

Meeting time: January 21, 2026, 2:30-3:00 PST via Zoom

Participants: Laurent Dejean, Geoff Dervishian, Jeff Bulawit, Jaime Horio, Kate Waselkov.

Approval of Minutes: This document was circulated to the IBC after the meeting and all attendees approved the minutes without changes.

Quick recap

The meeting began with discussions about a new NIH policy requiring documented decisions and votes for BUA applications, followed by a review of a specific application co-written by Geoff and Dr. Freire. The committee then addressed a biosafety protocol for testing pasteurized milk and approved it with modifications, while also discussing concerns about the AI transcription system's participant identification capabilities. The conversation ended with discussions about application review scheduling, the need for a BUA for certain biology projects, and plans for an upcoming lab safety awareness week featuring webinars and coordination with various department safety coordinators.

Next steps

- Geoffrey: Send out email advertising the lab safety awareness week webinars (February 9-13) to JARC and relevant parties.
- Jaime: Distribute information about the lab safety awareness week webinars to department safety coordinators and technicians for chemistry, biology, EES, and art.
- (Optional) All interested participants: Fill out the survey to select preferred lab safety webinar videos from the provided list.

Summary

NIH Policy and Voting Process

The meeting began with Laurent explaining the new NIH policy requiring documented decisions and votes for BUA applications. Geoff presented an application he co-wrote with Dr. Freire, and the group discussed the application's details. The conversation ended with Laurent outlining the voting options: accept without modification, accept with modification, or deny. The group agreed to proceed with voting despite some members being absent, and unanimously voted to approve the BUA.

Biosafety Protocol for Milk Testing

The committee discussed a biosafety protocol for testing the shelf life of pasteurized milk using a new technique. They agreed that the work should be conducted at Biosafety Level 2 due to the potential for harmful organisms to grow, and confirmed that appropriate safety measures were in place. The committee approved the protocol with modifications suggested by Geoff, including the need to complete Section C regarding exposure to biohazardous materials.

AI Transcription System Verification

Geoffrey raised a concern about the AI transcription system's ability to identify meeting participants, and Laurent confirmed they would need to verify this. They discussed the possibility of creating a manual summary if the system fails, and Laurent assured Geoffrey that it was a straightforward process. Geoffrey also mentioned that Jeremy Woods had initiated a project a few months ago but had not provided any updates recently.

Application Review Process Flexibility

The committee discussed scheduling for reviewing applications, agreeing to handle them as they come in rather than maintaining a fixed schedule, given the irregular flow of submissions. Laurent noted that while there had been a recent increase in applications, they could maintain flexibility in their review process, potentially dedicating three weeks to review 2-3 applications if needed. The group also touched on the need for a BUA for biology and biotechnology projects funded at levels lower than NIH or NSF grants.

Lab Safety Awareness Week

Geoffrey announced plans for a lab safety awareness week from February 9th to 13th, featuring pre-recorded webinars that will be shown in JARC and accessible remotely. Jamie will coordinate email distribution to department safety coordinators and technicians in chemistry, biology, EES, and art departments. Participants can watch the webinars and engage in discussion, with Geoffrey confirming that a survey is available for selecting which videos to show during the week.