

By Laws: Spinal Cord Injury Research Fund Board Board Approval May 2, 2014

Background/History: The South Carolina Spinal Cord Injury Research Fund (SCIRF) was established in 2000 by amendment (Bill S54 44-38-510) to Section 2, Chapter 38, Title 44 of the 1976 S.C. Code. Signed by the Governor on July 20, 2000 this legislation:

- Authorized the new South Carolina Spinal Cord Injury Research Fund.
- Specified that it would be derived from a new surcharge of \$100 on each driving under the influence (DUI) conviction in South Carolina.
- Established the Spinal Cord Injury Research Fund Board (Board) to administer the SCIRF.
- Attached the Board to the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) for meeting, staff and administrative purposes.
- Specified that all operating, personnel and administrative costs and expenses of the SCIRF Board and its programs must be paid for by the SCIRF.
- Instructed that the collecting municipal and county governments pay collections on a monthly basis to the State Treasurer where the monies would be placed in a separate account to be used for Spinal Cord Research by the SCIRF.
- Permitted the collecting municipal and county governments to deduct from collections all one-time operating and administrative costs related to computer upgrades or programming.

Classification/Terms of Appointment: The Spinal Cord Injury Research Fund Board is a standing State of South Carolina Board. These By Laws shall be periodically reviewed and updated as appropriate by the Board.

Formal Charges: The South Carolina Spinal Cord Injury Research Fund Board is charged with promoting research to develop a better understanding of causes and effective treatment strategies for paralysis, sensory loss, and other consequences of spinal cord injury and disease. The primary objectives of this Board are:

1. To advance knowledge of spinal cord injury, repair, and regeneration within the South Carolina research community by encouraging physicians and scientists to apply their expertise to the spinal cord injury research field.
2. To foster collaborative interdisciplinary approaches to spinal cord injury research among South Carolina hospitals, rehabilitation centers, research universities and interested organizations.

3. To nurture the next generation of spinal cord injury researchers through support of young scientists and post-doctoral fellows.
4. To improve the well-being and quality of life of individuals with spinal cord injury by research programs which prevent or treat the secondary conditions and consequences of spinal cord injury.
5. To set budgets and administer funds directed for spinal cord injury research as mandated by the South Carolina Legislative Act and to assure the highest quality of research and commitment by the investigators.

The Spinal Cord Injury Research Fund Board shall award investigators with research grants that promote innovative and potentially ground breaking research, not necessarily to provide long term support. The expectation is that funded researchers and research groups will be able to apply for additional research projects and awards to more widely develop their individual projects and laboratories.

Priorities and focus of funding:

1. Translating basic and preclinical findings into clinical applications.
2. Studying strategies to promote growth and survival at the cellular level.
3. Providing efficacy of drugs and other interventions to prevent or reduce secondary injury and to provide insight to the mechanisms causing this progressive damage.
4. Exploring the role of tissue transplantation in restoration of spinal cord function.
5. Studying other disorders of the spinal cord or brain that are reasonably expected to produce new insight into the mechanism or treatment of dysfunction following spinal cord injury.
6. Defining anatomical, pathophysiological, inflammatory and neurochemical characteristics of spinal cord injury or disease in well-defined animal models.
7. Elucidating biological and physical mechanisms that improve functions compromised by spinal cord injury, including bladder and bowel dysfunction, sexual dysfunction, chronic pain, muscle atrophy and uncontrolled spasticity.
8. Developing strategies to prevent or treat secondary complications from injury or disease of the spinal cord.
9. Developing innovative rehabilitative strategies, services, or priorities to promote recovery and function following spinal cord injury.
10. Developing public education programs to help decrease the occurrence of spinal cord injury by safety education, and better safety practices and decreased alcohol use as a contributing factor.
11. Developing educational programs for those with spinal cord injuries and their families.

Reporting Channels/Procedures: The Board shall report to the Governor and the Legislature of the State of South Carolina.

