

**Board of Scientific Advisors (BSA)
caBIG® Oversight ad hoc Subcommittee Teleconference Meeting**

National Cancer Institute, 8th Floor
September 26, 2011
3:00 p.m. – 4:35 p.m.

SUMMARY

Participants:

Dr. Daniel Masys, Chair
Dr. Brian D. Athey
Dr. Andrea Califano
Dr. Robert Comis
Mr. Paul Fearn
Dr. Joe Gray
Dr. Rebecca Kush
Dr. Lincoln Stein

Other Participants

Mr. Lawrence Brem (SAIC-Frederick)
Dr. Michael Becich (University of Pittsburgh)
Ms. Janie Hofacker (AACI)
Mr. Bron Kisler (CDISC)
Ms. Linda Schmandt (University of Pittsburgh)

NCI Staff Participants:

Dr. Paulette Gray
Mr. John Czajkowski
Dr. Ken Buetow
Ms. Claire Harris
Ms. Andrea Collins
Ms. Natasha Copeland

Review of Teleconference Activities—Dr. Daniel Masys

Dr. Daniel Masys asked the attendees to address the following topics during the conference call: populate the three working groups, reach agreement on documentary vehicles for communicating between NCI program staff and the caBIG® subcommittee, reach agreement on evaluation criteria for the project reviews, and establish a timeline for line-by-line project reviews.

Review of August 2011 caBIG® Subcommittee Meeting Summary—Dr. Daniel Masys

Dr. Masys asked for comments on the summary of the August 25, 2011, caBIG® subcommittee meeting. Dr. Robert Comis moved that the minutes be approved as submitted. Dr. Joe Gray seconded the motion. The summary was accepted as submitted unanimously without discussion.

Dr. Paulette Gray noted that committee approval was needed for the July 25, 2011, summary as well. Dr. Brian Athey moved that those minutes be approved as submitted. Dr. Joe Gray seconded the motion. The summary again was accepted unanimously as submitted. Dr. Masys asked Dr. Paulette Gray to send him final copies of both summaries for signature.

Committee Documents and Procedures—Dr. Daniel Masys

Spreadsheet

Dr. Masys noted that the subcommittee is working to develop two types of documents: (1) an Excel spreadsheet that will summarize ongoing and planned caBIG[®] projects and (2) a summary document for each project included on the spreadsheet. He asked subcommittee members to comment on the sample spreadsheet pages that were circulated prior to the call. Dr. Athey said that it would be helpful to include the magnitude of funding for the projects. Dr. Paulette Gray indicated that including the information would not be a problem if the information is available to program staff; Mr. John Czajkowski confirmed that the information is available. Dr. Masys said that a funding item would be added to the spreadsheet. Dr. Andrea Califano requested that project start dates also be included on the spreadsheet, and Dr. Masys agreed to add them.

Dr. Joe Gray asked how the spreadsheet should be used. Dr. Masys replied that each project (row) listed would be assigned for review by one of the three work groups. The spreadsheet is intended to provide an “at-a-glance” summary of each project for use by the workgroups to enable them to assess each project. Dr. Andrea Califano stated that it also would be valuable to hear Dr. Ken Buetow’s recommendations regarding the projects and an assessment of projects that may be “at risk.” Dr. Joe Gray added that it also would be useful to have information on the value of the projects to their user communities, perhaps including letters of support. Dr. Athey suggested that Dr. Buetow provide a high-level summary of certain categories of projects to enable the subcommittee to function more efficiently. Dr. Buetow agreed to provide project briefings during work group calls and noted the need for flexibility in attendance on the calls because some projects would be of interest to more than one work group. Dr. Joe Gray noted that it also would be useful during these briefings for Dr. Buetow to include an assessment of project urgency. Dr. Califano and Dr. Joe Gray also requested that Dr. Buetow include in his briefings information about potential new projects and new directions. Dr. Paulette Gray suggested that this might best be accomplished at the November 6, 2011, face-to-face meeting, and Dr. Masys agreed to add this high-level briefing to the agenda for the November meeting, in addition to the briefings to take place during the work group calls. Dr. Masys noted that Dr. Buetow also would be available during the calls to answer questions from the work groups.

