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Natural Immunity Consortia & Scientific Steering Committee

Mandate of the Natural Immunity Consortium (NIC)

The mandate of the Natural Immunity Consortium is to facilitate discovery and validation of correlates of protection to HIV infection among subjects who are exposed to HIV, but yet remain uninfected in order to facilitate novel knowledge that may direct useful approaches for the development of HIV vaccines, microbicides or other protective strategies by:

1. creating the supporting infrastructure to: share knowledge, data and experiences;
2. develop and expand site capacity;
3. Improve and standardize laboratory practices and data analysis
4. develop shared protocols and definitions;
5. encourage and facilitate collaboration
6. encourage the sharing of data, scientific approaches and specimens
7. develop collaborative funding proposals and studies

Ideally, the mandate would be implemented using a phased-in approach with phase 1 being the establishment of a virtual consortium with modest infrastructure and support and phase 2 the utilization of the Phase I infrastructure to develop larger collaborative research projects that can attract funding from Federal and Non-Profit Agencies.

Phase 1: The Consortium

- Share knowledge, information, definitions and data thru scheduled research meetings, online websites and shared databases
- Build intellectual, scientific, and research capacity thru exchange of best practices, approaches and research protocols.
- Facilitate and encourage collaboration by establishing a compendium of cohorts and a catalogue of specimens that can be made available to interested researchers
- Help develop joint funding proposals by matching like minded researchers and facilitating development of preliminary data to support grant submissions

This would be supported by a modest infrastructure of administrative support, databases, scientific and organisational expertise to facilitate these activities

Phase 2: Research Initiatives

Support the development of programmatic research initiatives that are attractive to Funding Agencies.

This would be supported by research infrastructure obtained via the initiatives described above and available to the consortia community.

Guiding Principles

The Mandate is to be accomplished within the following Guiding Principles:

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- Open participation, direction and involvement from the involved research communities
- Maintaining the highest standards of scientific practice, ethics, and integrity
- Making data and study results available to the scientific community
- Serve as point of contact with other groups/consortia examining correlates of protection
- Building on and creating synergy while avoiding duplication

Scientific Steering Committee

The role of the Scientific Steering Committee is to help guide and facilitate the development of a consortium of world-leading basic scientists, clinicians, epidemiologists and social and legal experts to share findings that further understand correlates of protection to infection to HIV.

Specifically the Committee would:

- Enable research by providing direction and suggestions on research priorities....
- Provide leadership on the phasing in of the mandate activities
- Provide oversight on Consortium initiatives

Time Frame: November 18 2009 to November 2011. Phase in from Phase I-II depends on the buy in and enthusiasm in the NIH community and availability of funding.

Membership: The membership of the SSC is to be decided upon by the members of the Consortia thru some sort of voting mechanism and likely involve a revolving membership. Proposed initial members may include

Organization	Name
Public Health Agency of Canada	TBD
University of Manitoba	TBD
International Center for Infectious Disease	TBD
Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise	TBD
Int'l AIDS Vaccine Initiative	TBD
5-7 (?) members from the NIC community	TBD

Member Responsibilities:

Members are responsible for attending meetings, reviewing research agenda material, providing feedback, advice, and following through on action items.

Meeting Schedule:

The Scientific Steering Committee will meet 3-4 times a year

Length of Meeting:

Maximum 2 hours

Meeting Format:

Meetings will be held via teleconference, with one in-person meeting per year