

WEST VIRGINIA SCIENCE AND RESEARCH COUNCIL

September 26, 2022

A meeting of the West Virginia Science and Research Council was held on September 26, 2022, at 2:00 p.m. at the headquarters of the Higher Education Policy Commission in Charleston, WV, and via Zoom. Attendance was as follows:

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Dr. Fred King
Dr. Micheal Fultz
Chancellor Sarah Tucker
Dr. Juliana Serafin
Anne Barth
Dr. Maura McLaughlin
Kelsey Staggers for Secretary James Bailey
Dr. Sally Hodder
Dr. Mike Norton
Dr. John Maher
Dr. Jack Dever
Joey Wiseman for Superintendent David Roach
Dr. Jason Best

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Dr. Uma Sundarum
Rachel Roberts

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Annette Carpenter (HEPC)
Angela Sundstrom (HEPC)
Jade Irving (HEPC)
Dr. Suzanne Strait (HEPC)
Dr. Erika Klose (WV Dept of Ed)
Ryan Quinn (Charleston Gazette Mail)
Dr. Sheena Murphy (WVU)

CALL TO ORDER

After declaring a quorum was present, Dr. Tucker called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m. Dr. Tucker introduced new members Dr. Micheal Fultz and Dr. Jason Best, followed by introductions of the entire group present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes from the prior meeting on June 14, 2022, was made; the motion carried.

NSF EPSCOR PROGRAM UPDATES (Juliana Serafin)

Dr. Juliana Serafin announced that the NSF EPSCoR RII Track 1 proposal was submitted on 8/20/22 and she provided a one-page summary to the group via email. She expects a panel review to be conducted in October with possible questions in November. A decision on funding will not be made until March 2023.

Dr. Serafin also announced that two travel vouchers to attend the NSF EPSCoR National meeting remain available to Council members. The meeting will be held in Portland, Maine, on November 13-16, 2022. Those that wish to attend should contact the STaR office.

Dr. Suzanne Strait recently attended a national NSF EPSCoR meeting for Education Outreach Diversity (EOD) Managers. Dr. John Maher and Jack Carpenter (Coalition and Foundation representatives for WV) attended the EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition/Foundation board meeting in Washington DC last week. Dr. Maher highlighted the authorization related to the EPSCoR NSF budget (increase to 20% of NSF budget), expansion of the COBRE program, and a new NSF GRANTED program aimed at Broadening participation in STEM. Dr. Maher and Mr. Carpenter will put together a one-pager for the group.

RESEARCH CHALLENGE GRANTS (Juliana Serafin)

Dr. Serafin gave a brief description of the state funded Research Challenge Grant program. The current grants will expire at the end of this year and 18 new proposals for 3 new awards are under review. Each grantee can receive up to \$1.3 million dollars over 5 years. The proposals were sent for external review. The external reviewers ranked them on intellectual merit and six of them were ranked as highly competitive or competitive. These 6 proposals now need to be reviewed to determine the best fit for the State of West Virginia. A motion to

select a subcommittee of the VPRs at each school represented on the Council (King, Maher, Fultz and Best) plus Drs. Serafin and Strait was made; the motion carried. A motion to allow this subcommittee to make the final decision was also made; the motion carried.

RESEARCH CHALLENGE FUND- other grants (Juliana Serafin & Suzanne Strait)

Dr. Jack Dever provided a short summary of a new Department of Energy program that MATRIC is applying for that if funded, will provide \$70 million dollars for a Clean Energy Manufacturing Institute. All funds must be matched, and they are seeking state support for this match. Dr. Serafin agreed to provide some matching funds to our colleges and universities if they are successful at obtaining funding from the grant. This type of match is in alignment with the with purpose of the Research Challenge Fund. Kelsey Staggers requested additional information related to this project and Dr. Dever will provide a power point.

Dr. Suzanne Strait gave an update on the Opportunity Grants that were funded last fiscal year, and the ones that have been funded so far in the current fiscal year. The program remains open for applications until the funding is exhausted. She also noted that the current round of Instrumentation Grants and Innovation Grants are open for proposals through the end of this month. She will announce the awards at the next Council meeting.

OUTREACH & COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE (Angela Sundstrom, Suzanne Strait, Jade Irving)

Dr. Strait updated the group on the last STEM speaker, Carl Zimmer, who came to the newly renovated Kanawha County Library in Charleston in June. She also announced the next 2 STEM speaker dates: October 26 at the Clay Center (via a partnership with the National Youth Science Foundation) and April 27, 2023, (via a partnership with the HEPC GEAR UP program).

Angela Sundstrom reported that the newest *Neuron* will on the First2 program and is targeted for release at the end of October. The next round of Science Spotlight Videos is still in production. Angela had hoped to have the current round of videos (with a focus on academia, government, and industry) completed by the end of July but after some delays, they should be released soon. The new videos include representation from Greenbank Observatory, WVU Institute of Technology, and MATRIC.

Ms. Irving gave a brief update on the First2 project funded by an NSF INCLUDES grant. The First2 alliance continues to work on a long-term sustainability plan as the grant from NSF expires in August 2023.

NEXT MEETING / OTHER

A date for the next meeting was not chosen.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.