In describing the process model for the work groups, Dr. Masys noted that each work group is expected to examine each project in its domain. Projects needing special attention may be brought to the full subcommittee for further consideration. Dr. Paulette Gray added that work groups meet in closed sessions, but any final decisions regarding projects must be brought before the full subcommittee. Minutes of the subcommittee meetings will be made public; the proceedings of the work groups will remain confidential. Dr. Masys asked NCI staff to begin populating the spreadsheet with information as soon as possible so that the work group calls can begin.

Work Group Assignments

Dr. Masys noted that the draft standard operating procedures (SOPs) list the three work groups as the (1) bioinformatics and basic cancer research work group, (2) clinical and translational informatics work group, and (3) informatics infrastructure work group. He added that subcommittee members were free to sign up for one, two, or three work groups. For the work to be accomplished, at least some subcommittee members will need to sign up for more than one group. Dr. Paulette Gray added that group members are free to add experts from the community as *ad hoc* work group members. Dr. Masys said that this will be added to the SOPs.

Subcommittee members indicated their interest in serving on the work groups as follows:

Name	Bioinformatics and Basic Cancer Research	Clinical and Translational Informatics	Informatics Infrastructure
Dr. Masys	•	•	•
Dr. Athey	•		•
Dr. Califano	•	•	
Dr. Comis	•	•	
Mr. Fearn		•	•
Dr. Getz	•		•
Dr. Joe Gray	•	•	
Dr. Kush		•	•
Dr. Stein		•	•
Dr. Vogel			•
Dr. Wang	•		

Evaluation Criteria

Dr. Masys called members’ attention to the nine elements of the project evaluation criteria that were listed on pages 2 and 3 of the SOPs and asked for comments. He noted that the SOPs and these criteria are considered to be “a work in progress” in that they may need to be adjusted as the work groups become operational. At this juncture, the criteria just need to be good enough for the groups to get started. Drs. Athey and Califano suggested adding a focus on the customer and the impact of the projects in the three work group areas. Dr. Athey agreed to draft language to incorporate this idea. Dr. Masys noted that item #7 touched on this topic and should be divided into two items, for a total of 10 evaluation criteria. He asked subcommittee members to send him any modifications they may have for the text of these criteria. Copies of these suggestions should be sent to Dr. Paulette Gray and Mr. Czajkowski as well.

Top-Level Table Summary

Dr. Masys asked participants to suggest additional items to be included in the top-level table summary that had been circulated prior to the call. Current-year obligation, prior funds spent, and future funding obligations were suggested as items to be included. Mr. Czajkowski said that NCI staff would incorporate this information.

Dr. Paulette Gray suggested that the column sizes on the top-level table summary could be increased or decreased to accommodate additional information, and noted that work groups will want to maintain a separate listing to track the results of their deliberations about individual projects. She also suggested that a list of the projects assigned to each work group be developed to aid in assessing the relative workloads of the groups. Dr. Masys noted that the information developed by each work group should be made available to members of other work groups as well. He added that the scoring document would be a subcommittee output versus input; these two types of documents are subject to different procedures and should be thought of separately. Dr. Paulette Gray noted that there will be no formal written summaries of work group discussions. Dr. Masys added that the work groups likely will have an internal document that is similar to the spreadsheet for their use during deliberations.

Dr. Comis suggested that an impact factor be included. Dr. Masys added that this could be done in a manner similar to the impact score assigned by National Institutes of Health study sections. After some

discussion, Dr. Masys suggested that the groups assign impact scores and then see how they function with regard to distribution. He further suggested that the output of the work group's reviews be impact scores assigned by each work group member. These then would need to be incorporated at the subcommittee level, perhaps, as suggested by Mr. Czajkowski, with additional discussion in controversial cases only. Dr. Masys will incorporate these suggestions into the draft SOPs.

