



Dr. Judah Denburg
Scientific Director and CEO



Dr. Diana Royce
Managing Director and COO

Network Newsletter March 2010

The Conference in Quebec City

It has been six years since the founding documents describing AllerGen's vision were submitted to the Networks of Centres of Excellence on April 2, 2004. These documents envisioned a vibrant, collaborative research and development network that would engage academic, public and private sector partners in generating innovations benefiting Canadians with Allergy, Asthma and Anaphylaxis.

AllerGen's plan painted a vivid picture of an organization in which clinicians, scientists and trainees with research expertise in more than a dozen fields would pool their talents and collaborate on projects with goals that they would be unable to achieve working alone.

Early in February 2010, the degree to which AllerGen's founding vision has been successfully realized was evident at its 5th Annual Conference, held at the Chateau Frontenac in Quebec City. For three days, almost 200 delegates from the academic, public and private sectors shared the results of their AllerGen-supported research. The results presented demonstrated the powerful and productive synergies that AllerGen has enabled since its 2005 launch.

For the organizing committee, the broad range of attendees was particularly gratifying. Researchers and trainees shared their findings with other scientists, clinicians and representatives of government, industry and patient-based organizations. There was also strong representation from AllerGen's international partners from Europe, Asia, Australia and America.

From the welcoming speeches on Sunday to the closing sessions on Tuesday afternoon, the

conference generated a level of engagement that was almost electric.

The tone was set by the conference's three keynote presenters: Dr. Stephen Holgate, Clinical Professor of Immuno-pharmacology at Southampton General Hospital; Dr. Neal Cohen, Vice Dean of the School of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco and Dr. Alan James, an Associate Professor of Respiratory Medicine at the University of Western Australia and an AllerGen researcher.

The Quebec City conference was a tremendous success. It certainly set the bar high for next year's event in Vancouver! Remember to mark your calendars. The dates for AllerGen's 6th Annual Conference are February 6 – 8, 2011.

Internal Strategic Funding Programs 2010-11

The AllerGen Board has approved the budget allocations for 2010-11.

Strategic Initiatives Program

In addition to the \$4 million previously approved for Network Research, an additional \$75,000 has been allocated for the Strategic Initiatives Program. Individual grants of up to \$50,000 are available.

Funding must be used within a 12 month period. Strategic Initiatives Research funding can be used to support:

- Programmatic or Network-level research partnership initiatives,
- Unique capacity building / training / professional development opportunities within existing research projects,

- Seed funding of new research and development initiatives to build new teams or enable proof-of-principle that will lead to follow-on funding from other sources.

Applicants are required to consult with their Program Leaders and the Managing Director in advance of submitting an application to the Administrative Centre.

KTEE Program

The Knowledge and Technology Exchange and Exploitation (KTEE) programme has a budget of \$300,000 for the coming year. Activities eligible for KTEE support include:

- strengthening the IP position of AllerGen-supported research results,
- undertaking proof of principle and commercialization initiatives aimed at accelerating the rate at which the economic benefits of AllerGen research are realized,
- knowledge translation and transfer activities aimed at accelerating the rate of dissemination and uptake of research findings by target users.

The maximum grant available for KTEE proposals is \$50,000. Applications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and can be submitted at any time throughout the fiscal year.

Proposals will be evaluated by the appropriate AllerGen committees on a “first come, first served” basis until the annual budget for the program is exhausted. Application forms can be obtained from the AllerGen web-site under the *Research/In-Year Research Funding Programmes* tab.

If you have questions about the Strategic Initiatives and KTEE programs, please contact Mark Mitchell, Manager, Research and Partnerships. He can be reached at 905-525-9140 ext. 26902 or mitchemd@mcmaster.ca

HQP Initiatives

This year, \$495,000 has been allocated to AllerGen’s Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP) programme as follows:

- Trainee Symposium \$55,000
- Poster Competition \$50,000
- Trainee Awards \$165,000
- Specialized Equip’t/Lab Transfers \$30,000
- Travel Awards \$31,250
- Tech/Prof. Dev’t Workshop \$10,000
- CTS/CLA Fellowship \$28,750
- Clinician-Scientist Fellowship \$125,000

If you have questions about HQP programs please, contact Melissa Shuker, Program Coordinator, at 905-525-9140 ext. 26633 or shuker@mcmaster.ca.

NCE Renewal – The Critical Path

Planning is already underway for AllerGen’s NCE full review, which will determine the Network’s eligibility for its second seven years of NCE funding from 2012 to 2019. It will take a full 18 months to prepare the hundreds of pages of supporting documentation required for success. The renewal effort will also require cooperation from everyone in the Network. The application profiles progress and accomplishments to date, as well as future plans. This means an increasing emphasis over the next few months on project reports and updates. This is critical for many reasons above and beyond the renewal.

Timely reports allow research leaders to be informed about the overall progress of projects as they move forward towards milestones. They are equally important because they identify opportunities for intellectual property protection. Finally, they help AllerGen staff stay informed about project personnel, publications and related presentations.

We welcome your feedback. If you have specific issues you would like us to address in future issues, please let us know. All comments or enquiries should be sent *via* email to execsec@mcmaster.ca.