



Association of Biomolecular Resource Facilities

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Dr. Arthur Rubenstein, M.B.B.Ch.
Chair, NIH Scientific Management Review Board (SMRB)

Dr. Frances Collins, M.D., Ph.D.
Director, National Institute of Health

December 7, 2010

Dear Dr. Rubenstein and Dr. Collins:

The Association of Biomolecular Resource Facilities (ABRF) comprises over 700 scientists dedicated to advancing core facilities and research biotechnology laboratories, including genomics, proteomics and other 'omic' technologies that underlie biomarker discovery and translational medicine. We actively pursue the benchmarking of research methods, equipment and reagents, provide membership education, facilitate technology adaptation, and promote good core facility management practices. Throughout the 22 year history of our society, the NCCR has been there to provide our members and the researchers they serve with significant support. The NCCR has established coherent national efforts geared towards improving the efficiency of core and shared resource facilities, maximizing the best use of federal dollars for the purchase and operation of high end and costly core instrumentation, and has recently provided leadership in the efforts to create a national registry of core facilities and research scientists. This registry will promote the sharing of core equipment and expertise at regional and national levels. These initiatives of NCCR are, in our opinion, original and key to the competitiveness of the research enterprise in this nation and are beginning to bear fruit at a high level.

With regard to the planned creation of the National Center for Translational Medicine and Therapeutics we are concerned about the potential dissolution of the NCCR that might ensue in its wake. Importantly, NCCR programs provide key infrastructure and support for core facilities and their personnel, including the Shared Instrumentation Grants, funds for facility renovation and improvement, leadership in the efforts of core consolidation, programs to support the education of core management, and the support of the Network of IDeA-funded Core Laboratories (NICL). We strongly feel that our nation must maintain these services, currently provided by the NCCR, that have enabled core facilities and their collaborative research base to remain on the leading edge of science and discovery. Therefore we hope these critical aspects of the NCCR mission will be preserved in whatever new organizational structure that might emerge for the NIH.

Thank you very much for your attention and leadership in this important matter.

Yours truly,

The Executive Board of the ABRF