Next Steps—Dr. Daniel Masys

Dr. Masys planned to circulate the revised SOPs to subcommittee members and asked NCI staff to prepare and circulate the revised spreadsheet documents and assist in arranging work group calls. He suggested the goal of having work group members review their assigned projects by the November 6 meeting. Dr. Paulette Gray stated that NCI staff should be contacted when the work groups are ready to begin and when Dr. Buetow and staff are ready to share the spreadsheet information. NCI committee management staff then will coordinate the work group calls. Dr. Comis suggested that the work groups take adequate time for their deliberations and not be constrained by the idea of having to complete the project reviews by the November BSA meeting. Dr. Masys and others agreed, and Dr. Paulette Gray indicated that she did not think that the BSA would expect conclusions at its November meeting. Mr. Czajkowski noted some items may require attention before November because of pending deadlines and that NCI staff will need adequate time to assemble letters of support and the like when requested. Dr. Athey asked Dr. Buetow to highlight projects that may need special attention as early in the process as possible. Dr. Masys suggested that the urgency of a pending deadline determine the order in which work groups review projects and emphasized the need for flexibility in the review process, especially during the early stages.

Communication Procedures—Dr. Paulette Gray

Dr. Masys asked Dr. Paulette Gray to discuss procedures to be followed when committee members receive anonymous e-mails and other correspondence/requests from the public at large. Dr. Paulette Gray reminded committee members that they are considered Special Government Employees (SGEs) when conducting committee business. Committee members should not respond to anonymous e-mails, telephone calls, or other correspondence. Instead, committee members should forward such correspondence to Dr. Paulette Gray and Mr. Czajkowski, the Designated Federal Officers (DFOs). As DFOs, they will review the correspondence and determine if a response is needed. Often, no response is needed to an anonymous contact. With regard to non-anonymous correspondence, the DFOs will determine the appropriate party to respond. Dr. Masys, as the chair of the subcommittee, should be copied when correspondence is forwarded to the DFOs. In addition, should subcommittee members be asked to make a presentation that relates to the business of the subcommittee (even after the work of the subcommittee has concluded), they should forward the request to Dr. Masys, who will discuss the request with the DFOs and provide an answer to the subcommittee member. Whenever a subcommittee member discusses the work of the subcommittee in any way, he or she becomes an SGE and should respond appropriately.

NCI Programs

Dr. Paulette Gray asked if there would be a conference call prior to the November 6 face-to-face meeting. The subcommittee members agreed to hold such a call near the end of October. NCI staff will arrange for the call.

Action Items

- Dr. Paulette Gray will send Dr. Masys final copies of the July 25, 2011, and August 25, 2011, caBIG® subcommittee meeting summaries for his signature.
- Mr. Czajkowski will add project funding information to the top-level table summary.
- Dr. Buetow and his staff will add information on project funding levels and project start dates to the caBIG® tracking table.
- Dr. Buetow and his staff will populate the caBIG® tracking table with information as soon as possible and circulate it to the work groups so that they can begin to hold their teleconferences.
- Dr. Buetow will present a high-level briefing to the November 6 face-to-face meeting to facilitate decision-making by the Work Groups and ensures that the Subcommittee receives the slides prior to the meeting.
- Dr. Masys will work with Dr. Paulette Gray and Mr. Czajkowski to amend the SOPs regarding project impact scores arrived at by the work groups.
- Dr. Masys will add a section to the SOPs indicating that work group members can appoint members of the community as *ad hoc* work group members.
- Dr. Athey will draft language to revise the project evaluation criteria to include a focus on the customer and impact of the projects.
- Subcommittee members should send suggestions for modifying the text of the project evaluation criteria to Dr. Masys, with copies to Dr. Paulette Gray and Mr. Czajkowski.
- CMO staff will coordinate a date for a Subcommittee teleconference to occur approximately 1 month from the September 26th teleconference to prepare for the November 6 face-to-face meeting.

Adjournment – Dr. Daniel R. Masys

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m. on Monday, 26 September 2011.