THE WISTAR INSTITUTE IBC
Monthly Meeting Minutes

January 15, 2026
2:00PM – 3:00PM
Hybrid Meeting

Members Present: (Quorum = 6 members)
Qingsheng Li, IBC Chair, WI PI
Roma Maraj-Owen, WI Director of Laboratory Operations and Environmental Health and Safety
Yulia Nefedova, WI PI
Sonali Majumdar, WI PI
Paul Lieberman, WI PI
Denise DiFrancesco, WI Animal Facilities Director
Lauren Duffy, WI Animal Facilities Associate Managing Director
Rebecca Spangenberg, Non-Affiliated Assist. Prof.
Erick Gagne, Non-Affiliated Assist. Prof

Members Absent:
Colby Maldini, WI PI
Michelle Ho, WI Biosafety Officer

Guests Present:
Brennah Murphy Britten, WI Research Compliance Coordinator

1.0 Call to Order
- 1.1 The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 2:00 PM

2.0 Review and Approval of Previous Fourth Quarter 2025 Meeting (December 10, 2025) Minutes.
- 2.1 The committee was reminded that IBC minutes are shared publicly.
- 2.2 Motion to approve was made by Denise DiFrancesco, seconded by Lauren Duffy. Minutes of the Fourth Quarter meeting were approved by those present at the meeting.

3.0 Discussion of observed Violations / Exposures (Roma Maraj-Owen)
- 3.1 No observed violations.

4.0 Monthly Review of IBC Registrations and Amendments submitted since the last meeting.
- 4.1 For the registrations listed below, the committee discussed, where relevant, the characteristics of the agent, the types of manipulations planned, the source(s) of the nucleic acid sequences, host(s) vector(s) to be used and whether there were attempts planned to obtain expression of a transgene, and if so, the function of the protein that would be produced. Additional discussion is recorded below.

5.0 Open Discussion
- 5.1 Although there have not been any exposures, the IBC Office reminded the committee of the reporting requirements to the NIH in the event of an exposure.
- 5.2 The IBC Office reiterated to the committee that the role of the IBC is to assess the risk to human health and the environment, not to review scientific rigor. This should be kept in mind when reviewing registrations.
- 5.3 The IBC Office noted that the IBC registration form should be updated as technology advances. The Office would like to update the current registration form with the guidance of the committee. It was noted that comments from the committee for improving the form can be submitted directly to the Office.

5.4 The IBC Office continues to work with IT to develop an internal IBC Registration Review App.

8.0 The Meeting was adjourned at 2:41 PM

9.0 The next meeting will be February 19, 2026, from 2:00PM – 3:00PM.

IBC Registrations

New

PI	Registration no.	Title	BSL	ABSL
Herlyn	2251662	Use of Recombinant Viral and Plasmid Vectors to Enhance Hematopoietic Stem Cell Generation and Engraftment in a NSG Murine Model	2	

Applicable NIH Guidelines: Section III-E	**All required trainings are complete** Yes ☒ No ☐
Summary: This lab seeks to enhance the generation and engraftment of human hematopoietic stem and progenitor cells (HSPCs) using recombinant plasmid and viral vectors in combination with iPSC-derived teratomas and engineered stromal cell lines. Using complementary approaches, they will modify stromal cells in an attempt to improve human cell constitution in immune-deficient murine models.	
Discussion: This registration is a renewal. This lab is using a conventional lentivector and adenovirus vector, which are commonly used in both a laboratory setting and clinical trial setting. Furthermore, this registration was graded as 'minimal risk' as no infectious agents that can cause disease are being utilized. The BSL-2 requirement stems from the fact that the group cultures human cell lines.	

Motion: Approval	For: 9	Recuse:0	Against:0	Abstain: 0	Absent: 2

PI	Registration no.	Title	BSL	ABSL
Liang	22512663	Molecular Mechanism of UV Protection in Cutaneous Melanoma	2	

Applicable NIH Guidelines: Section III-D	**All required trainings are complete** Yes ☒ No ☐
Summary: This lab plans to modify human and mouse melanoma cell lines using lentiviral vectors to knockdown essential genes in the nucleotide excision repair (NER) pathway and melanosome biogenesis pathway in in order to assess the role of these pathways in limiting the UV-induced mutation signatures in melanocytes.	
Discussion: This registration is a renewal. The lab uses a conventional, commercially-available lentiviral vector which is not replication competent. The committee reviewed questions submitted by a committee member ahead of the meeting. It was determined that the questions raised scientific matters rather than biosafety considerations and that they would not impact the outcome of the assigned biosafety level or requirements. The committee nevertheless decided that the IBC Office should contact the committee member for clarification. Another committee member pointed out section 8 of the form does not align with section 9. The committee requests that the PI update section 8 to provide the percentage viral genome remaining for the viral vectors identified in section 9, or clarify why section 8 would be 'not applicable.' Finally, the committee requests clarification as to which cell lines are being modified that will ultimately be inoculated into *in vivo* models. A motion was made to close the discussion and request modifications to secure approval by IBC Chair, Biosafety Officer and IBC Office review subsequent to full committee review.	

Motion: Conditional Approval (Admin and Chair Review)	For: 9	Recuse:0	Against:0	Abstain: 0	Absent: 2

PI	Registration no.	Title	BSL	ABSL
Xu	22512664	Nanobodies as countermeasures against viral pathogens	2	

Applicable NIH Guidelines: Section III-E	**All required trainings are complete** Yes ☐ No ☒

Summary: This lab seeks to utilize plasmids vectors encoding recombinant viral surface glycoproteins in Expi293 or Expi293PRO cells and *E. coli* bacteria to produce purified viral glycoproteins. These proteins will be utilized in downstream immunization assays for the generation of nanobodies which will be subsequently cloned in a plasmid vector and expressed in yeast cells.

Discussion: This is a new registration. This PI is an expert in generating nanobodies, which are small fragments of antibodies that can be used to target various infectious diseases. Despite targeting infectious diseases, this registration does not utilize any infectious agents, therefore there were no major concerns.

It was noted that although *in vivo* models are mentioned in the registration and may be utilized in downstream assays, they are not inoculated with viral or plasmid vectors, nor with modified cell lines. Therefore, their mention should be removed from section 7 and 4g of the registration form. The investigator should remove the mention of *E. coli* from section 14. Additionally, the committee found the experimental summary difficult to understand and recommends the PI revise the section (4a) for clarity.

Finally, it was noted by the IBC Office that the personnel listed in the registration are in the process of completing their required training. The registration will not be approved until the training is complete.

A motion was made to close the discussion and request modifications to secure approval by IBC Chair, Biosafety Officer and IBC Office review subsequent to full committee review.

Motion: Conditional Approval (Admin and Chair Review)	For: 9	Recuse:0	Against:0	Abstain: 0	Absent: 2

Reports

Administrative Approvals

Nothing to report.

2/26/2026

Chair or Designee Signature Date