

Minutes CMC1/2022-2023

WEST AFRICAN CENTRE FOR CELL BIOLOGY OF INFECTIOUS PATHOGENS

MINUTES OF THE CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 13TH APRIL, 2023 IN THE WACCBIP BOARD ROOM AT 9:30A.M.

Present:

Prof. Gordon Awandare	-	Director, WACCBIP (Chairman)
Prof. Dorothy Yeboah-Manu	-	Director, Noguchi Memorial Institute of Medical Research
Dr. Lydia Mosi	-	Deputy Director (Administration)
Dr. Peter Quashie	-	Deputy Director (Research)
Prof. David Dodoo-Arhin	-	Appointed by the Vice-Chancellor
Prof. Neils Ben Quashie	-	Representative, College of Health Sciences
Prof. Anderson Mon	-	Appointed by the Provost, College of Basic and Applied Sciences (CBAS)
Rev. Dr. W.S.K Gbewonyo	-	Mentorship Coordinator
Dr. Yaw Bediako	-	Head of Advancement
Dr. Lucas Amenga-Etego	-	Representative of Research Fellows
Dr. Theresa Manful Gwira	-	Head of Research Training
Dr. Anastasia R. Aikins	-	Coordinator of Graduate Admissions and Examinations
Dr. Yaw Aniweh	-	Head of Technology
Ms. Henrietta Ashiabor	-	Assistant Registrar/Secretary

Absent/*Apologies

*Prof. Osbourne Quaye	-	Head, Department of Biochemistry, Cell and Molecular Biology
*Mr. Francis K. Boachie	-	Chief Information Technology Officer, UGCS
Prof. Kwadwo Koram	-	Member, Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research
*Mr. Christopher Abana	-	Representative of Postgraduate Student

In Attendance

Ms. Emefa Adzadu	-	Senior Accounts Officer
Mr. Andrew Nantogmah	-	Communications Manager
Mr. Michael Abogro	-	Procurement Manager
Ms. Marian Nanor	-	Accounts Officer
Mr. Stefan Danquah	-	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
Mr. Theophilus Dugah	-	ICT Officer
Mr. Francis Dzabeng	-	Data Manager
Ms. Sarah Ntim	-	Procurement Officer
Mr. Eric Afful	-	Laboratory Technician
Mr. Srinivasan Balapangu	-	Laboratory Technician
Mr. Alfred Kazaaresam	-	ICT Technician
Ms. Kyerewaa A. Boateng	-	Public Engagement Officer

1.0 Opening

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:48 a.m., and apologies received.

2.0 Confirmation and Adoption of Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Minutes CMC5/2021-2022 of the Management Committee held on 21st December, 2022 was accepted and adopted as a true reflection of proceedings on a motion by Dr. Peter Quashie, seconded by Rev. Dr. W.S.K. Gbewonyo.

3.0 MAIN BUSINESS

3.1 Update on Laboratory Renovations - Deputy Director, Administration

Dr. Lydia Mosi briefed the meeting on the status of renovation works and also mentioned that the set deadlines could not be achieved due to some challenges.

Completed works

- Partitioning
- Electrical works
- Resurfacing of the floor and reconstruction of laboratory benches (99% complete).

Outstanding Works

- Fixing of shelves in the Malaria Laboratory
- Final resurfacing of Epoxy flooring will be done after final payment to the contractor.
- Cabling and Internet wiring for the lab benches to be handled by UGCS.
- Covering of Drains: The contractor who had to fix the grates to cover the drains did not meet the regulatory requirements and had to be replaced. The Chairman proposed the use of wood instead of the grates, as was done in the Malaria Lab.
- Internet connections.
- The introduction of a new maintenance routine was pending.

It was suggested that, in future, the procurement process should begin far ahead of time to prevent unnecessary delays.

3.2 Preparations for WACCBIP Annual Research Conference

Dr. Peter Quashie, Deputy Director for Research briefed the meeting on the work of the Scientific Committee in preparation towards the Annual Research Conference from 26th to 28th July, 2023. The theme and sub-themes, which were yet to be finalized would be chosen from the areas of: Network, Biotech Entrepreneurship, and Research Policy and Vaccine development.

The identified keynote speakers and/or discussants were:

Prof. Thumbi Ndung'u, Prof. Kelly Chibale, Prof. David Bauer, Dr. Emma Wall, Greg Rockson,

Ngozi Erondy-Manyonganise, Dr. Lydie Hakizimana, Dr. Gerald Mbowe, Alexander Douglas. In addition, there would be other resource persons identified locally, and others from the Ghana Health Service as well as notable funding agencies.

It was also decided that:

- The Ghana Research Agenda should be included in the panel discussions.
- The Call for Abstract should be publicized pending the selection of keynote speakers.
- Deadline for submission of the Call for abstracts to be 31st May 2023.

