



# THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

1230 YORK AVENUE · NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10021

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

22 May 1980

CONFIDENTIAL

Memorandum for the Record

Subject: New Possibility for Whitehead Institute

On May 13, JL had breakfast with Jack Whitehead and Paul Marks to explore in person the suggestions that we had been receiving indirectly for some months that Jack Whitehead wishes to establish the Whitehead Institute for Medical Research on the RU campus. In this brief memorandum, I will outline the key elements as we understand them. A general framework will be considered intensively during the next several months.

1. To begin with, Jack Whitehead appears to be serious about making soon the decisions necessary to launch the Institute. This year (1980) might include selecting both a director and the site. However, Whitehead's plans have been stalled at ostensibly comparable stages in the past.

2. The new Institute would be an independent entity dedicated primarily to the Molecular and Cellular Biology of Eukaryotes. Such a mission would certainly be compatible--if pursued on a first rank basis--with RU's mission/programs.

3. Funding would be managed by the Institute's finance committee consisting of individuals chosen by Jack Whitehead. The operating budget would be on the order of \$5 million per year, assured through an annuity trust. An additional \$100 million would be committed toward endowment through an irrevocable testamentary provision. And about \$35 million would be made available during the initial few years for capital construction, through the sale of stock and/or borrowing (which presumably could be arranged on favorable terms).

4. JL has stressed that, if the new Institute is not subordinate to RU, then its affiliation with RU should be minimal in a formal sense. There would be no joint or interlocking academic structures, because the Whitehead Institute would be a free-standing organization. Tentatively, Josh prefers not to serve on the Whitehead Institute's Board and that there be no other RU ex-officio representative on the Board; possibly, an RU faculty member would be appropriate. Governance of the Whitehead Institute might lead to selected joint appointments; but controls on this should be assessed carefully.

5. The first director of the Institute would be named in the near future, presumably before the end of calendar 1980. A short list of possible candidates has been developed. The prime candidate would definitely command respect from the RU faculty (i.e., Nossal from Australia).

Memorandum for the Record  
Subject: New Possibility for Whitehead Institute  
22 May 1980

- 2 -

6. The quid pro quo for RU remains to be worked out. Earlier ideas about construction of a library have not been ruled out, but are not as pressing at the moment. Instead, if the Whitehead Institute were established on the 68th Street and York parking lot, the RU might receive a substantial "ground rent"--and some further considerations in terms of managerial services, parking space, office/conference space, and (of particular interest at the moment) staff housing. As an alternate site, air rights probably should be considered. Over a 20-30 year period, perhaps the Institute as a whole--or its buildings and/or its endowment--could revert to RU control. All options for the quid pro quo should be thought through during the early summer so that a formal proposal can be tabled for Mr. Whitehead by not later than September.

Action for officers: Begin working out the details of a possible bargain with Whitehead. In particular, RWN has contacted (a) Mr. Bozorth re. legal questions and (b) Mr. Dilworth (then Mr. James Peel) re. concepts for the ground rent (sale price? ground rent value per year? indexing of ground rent over ten to thirty years?). RWN will coordinate the design of a draft concept paper for JL to review before next meeting with Whitehead.



Rodney W. Nichols

cc: William O. Baker  
J. Richardson Dilworth

Squire Bozorth  
Richard E. Salomon

Frederick Lehmann  
David Lyons  
Tonya Siddiqi  
Sydney Woodd-Cahusac  
Richard Young  
Joshua Lederberg