

The brief overview below is based on the legislation passed by the General Assembly and signed by the Governor. Please revisit this web site for updates anticipated in the near future.

Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund Brief Overview

Established: By Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. and the Maryland General Assembly through the Maryland Stem Cell Research Act of 2006 during 2006 General Assembly Session.

Purpose: The purpose of the Fund is to promote state-funded stem research and cures through grants and loans to public and private entities in the State. The Fund is a special, nonlapsing fund that is not subject to the State Finance and Procurement Article.

Amount: \$15 Million (FY2007 beginning July 1, 2006)

Stem Cell Research Commission: This independent Commission functions within TEDCO and consists of the following members:

- The Attorney General or Designee
- Three patient advocates, one appointed by each of the following: the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Delegates
- Three individuals with experience in biotechnology, one appointed by each of the following: the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Delegates
- Two individuals who work as scientists for the University System of Maryland (USM) and do not engage in stem cell research, appointed by USM
- Two individuals who work as scientists for the Johns Hopkins University (JHU) and do not engage in stem cell research, appointed by JHU
- Two bioethicists, one appointed by USM and one by JHU
- Two individuals with expertise in the field of biomedical ethics as it relates to religion, appointed by the Governor

The Commission shall elect a Chair from among the appointed members of the Commission. Commissioners serve two year terms and are staggered as required beginning July 1, 2006. Commission members do not receive compensation, but are entitled to reimbursement for State approved expenses.

Proposal Review: The Commission will establish an independent scientific peer review committee composed of scientifically recognized experts in the field of stem cell research. The Committee will review, evaluate, rank, and rate research proposals for State-funded stem cell research based on procedures and guidelines established by the Commissions and in a manner that gives due consideration to the scientific, medical, and ethical implications of the research. The Committee will then make recommendations to the Commission, based on the ranking and ratings awarded to each research proposal and according to its scientific merit. Members of the Committee are not eligible to receive a grant or loan from the Fund and may not reside in Maryland.

Fund Management/Administration: Provided by the Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO), an independent entity established by the Maryland General Assembly in 1998 to facilitate the creation of businesses and foster their growth in all regions of the State through the development and commercialization of technology.

Selected Definitions from the Legislation:

Adult Stem Cell: a cell that is derived from human tissue and is obtained after birth.

Stem Cell: means a human cell that has the ability to divide indefinitely; give rise to many other types of specialized cells; and give rise to new stem cells with identical potential.