



TO: ICOC
FROM: Alan Trounson
RE: Online Journal
DATE: March 3, 2011

CIRM's 2010-11 budget included funds to support the development of an on-line journal focused on stem cells and translational medicine. That budget was approved by the ICOC in June 2010. As requested by the Board, CIRM staff met with the Finance Committee to review the planned Request for Proposals, and is reporting to the Board on the selection of the publisher. If that selection meets with the Board's approval, CIRM will enter into a contract so that work on the journal can begin.

The search for a publisher began in November 2010 when CIRM issued a Request for Proposals. As stated in the RFP, the goal is an online journal focusing on translational aspects of stem cell science; stem cell-based regenerative medicine and tissue engineering; stem cell-based predictive toxicology; and cancer stem cell investigation. CIRM would provide a start-up subsidy, up to \$200,000 per year for three years, to accelerate introduction of the new journal. The journal and its editors will have full editorial independence. CIRM contacted publishers with pertinent experience to make them aware of the RFP.

The RFP identified the key qualifications for a publisher:

- Proven track record of attracting, reviewing and publishing high quality scientific manuscripts.
- Existing on-line peer review and publication system or other means to reduce the start-up costs and time needed to create such an on-line system.
- Financial resources sufficient to meet startup costs not covered by CIRM's subsidy.
- Editorial team familiar with translational science, stem cells, stem cell-based regenerative medicine and tissue engineering and/or cancer stem cells.

CIRM received three proposals. A four-person internal committee evaluated the proposals and all agreed that the one from AlphaMed Press stood out. It met all CIRM requirements and included the most detailed plan for getting the new journal off the ground.

AlphaMed publishes one of the longest running journals in the field, *Stem Cells*, and has in place all the required manuscript submission and review systems as well as an assembled

bank of qualified manuscript reviewers. *Stem Cells* is now in its 29th year and has an impact factor of 7.75, which puts it among the leading high-impact, peer-reviewed journals.¹ AlphaMed has already received a commitment from Anthony Atala to be the editor. Dr. Atala is the Director of the Wake Forest Institute for Regenerative Medicine and is one of the leading experts on translating stem cell science into clinical applications (see attached bio). They have also assembled a list of potential associate editors with the breadth and depth needed to advance this special niche in stem cell research. In addition, while the main editorial office for the publisher is in North Carolina, the publisher also has an existing editorial office in California, which will be involved in the new journal.

AlphaMed demonstrated that they have the necessary qualifications, and agreed to key requirements from the RFP: to publish negative data, and to publish periodic commentaries from CIRM that have been appropriately peer reviewed.

After identifying the AlphaMed proposal as the strongest applicant, CIRM began negotiating the terms of a detailed agreement. CIRM consulted with a leading expert in academic publishing, Meyers Consulting Services, to ensure that the terms are a good value for CIRM, realistically achievable, and accurately reflect the economics of journal publishing. Through this consultancy it was determined that two changes should be made to the plan outlined in the RFP.

1. The plan now calls for self-sustainability over five years rather than three, a more realistic goal in the current publishing market. The publisher provided a revised five-year budget showing progress to sustainability over five years with the CIRM subsidy still ending after the originally planned three-year commitment.
2. The ramp-up to the first issue has been increased from six to nine months. This will give the editors more time to solicit high quality manuscripts, and will bring the new journal into the publishing cycle with the calendar year. The latter is critical for setting advertising budgets and getting a new journal on library subscription budgets.

Once the final contract is signed, the publisher has pledged to immediately begin marketing the journal and will be conducting a formal launch with the new editor at the ISSCR meeting in Toronto in June. The first articles will go online in December and the first full edition online and in print will be January 2012. The online version will be open access.

¹ Impact factor is a measure of how often articles in a journal are cited by authors of subsequent papers and is considered a valuable measure of the importance of a journal in advancing the field.



Anthony Atala, M.D., is the Director of the Wake Forest Institute for Regenerative Medicine, and the W.H. Boyce Professor and Chair of the Department of Urology at Wake Forest University. Dr. Atala is a practicing surgeon and a researcher in the area of regenerative medicine. His current work focuses on growing new human cells, tissues and organs.

Dr. Atala works with several journals and serves in various roles, including Editor-in-Chief of *Current Stem Cell Research and Therapy*, and *Therapeutic Advances in Urology*; as Associate Editor of *Tissue Engineering and Regenerative Medicine*, *The Journal of Rejuvenation Research*, *Nanotechnology in Engineering and Medicine*, *Gene Therapy and Regulation*, and *Current Reviews in Urology*; as Executive Board Member or Section Editor of the journal *Tissue Engineering and International Journal of Artificial Organs*, and as Editorial Board member of the *International Journal of Stem Cells*, *Stem Cell Review Letters*, *Expert Opinion on Biological Therapy*, *Biomedical Materials*, *Recent Patents on Regenerative Medicine*, the *Journal of the American College of Surgeons*, the *Journal of Urology*, *BioMed Central-Urology*, *Urology*, and *Current Opinion in Urology*.

Dr. Atala is a recipient of the US Congress funded Christopher Columbus Foundation Award, bestowed on a living American who is currently working on a discovery that will significantly affect society, and the Gold Cystoscope Award for advances in his field. Dr. Atala was named by Scientific American as a Medical Treatments Leader of the Year for his contributions to the fields of cell, tissue and organ regeneration. In 2006, he was named by Fast Company magazine as one of 50 people who "will change how we work and live over the next 10 years. Dr. Atala's work was listed as Discover Magazine's Number 1 Top Science Story of the Year in the field of medicine, and as Time Magazine's top 10 medical breakthroughs of the year in 2007. A Time Magazine poll ranked Dr. Atala as the 56th most influential person of the year in 2007. Esquire Magazine in 2008 named Dr. Atala one of the 75 most influential persons of the 21st century. Fast Company Magazine named Dr. Atala one of 100 Most Creative People in Business in 2009. Dr. Atala was featured in U.S. News & World Report as one of "14 Medical Pioneers Who Aren't Holding Back."

Dr. Atala has led or served several national professional and government committees, including the National Institutes of Health working group on Cells and Developmental Biology, and the National Institutes of Health Bioengineering Consortium. He is currently an NIH "Quantum Grant" awardee. Dr. Atala heads a team of over 250 physicians and researchers. Ten applications of technologies developed in Dr. Atala's laboratory have been used clinically. He is the editor of nine books, including *Minimally Invasive Urology*, *Methods of Tissue Engineering*, *Principles of Regenerative Medicine*, and *Foundations of Regenerative Medicine*, and has published more than 300 journal articles and has applied for or received over 200 national and international patents.