

2024 Current Fiscal Year Report: Joint Biomedical Laboratory Research and Development and Clinical Science Research and Development Services Scientific Merit Review Board

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1. Department or Agency	2. Fiscal Year
Department of Veterans Affairs	2024
3. Committee or Subcommittee	3b. GSA Committee No.

Joint Biomedical Laboratory Research and Development and Clinical Science Research and Development Services Scientific Merit Review Board	2017
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4. Is this New Fiscal Year?	5. Current Charter	6. Expected Renewal Date	7. Expected Term Date
No	04/19/2022	04/19/2024	

8a. Was Terminated During Fiscal Year?	8b. Specific Termination Authority	8c. Actual Term Date
No		

9. Agency Recommendation for Next Fiscal Year	10a. Legislation Req to Terminate?	10b. Legislation Pending?
Continue	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

11. Establishment Authority	Agency Authority		
12. Specific Establishment Authority	13. Effective Date	14. Committee Type	14c. Presidential?
38 USC 7303	05/09/1995	Continuing	No

15. Description of Committee Scientific Technical Program Advisory Board

16a. Total Number of Reports No Reports for this Fiscal Year

17a. Open 0 **17b. Closed** 0 **17c. Partially Closed** 0 **Other Activities** 0 **17d. Total** 0

Meetings and Dates

No Meetings

	Current FY	Next FY
18a(1). Personnel Pmts to Non-Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18a(2). Personnel Pmts to Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18a(3). Personnel Pmts to Federal Staff	\$0.00	\$0.00
18a(4). Personnel Pmts to Non-Member Consultants	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(1). Travel and Per Diem to Non-Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(2). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(3). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Staff	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(4). Travel and Per Diem to Non-member Consultants	\$0.00	\$0.00
18c. Other(rents,user charges, graphics, printing, mail, etc.)	\$0.00	\$0.00
18d. Total	\$0.00	\$0.00
19. Federal Staff Support Years (FTE)	0.00	0.00

20a. How does the Committee accomplish its purpose?

The Joint Biomedical Laboratory/Clinical Science Research and Development Services Scientific Merit Review Board supports the central VA mission in advancing Veterans' health in its review of Veteran-centric research applications.

Supporting research helps to recruit and retain top clinician-scientists, as well as supports the VA Strategic Goals of improving customer service and implementing the mission action. Applications

reviewed by the Board included research on suicide prevention, one of the Top 5 Priorities for the VA. Other high priority topics include traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorder, pain, and opioid abuse. The Board provided expert review of the scientific quality, budget, safety, and mission relevance of investigator-initiated research proposals submitted for VA Merit Review funding. The evaluations resulted in recommendations for approval or disapproval, levels and duration of funding, and a priority score reflecting the overall merit of the application. These recommendations were used by the Joint Biomedical Laboratory/Clinical Science Research and Development Services Scientific Merit Review Board to guild the limited research funds to the most promising VA-relevant projects that will impact the health and health care of Veterans.

20b. How does the Committee balance its membership?

The Board must have an appropriate balance of reviewers to evaluate the scientific, technical, and medical aspects of the proposals within the purview of the Board. Collectively, the members must reflect the broad-based scientific expertise required to competently review the research proposals received. Board members are selected based on their skills sets, experiences, credentials and with regard to ensuring a diverse group of members.

20c. How frequent and relevant are the Committee Meetings?

The scientific review function of the Board is performed by 32 standing review panels, which usually meet twice a year--spring and fall--in order to evaluate the scientific merit of research proposals each year. For the current year, there

were 61 review panel meetings. In order to assure timely evaluations of research proposals, semi-annual meetings of the review panels are essential.

20d. Why can't the advice or information this committee provides be obtained elsewhere?

The Board is composed of both VA and non-VA scientists, who are nationally and internationally recognized as experts in their respective fields. Local staff does not have the required expertise, and there is no other acceptable way to accomplish the scientific review of Merit Review proposals. The outstanding credentials of the review panels lend credibility to award decisions.

20e. Why is it necessary to close and/or partially closed committee meetings?

The closed portion of the meetings is devoted to the evaluation of research proposals from investigators whose ideas and credentials are discussed freely. These discussions must remain confidential to protect the privacy of the individual investigators and their research ideas.