3.3 WACCBIP 10th Anniversary Celebrations

The Chairman announced that the Centre will be 10 years in 2024, and it presents the opportunity to showcase the achievements of the Centre over the period. The anniversary celebrations which will be launched at the Opening Ceremony of the Annual Research Conference would be climaxed at the 2024 Annual Research Conference.

Consequently, a Planning Committee was to be constituted to plan an all year-round activity. Also, a media company was to be engaged to produce a documentary on WACCBIP.

3.4 Proposals from the International Advisory Board

The Advisory Board at its last meeting held on July 23, 2022 made the following proposals for consideration by the Management Committee:

Proposals	Comments
An external body to review the strategic plan	The reviewers would be identified from the local and international among others.
Solicit the views of Centre Management Committee members on their expectations of an Advisory Board and present the responses to the Advisory Board.	The Monitoring and Evaluation Officer was to design an evaluation form for a survey to be conducted.
Reconstitute the Advisory Board to include members from Europe.	The International members of the Advisory Board were to propose the names.

It was noted that some of the Advisory Board members have contributed tremendously to the well-being and growth of WACCBIP and they could further assist in reviewing applications for selection of Postdocs and Senior Fellows, with members of faculty in attendance to observe the proceedings.

Additionally, some of them could also be earmarked for thesis examination when thesis areas/topics are presented for approval.

3.5 New WACCBIP Building

As the Centre continues to see growth and expansion of its research activities, office and laboratory spaces have become limited, making it challenging to accommodate new faculty and staff members. In the light of this, the idea of a new building was conceived, and a team was put together to see to its implementation.

The sketch of the proposed new WACCBIP building was presented to members by Dr. Peter Quashie.

The building plan, which is modeled after some notable Health Research institutions would have administrative offices and meeting spaces on the ground floor. The rest of the 3-storeys will provide open spaces which can be partitioned into laboratories.

Dr. Quashie mentioned that the plan would be modified to add an additional floor to the building, making it 4-storeys.

The proposed Budget for the building is \$4.8m. Dr. Bediako, Chairman of the fund-raising Committee, will provide information on plans to mobilize resources for the building.

4.0 PRESENTATION OF 1ST QUARTER REPORTS (JANUARY TO MARCH 2023)

4.1 CMC1(1)/2022-2023 - Grants Management

In the absence of the Grants Manager, the Chairman highlighted on new grants awarded by NIHR and Gates Foundation, one of the highest grants to Dr. Amenga-Etego. The performance indicator for internships still remained a challenge.

4.2 CMC1(2)/2022-2023 - Graduate Admissions

Dr. Aikins reported 28 Master's and 8 PhD students have reported and registered for the 2022-2023 academic year.

All the PhD students have passed all the three (3) components of the doctoral qualifying examinations and were working on their thesis proposals.

Deltas II Fellowships

The 2023/2024 DELTAS fellowships would be awarded to PhD, early career Postdocs and Senior Research Fellows (10 PhDs, 5/6 Postdocs and 2 Senior Research Fellows).

The Chairman hinted that the grant which was previously awarded for 5 years has been reduced to 4 years, which meant that there was no provision for no-cost extensions.

4.3 CMC1(3)/2022-2023 - Finance

The Senior Accounts Officer reported on amounts realized from grant overheads which were paid to the University for 2022. The Chairman directed the Finance Manager to compile the overheads accrued from Grants to the Centre.

He further directed that:

- Administrative costs (i.e. salaries) should be included in grant applications.
- The Accounts Officers should also assist those writing grants in budget preparations.

4.4 CMC1(4)/2022-2023 - Research Training

The Head of Research Training reported on submission of thesis according to cohorts. She indicated that Master's students who have delayed/failed to submit their thesis on time were being given the needed support to enable them complete their programmes.

4.5 CMC1(5)/2022-2023 - Mentorship

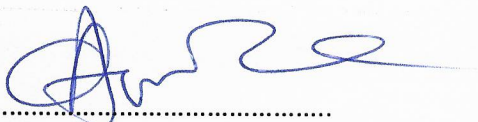
The Unit organised an Orientation session for newly admitted fellows, conducted a needs assessment, after which mentors were assigned to the new fellows.

Planned activities for the second quarter would include Workshops on thesis writing, stress management and mental health well-being. It was suggested that Board games could be introduced as one of the ways to help members of the community de-stress.

The Mentorship Coordinator was also tasked by the Chairman to put in place reporting systems for those who feel harassed or bullied to lodge complaints, in order to create a conducive environment for all, without any fear of victimization for reporting the matter.

5.0 Closing

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20pm on a motion by Dr. Lydia Mosi seconded by Dr. Yaw Aniweh.



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Professor Gordon A. Awandare
(Chairman)



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Ms. Henrietta Ashiabor
(Secretary)