Membership and Terms of Membership: The Board shall be comprised of seven (7) members who must be residents of the State of South Carolina and appointed on the basis of the following qualifications: two members who are medical doctors from the staff or faculty of MUSC; two members who are medical doctors specializing or significantly engaged in the treatment of spinal cord injuries in South Carolina; two members who have a spinal cord injury or who have a family member with a spinal cord injury; and an at-large member who is a medical doctor and a member of the South Carolina Medical Association.

All terms of Board members shall be four years with exception of staggering the initial appointments to ensure turnover with continuity: two year term for one of the MUSC faculty/staff, one of the specialists, and one member with a spinal cord injury or their family member; and an initial three-year term for the at-large doctor. At the end of a term, a member shall continue to serve until a successor is appointed and qualifies. A member who is appointed after a term has begun shall serve the rest of the term and until a successor is appointed and qualifies. A member who has served two consecutive full four-year terms shall not be reappointed for two years after completion of those terms.

Quorum: A majority of the membership of the Board shall constitute a quorum.

Membership Appointment: All Board members shall be appointed in writing by the South Carolina Governor based on nominations submitted by the President of MUSC.

Officers: The Board shall elect, by majority vote, a Chair who shall be the presiding officer of the Board, preside at all meetings and coordinate the functions and activities of the Board. The Chair shall be elected or re-elected by the Board each calendar year. The Board shall hire an Executive Director who shall act as Board Secretary and Treasurer. The Board may appoint other officers as it deems necessary to carry out its duties.

Committees: The Board shall appoint such ad hoc study groups, task forces and committees as are deemed necessary in carrying out its responsibilities and goals.

Frequency of Meetings: Meetings of the Board shall be held at least twice a year but may be held more frequently as deemed necessary, subject to call by the Chair or by request of a majority of the Board members.

Notice of Meetings: Written reminders of all scheduled meetings shall be provided to all Board members at least two weeks prior to the time scheduled. Called meetings will require telephone and/or e-mail notice to all Board members, which will be given as far in advance as

possible by the Executive Director. In addition, appropriate public notice of each meeting will be given in full compliance with current applicable provisions of the State Freedom of Information Act by posting on the SCIRF website.

Meeting Agenda and Support Material: A written agenda and appropriate support materials may be attached to the notice of the meeting.

Board Minutes: Summary minutes, including all actions and decisions, shall be kept by the Executive Director for all Board meetings and distributed within one month to each Board member.

Board Reports: The Board shall summarize its activities and plans in writing in an annual report. The annual report shall be posted to the SCIRF website. Other reports will be prepared and appropriately distributed as ongoing activities dictate.

Staff Support: The Board shall be attached to the Medical University of South Carolina for meetings, staff and administrative purposes. Duties and responsibilities of MUSC shall include:

1. Assist the Board in administering the SCIRF and its programs to achieve the goals and objectives set by the Board.
2. Assist the Board in organizing, implementing and overseeing procedures and processes to solicit, review, fund, and administer grants and other initiatives of the SCIRF.
3. Receive, disburse, and be fully accountable under applicable State laws for all monies placed in the SCIRF and subsequently expended by the SCIRF.
4. Assist the Board in identifying and setting up effective communication channels with all relevant organizations, agencies and individuals throughout the State who should be kept currently aware of the priorities and opportunities of the SCIRF.
5. Help organize and staff regular meetings of the South Carolina Spinal Cord Injury Research Fund Board to conduct Board business.
6. Carry out any other directives or initiatives of the Board.
7. Have performance evaluated annually by the Board.

Liability of Board Members: No member of the Board shall be subject to any personal liability or accountability for any loss sustained or damages suffered on account of any action or inaction of the Board.

Other Financial Stipulations of Enabling Legislation:

1. Board members shall be reimbursed for ordinary travel expenses, including meals and lodging, incurred during the performance of their duties.

2. SCIRF research projects can be granted to institutions other than MUSC as long as the receiving institution shares the research statistics with each medical institution in the State.
3. All SCIRF expenditures shall be made in accord with applicable South Carolina policies, procedures, and laws concerning the expenditure of State funds.

Amendments to By-Laws: Any amendment(s) to these By-Laws require vote from a majority of Board members at an official Board meeting based upon a written draft of proposed amendment(s) submitted to all Board members at least one month in advance.