

IBC Portal Innovations
Instituional Biosafety Commitee (IBC) Minutes
March 17, 2026

I. Meeting Information

Location: 400 N. Aberdeen, Chicago, IL 60612 (Humboldt Park) and Microsoft Teams (virtual)

Date: Tusday, March 17th, 2026

Time: 1-2 PM

Minutes Prepared By: Jelena Dimitrijeviski

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II. Introduction of Members and IBCs:

Attendance

Members: (voting members)

- ☒ Emily Yee, IBC Chairperson, Biosafety Officer
- ☒ Haidy Delgado, IBC Vice Chair
- ☒ Parth Rao, IBC Member
- ☒ Vilasack Thammavongsa, Scientist
- ☒ Jeremiah Kim, Scientist
- ☒ Carlton Adams, Scientist

Community Members: (voting members)

- ☐ Kyle Schachtschneider, Community Representative
- ☒ Amira Alburei, Community Representative

Triumvirate Environment Representatives (non-voting member)

- ☒ Jelena Dimitrijeviski, EHS Consultant

Guests (non-voting member)

- ☒ Gaby Martinez-Ramirez, Manager of Lab Operations, UChicago Science Incubator
- ☒ Raul Vasquez, Executive Director, UChicago Science Incubator

III. Call to Order:

Meeting called to order at: 1 PM

Agenda:

- Introduction of IBC members and roles
- Overview of IBC responsibilities and NIH guideline requirements
- Overview of Portal Innovations facility and laboratory operations
- Operating Permits & Contracts Status
- Review of biosafety program, training, and safety controls
- Review of biological waste management practices
- Presentation and review of the Immunartes research project, including technical scope and controls
- Discussion of project-related biosafety considerations and vote
- Accident/Incident Updates, Non-Compliance Issues relevant to IBC
- Additional Topics

Agenda reviewed and approved: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Comments or modifications: /

IV. Project Review and Approval

Protocol Title: Immunartes Research

Principal Investigator: Vilasack Thammavongsa, PhD (Immunartes, LLC)

Project Summary: Immunartes, LLC is developing vaccine and monoclonal antibody candidates targeting *Staphylococcus aureus*, including MRSA strains, with the goal of characterizing immune responses and identifying correlates of protective immunity associated with bacterial clearance. The project involves the development and implementation of in vitro immunological assays to evaluate functional and antigen-specific antibody responses. Activities include production and purification of monoclonal antibodies from stable CHO cell lines using standard tissue culture techniques, development of opsonophagocytic killing (OPK) assays utilizing live *Staphylococcus aureus*, and implementation of immunoassays such as dot blot and ELISA-based methods to quantify antibody responses in serum samples. All work is conducted under BSL-2 laboratory conditions. Mammalian cell culture activities are performed in biological safety cabinets (BSCs), while work with live *Staphylococcus aureus* is conducted within a designated BSC in a bacteria-dedicated laboratory space. Immunoassays that do not involve live organisms are performed on the benchtop. Standard biosafety practices are implemented, including biological waste management in accordance with site requirements and routine surface decontamination following laboratory activities.

Investigational Study Agent(s)/Toxin(s):

- Monoclonal antibodies produced from CHO cell lines
- Mammalian cell lines (CHO, HL60)
- *Staphylococcus aureus* (BSL-2, including USA300 strain)
- Serum samples (animal-derived; guinea pig, rabbit, mouse)

- Recombinant protein antigens (received from external source)

Discussion of the Protocol:

- The use of BSL-2 laboratory practices and Biological Safety Cabinets (BSCs) for mammalian cell culture and work with *Staphylococcus aureus* was reviewed and deemed appropriate. Bacterial work will be conducted within a designated BSC in Bacterial Suite - 980A
- Decontamination procedures were reviewed; additional clarification is required regarding disinfectant concentrations and contact times, particularly for effective inactivation of *Staphylococcus aureus*.
- The project scope should be updated to accurately reflect current activities, including clarification that recombinant protein antigens are obtained from an external source and that current work is focused on CHO cell lines.
- Overall, the proposed work is appropriate for BSL-2 containment, pending incorporation of some clarifications.

Biosafety Level Assignment: BSL-2**Section of NIH Guidelines:** Section III-E**Occupational Health, Safety and Environment Practices:**

- BSL-2 laboratory practices are implemented for all activities involving *Staphylococcus aureus*.
- All manipulations involving live *Staphylococcus aureus* are conducted within a certified Class II Biological Safety Cabinet (BSC) in a designated bacteria laboratory space.
- Mammalian cell culture work (CHO and HL60 cell lines) is performed in BSCs using aseptic technique.
- Decontamination procedures include the use of approved disinfectants for work surfaces, equipment, and biological waste.
- All biological waste (liquid, solid, and sharps) is managed and disposed of in accordance with site-specific biosafety and waste management procedures.
- Cultures and biological materials are handled in closed or contained systems where applicable to minimize exposure risks.

Training Requirements:

- Laboratory Training Pathogens Training
- Safety Training - Chemical & Biosafety Training

Motion: A motion was made to approve the protocol as stated, pending the following revisions:

Change Description:

- Update the Project Registration Form description to reflect the current scope of work, including clarifying that recombinant protein antigens are obtained from an external source and that no onsite *E. coli* work is performed.

- Revise the cell line description to reflect current use, with CHO cell lines as the primary system, and remove or clarify references to HEK293 if not applicable.
- Provide clearer details on decontamination procedures, including disinfectants used, their concentrations, and contact times for effective inactivation of Staphylococcus aureus.

Votes:

For: 5 (Conditional approval pending revisions; Chairperson to provide details)

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

V. Accident/Incident Updates, Non-Compliance Issues relevant to IBC

No accidents, incidents, or non-compliance issues relevant to IBC activities were reported or identified at the time of the meeting.

VI. Additional Topics

No additional topics were discussed during the meeting.