21. Remarks

The Joint Biomedical Laboratory/Clinical Science Research and Development Services Scientific Merit Review Board reviewed 833 proposals in FY 2023 in review panel Virtual and Hybrid subcommittee meetings during the November-December 2022 and May-June 2023 time frames. Virtual meetings of the parent committee were held on January 10 and July 11. The Joint Biomedical Laboratory/Clinical Science Research and Development Services Scientific Merit Review Board is structured to have scientific discipline-specific subcommittees and a parent Joint Biomedical Laboratory/Clinical Science

Research and Development Services Scientific Merit Review Board. The subcommittees report recommendations and activities twice a year to the parent committee. The Joint Biomedical Laboratory/Clinical Science Research and Development Services Scientific Merit Review Board reports reflect both parent and subcommittee membership.

Designated Federal Officer

Michael R. Burgio Designated Federal Officer

Committee Members	Start	End	Occupation	Member Designation
Bickford, Paula	09/01/2020	06/30/2024	Senior Research Career Scientist, Tampa VA Medical Center	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Carson, James	09/01/2020	06/30/2024	Associate Dean for Research, University of Tennessee	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Clegg, Deborah	10/01/2022	06/30/2024	Texas Tech Health Sciences Center-El Paso	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
DeBeer, Bryann	03/16/2022	06/30/2026	Clinical Research Psychologist, Rocky Mountain Regional VA medical Center	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Diwan, Adhinav	03/01/2020	06/30/2024	Staff Physician, John Cochran VAMC	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Dixon, Anne	03/01/2021	06/30/2024	Director, University of Vermont Medical Center	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Haroutunian, Vahram	03/01/2023	06/30/2026	James J. Peters VA Medical Center	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member

Kimbrel, Nathan	10/01/2022	06/30/2025	VA Mid-Atlantic Mental Illness Research Center	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member Special Government Employee (SGE) Member Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Knox, Dayan	10/01/2022	06/30/2024	University of Delaware	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Kuhn, Cynthia	10/01/2022	06/30/2024	Duke University	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Migrino, Raymond	10/01/2022	06/30/2026	Phoenix VA Healthcare System	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Plymate, Stephen	03/02/2020	06/28/2024	Staff Physician, Puget Sound VA Healthcare System	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Shiao, Stephen	03/02/2020	06/28/2024	Associate Professor, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Tang, Gale	09/01/2020	06/30/2024	Attending Physician, Seattle VAMC	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Troen, Bruce	10/28/2021	06/30/2025	Physician/Investigator, Western New York Healthcare System	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Westlund High, Karin	03/16/2022	06/30/2026	Research Physiologist, New Mexico VA Healthcare System	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Westrick, Randal	10/01/2022	06/30/2026	Oakland University	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Williamson, Peter	10/01/2022	06/30/2026	National Institutes of Health	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member

Schnabl, Bernd [GAST (gastroenterology)]	10/02/2022	06/30/2025	Palo Alto VA Healthcare System	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Verne, George [GAST (gastroenterology)]	10/01/2022	06/30/2025	Memphis VA Medical Center	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Britton, Peter [MHBC (mental health behavioral sciences)]	03/31/2023	06/30/2027	Canandaigua VA Medical Center	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Cheong, Jeewon [MHBC (mental health behavioral sciences)]	03/31/2023	06/30/2026	University of Florida	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Steinhauer, Stuart [MHBC (mental health behavioral sciences)]	03/31/2023	06/30/2027	Pittsburgh VA Healthcare System	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Hyndman, Kelly [NEPH (nephrology)]	09/01/2020	06/30/2024	Associate Professor	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Wang, Jun [NURA (neurology)]	03/02/2020	06/28/2024	Associate Professor, Texas A&M University	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Chao, Linda [NURD (neurobiology)]	03/02/2020	06/28/2024	Research Biologist	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Kayed, Rakez [NURD (neurobiology)]	10/01/2022	06/30/2026	University of Texas Medical Branch	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Pletnikov, Mikhail [NURD (neurobiology)]	10/01/2022	06/30/2026	University at Buffalo	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Yan, Lirong [NURD (neurobiology)]	10/01/2022	06/30/2026	Northwestern University	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member

