

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY
CAMBRIDGE 39, MASSACHUSETTS

Professor Francis O. Schmitt

Cable Address: Technology Cambridge

26 September 1962

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics
Stanford University
School of Medicine
Palo Alto, California

Dear Lederberg:

On February 1, 1962, a group of us banded together to form a Neurosciences Research Program for the purpose of stimulating advance in research on the physical and chemical basis of brain function with particular reference to memory, learning, and the processes which together subserve cognitive behavior. Since then a one-day meeting of the members -- called Associates -- was held at the National Academy of Sciences on March 23, 1962 and on August 20-24, 1962 the first intensive meetings were held at the Associates' Center in the House of The American Academy of Arts and Sciences in Boston. The names of the twenty-seven Associates are given in the attached list. Oliver Lowry and Lars Onsager have been invited to the November meetings looking forward to their joining the group of Associates.

A grant from the N.I.H. having a five-year commitment defrays the costs of the meetings and of maintaining the Center staff and other non-government gifts have been received. All expenses of Associates in coming to meetings are defrayed and, to meet out-of-pocket expenses, an honorarium of \$50 per day, comparable to that paid by federal agencies, is paid to Associates in lieu of consulting fees which are paid to visiting lecturers.

One of the services rendered by the Center Staff is to search for and process information pertinent to the program. A highly specialized library is in the building at the Center, presided over by a well trained librarian.

Associates are welcome to use the Center facilities, situated in a beautiful garden estate in Brookline, six miles from M.I.T.

The intramural program of the Associates is that described above. It has been decided that we shall also undertake an extramural program similar to that operated in 1958 at Boulder, Colorado, by the Biophysics Study Section of N.I.H. It is hoped that this project will break down the barriers of traditional disciplines so that rapid advance can be made in the difficult problem of understanding more about mental processes. The Boulder-type program cannot take place before the summer of 1964. One of the dividends of the program will be the publication of a volume on the neurosciences comparable to that published on the biophysical sciences resulting from the 1958 program.

M.I.T. is sponsoring the Neurosciences Research Program at present and is administering the N.I.H. grant. However, a Neurosciences Research Foundation has been incorporated in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the purpose of sponsoring the program and being legally responsible for it. The names of the Incorporators are given in the enclosed list. It is expected that the sponsorship will be transferred from M.I.T. to the Foundation in the near future. This will not only make possible fast action unimpeded by red tape but will provide freedom of the Associates from external influence from government, industry, and even universities.

If you have substantial interest in the basic problem around which the Program centers and find the Associates' program challenging and potentially rewarding, we hope you will wish to become an Associate. Rather than to ask you for a decision and commitment at this time, you might plan to attend the November 13-15 meetings and decide on the basis of that experience whether you wish to join.

Dr. Joshua Lederberg

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If you can come to the November meetings, I'm sure the Associates would be interested to hear from you a brief description of the plans for your new institute. About 20 minutes would be available for this purpose. Should you wish further information please call me by telephone collect.

You might care to discuss the Program over the telephone with one or more of the Associates located on the West Coast. Don Glaser ^(Berkeley) at Berkeley would be nearest. Norman Davidson ^(Berkeley) at Cal. Tech. and Ted Bullock ^(UCLA) at UCLA could also give you background.

I hope you will forgive the inordinate length of this letter; I tried a number of times to reach you by telephone but was unsuccessful.

Looking forward to hearing from you, I am

Sincerely yours,



Francis O. Schmitt

Enclosures