

Research Review Committee Meeting**31 March 1998****at Royal College of Pathologists, London****Those present:**

P van Aken (CLB, Amsterdam, Chair)
D J Anstee (Bristol, Secretary)
H Klein (NIH, Bethesda MD)
P Greenaway (DoH)
M Contreras (Colindale)
J-P Allain (Cambridge)
A Robinson (Observer)

PvA described changes in the structure and funding of NBS R&D prior to the Board's request for him to form and chair the committee. The Terms of Reference of the Research Review Committee (RRC) were to meet once a year to review the Business Plan of all centres carrying out R&D and to decide on priorities for funding peer-reviewed project grant applications.

R&D Business Plans of 1998/99 were presented for the Bristol Centre and IBGRL (DA), for the London and South East Zone (MC) and the Division of Transfusion Medicine Cambridge (J-PA). DA, MC and J-PA left the meeting after the presentations and the plans were discussed *in camera* by the remaining committee members. Their main recommendation was that, in future, business plans should be presented in a standard format with clear organisational structures. HK offered to provide copies of forms used for NIH Programme Grants for use as a model of how business plans should be produced.

Twenty project grants submitted for approval were considered in conjunction with the comments of referees and the applicants' replies to referees' comments. DA, MC and J-PA left the meeting as appropriate when grant applications from Bristol, Colindale or Cambridge were discussed.

A list was tabled naming the referees used for project grants but without indicating which application they reviewed. Eight applications were selected as suitable for funding. The eight applications were ranked in order of priority and allocation of funds delegated to DA.

Policy for selecting referees was discussed. PG suggested that a "college of referees" be created and that the names be made known to applicants who could nominate one referee.

It was agreed that the NBS R&D Strategy should be a standing item on the agenda so that recommendations for revision could be made if appropriate.

R&D funding procedures were discussed. PG outlined the Terms of Reference of the NBA Funding Steering Committee which is presently considering the mechanism for providing DoH funds for NBS R&D.

Date of next meeting: Monday, February 1st 1999 when the main focus will be on business plans submitted for 1999/2000.

Paper 1 - Commissioned Research

At the present time there are research monies for commissioned research related to leucodepletion and nucleic acid testing (NAT).

Projects related to leucodepletion have been sought and funded through the CJD Research Strategy Committee (Table attached). Projects 98/1 and 98/2R were funded from NBA leucodepletion funds. Project 98/3 by DoH (Dr Nick Wingfield) and Project 98/4 funded jointly by NBA Leucodepletion Funds and DoH). All the projects were peer reviewed either through RRC or DoH before monies were allocated.

Commissioned Research Projects related to NAT are sought and funded through the NAT Steering Group. One project proposal entitled "Evaluations of a multiplex system to screen HCV and HIVRNA in individual donations from first time donors" (Allain J-P, Barbara J, Bonn J-P, Mimms L, Fang C) is presently under review.

D J Anstee