two meetings required per year and will continue to monitor attendance.

## 6. Next Meeting - *All*

- Fall meeting to be confirmed by IDOH and Board Chair.
- Tentative Agenda:
  - Chair votes
  - Update on ABT Subcommittee
    - Recommendations to better define ABT in Statute
  - Discussion on Funding promotion
    - Conference, Group meetings, Organizations

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- Demonstrate value of funding opportunities

### 7. Final Business - *All*

- All (10) November progress reports were submitted and approved
- Board Chair provided feedback on the progress reports, noting that projects were progressing and topics were significant.