Bitan, Gal [NURE (neurobiology)]	03/02/2020	06/28/2024	Professor of Neurology, David Geffen School of Medicine	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Pandey, Udai [NURE (neurobiology)]	03/02/2020	06/28/2024	Associate Professor, Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Quinn, Joseph [NURE (neurobiology)]	03/02/2020	06/28/2024	Staff Neurologist, Portland VA Medical Center	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Zhou, Hongxia [NURE (neurobiology)]	03/02/2020	06/28/2024	Professor, Florida International University	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Aparicio, Ana [ONCA (oncology)]	03/02/2020	06/28/2024	Associate Professor	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Ashok, Tuteja [SPLD (special panel Gulf War illnesses)]	03/31/2023	06/30/2027	Salt Lake City VA Medical Center	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Chatterjee, Saurabh [SPLD (special panel Gulf War illnesses)]	03/01/2023	06/30/2027	Long Beach VA Medical Center	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Cowart, Lauren [SPLD (special panel Gulf War illnesses)]	03/01/2023	06/30/2027	Hunter Holmes McGuire VA Medical Center	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Hauser, Elizabeth [SPLD (special panel Gulf War illnesses)]	03/01/2023	06/30/2026	Durham VA Medical Center	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Staud, Roland [SPLD (special panel Gulf War illnesses)]	03/31/2023	06/30/2027	University of Florida	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member

Number of Committee Members Listed: 39

Narrative Description

The Joint Biomedical Laboratory/Clinical Science Research and Development Services Scientific Merit Review Board supports the central VA mission in advancing Veterans' health in its review of Veteran-centric research applications. Supporting research helps to recruit and retain top clinician-scientists, improving directly employee experience and access to care. The Board provided expert review of the scientific quality, budget, safety, and mission relevance of investigator-initiated research proposals submitted for VA Merit Review funding. The evaluations resulted in recommendations for approval or disapproval, levels and duration of funding, and a priority score reflecting the overall merit of the application. These recommendations were used by the Joint Biomedical Laboratory/Clinical Science Research and Development Services Scientific Merit Review Board to direct the limited research funds to the most promising VA-relevant projects.

What are the most significant program outcomes associated with this committee?

Checked if
Applies

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Improvements to health or safety | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Trust in government | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Major policy changes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Advance in scientific research | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Effective grant making | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Improved service delivery | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Increased customer satisfaction | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Implementation of laws or regulatory requirements | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Outcome Comments

NA

What are the cost savings associated with this committee?

Checked if Applies

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| None | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Unable to Determine | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Under \$100,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$100,000 - \$500,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$1,000,001 - \$5,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$5,000,001 - \$10,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over \$10,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost Savings Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Cost Savings Comments

NA

What is the approximate Number of recommendations produced by this committee for the life of the committee?

15,682

Number of Recommendations Comments

This is the total number of recommendations for FY 2003 through FY 2023.

What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Fully implemented by the agency?

79%

% of Recommendations Fully Implemented Comments

The Board recommended funding for more proposals than funds were available to support.

What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Partially implemented by the agency?

0%

% of Recommendations Partially Implemented Comments

NA

Does the agency provide the committee with feedback regarding actions taken to implement recommendations or advice offered?

Yes ☒ No ☐ Not Applicable ☐

Agency Feedback Comments

Each review meeting is informed about the outcome of recommendations at the

subsequent meeting. Information on agency feedback can be obtained by contacting Michael Burgio at 202-603-4667 or at Michael.Burgio@va.gov.

What other actions has the agency taken as a result of the committee's advice or recommendation?

Checked if Applies

Reorganized Priorities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reallocated resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Issued new regulation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proposed legislation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approved grants or other payments	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Action Comments

No other actions

Is the Committee engaged in the review of applications for grants?

No

Grant Review Comments

The research proposals reviewed by the Board are internal to VA and are not considered grants to outside entities.

How is access provided to the information for the Committee's documentation?

Checked if Applies

Contact DFO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Online Agency Web Site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Online Committee Web Site	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online GSA FACA Web Site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Publications	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Access Comments

N/A