

Breast Cancer Research Council Meeting Minutes
March 21, 2025 Council Meeting
UCOP Office | 1111 Franklin St. Lobby 1 Conference Room | Oakland

Members Present: Argelia Flores, Bryan Goldner, Hisashi Tanaka, Lori Petitti, Barbara Perry, Lesley Taylor, Erika Bell, Sharon Pitteri, Svasti Haricharan, Salma Shariff-Marco, Thomas Jascur

Members Absent: Wendy Shurelds, Maura Dickler, Christopher Clinton Conway, Svetlana Popova

Guests: Kathleen Erwin, Andrea Van Bebber (supplement presenter), EJ Ko (supplement presenter)

Staff: Katherine McKenzie, Lisa Minniefield, Senaida Poole, Sharima Rasanayagam

- I. Call to Order:** Erika called the council meeting to order at 9:04 am and initiated the ice breaker question.
- II. Approval of Minutes:** The council reviewed the minutes from the December meeting.

MOTION: Bryan moved (Thomas seconded) that the council approve the December minutes. The motion passed with one abstention.
- III. Directors' Report:** Kathleen Erwin provided an update on the impact and future of the current federal and state affairs including the political climate, program funding, staffing, and partnerships. Sharima also presented an update to the council on the Climate Action and Firefighter Cancer Prevention Initiatives.
- IV. Policy/PRAG Update:** Sharima briefly gave an overview of the committee. Erika went on to present the Policy RFQ: *Regulation of Pesticides Linked to Breast Cancer*. She provided an overview including the project's goals, funding and timeline. The group discussed the RFQ and suggested some revisions. Sharima will amend the RFQ based on the council's feedback including adding scientific references and clarifying objectives. The PRAG requested the council approve the RFQ for release once any edits have been made.

MOTION: Salma moved (Sharon seconded) that the council approve the RFQ with revisions. The motion passed with one abstention.
- V. Finance Committee Report:** Sharima summarized the tobacco tax and tax check-off revenue received including upcoming projected funds. She also presented all the other sources of revenue CBCRP receives, as well as CBCRP total expenditures, including operational expenditures and grants expenditures. She summarized the resource allocation in detail concluding with how much the program can spend on grants this cycle.
- VI. Funding Strategies:** Sharima presented a background summary of the Program Initiatives. Due to funding concerns, reduction of applications, reduced staff, and a drop in federal

funding, the program proposed some options including reinstating pre- and postdoctoral fellowships and having larger PI4 Call for Applications. The group had an extensive discussion, providing feedback and suggestions for improvement. Staff requested approval from the council to develop a call for fellowships in collaboration with a subcommittee, aiming for council consideration in June and a release in September. Staff also requested approval to work with internal and external researchers to identify funding gaps. The focus will likely be on large, investigator-initiated grants to reduce administrative burden compared to previous programs. Sharon, Svasti and Salma volunteered to be on the subcommittee.

MOTION: Bryan moved (Salma seconded) that the council approve the development of a Fellowship Call as stated above. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Sharon moved (Bryan seconded) that the council approve staff to work with researchers to identify funding gaps as stated above. The motion passed unanimously.

- VII. Diversity Supplement Presentation:** Andrea Von Bebbler, mentor to CBCRP researcher Ej Ko received a diversity supplement. Her presentation, *Financial Toxicity Among Underserved Breast Cancer (BC) Survivors* includes a detailed summary of the study, her experience on the project, and how it will contribute to the growth of her career.
- VIII. Programmatic Review Overview:** Katie reviewed the process, timeline, review tools, criteria, and scoring, going through each step of the review process for the Cycle 31 programmatic review for Core funding, CLASP-BC Phase 2 Full, and Investing in Communities' Local-Level Needs. She overviewed how to use the Dimensions analysis tool and the Smart Simple database. She asked the council to send her names of potential advocate observers.
- IX. Outreach Committee:** Bryan presented the one conference award application: *2025 Rise Up Conference*. The 2024 Rise Up Conference was previously approved and sponsored, with contingencies that were agreed upon by the organizers. The committee also aims to broaden the applicant pool. The proposed strategies include sending targeted promotions, simplifying the application process, networking, and streamlined announcements.
- X. Priority-Setting:** Sen provided an update on how well the team is implementing the 2023 council recommendations, with a focus on accountability and progress made since the priority-setting meeting. They summarized the five key council recommendations and the progress that has been made to date.

- XI. Council Member Recruitment:** Sharima gave a brief overview of the process for recruiting new council members then asked the group for recommendations on openings on the council. The group discussed what criteria they feel is important for recruiting new members. The deadline to submit nominations is June 30.
- XII. Chair/Vice Chair Nominations:** Erika nominated Bryan to be the Chair, and he accepted. Erika nominated Lori to be Vice Chair, and she accepted. Barbara nominated Lesley and she accepted. For the June meeting packet, Lori and Lesley will submit a one-page statement as to why they think they should be elected as Vice Chair. A secret ballot election will be held at the meeting.
- XIII. RGPO DEI Efforts:** Sharima presented on the Equity in Grantmaking Working Group that aims to ensure equitable grantmaking by identifying and addressing systemic barriers for underserved researchers and communities. The group systematically reviewed all RGPO grant policies and procedures—covering applications, reviews, and funding decisions—through an equity lens. This work informed new and revised policies directed at promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the \$100 million+ research funding ecosystem managed by RGPO. Implementation included the development of resources and DEI guidance for POs, reviewer training for POs, and specific language and tools for review chairs and POs to intervene in biased review discussions. The working group promotes diverse and equity-minded review panels that reflect applicants and impacted communities. This includes actively recruiting junior faculty, women, and scholars of color to better represent lived experiences relevant to the research.
- XIV. Announcements:** none
- XV. Adjourn:** Erika adjourned the meeting at 3:29pm.