



# SCIENCE PHILANTHROPY ALLIANCE

Advancing basic science—The foundation of our future

APRIL 16, 2020

## MEMBERS' MEETING NOTES AND LINKS

### Valerie Conn:

- Opened the call with welcoming remarks
- Announced the Commonwealth Club's COVID-19 live stream on April 17 will feature Harvey Fineberg
- Reminded participants of the Alliance's COVID-19 Resource Hub on the Alliance website.
- Introduced speakers Harvey Fineberg and Tom Kalil.

[Harvey Fineberg](#) noted three areas of inquiry he wanted us to ask ourselves during and following the COVID-19 pandemic:

1. How did we take our existing science investments and adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic? What did we find so far that has been working or not working as well?
2. Did the reality of the pandemic lead any of us to invest in new things we hadn't been doing before that are particular to this pandemic? How well did it work? What obstacles arose?
3. Looking at array of possibilities, how easy or hard has it been to decide what to actually support or get others to join? Where do we see needs to make partnerships to make real progress?

Harvey Fineberg went on to explain that the [Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation](#) is maintaining their long view of programming to make a difference on basic science and other funding areas. They have also pivoted and adapted their traditional program areas to meet the needs brought forth by COVID-19, while also looking at opportunities for new science and areas to work in partnership with colleagues.

[Tom Kalil](#) discussed five areas that [Schmidt Futures](#) were working to address the COVID-19 pandemics:

1. Emergency grant making in areas around COVID-19 in which Schmidt Futures have a comparative advantage
2. Having grantees pivot to address the crisis' impact on economy and society
3. Doing some lightweight coordination between philanthropists
4. In touch with a range of senior personnel in the current White House administration in recruiting people to aid in making suggestions to invest federal funds more wisely
5. Being involved in coalition building

Tom then went on to describe the shared [Google document](#) that Schmidt Futures has produced to allow people to indicate what they're doing and interested in doing. From this a series of working groups has emerged where organizations have decided to take the lead on various issues. One example: a collaboration between [Harvard University](#) and [EdX](#) allowing people to take an online course in ventilator training.

In vaccines, the outlines of a global plan have begun, coordinated by [CEPI](#), [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#), [WHO](#), [GAVI](#) and the [National Academy of Medicine](#), to address accelerated approvals. This includes new approaches like challenge trials, investing in parallel commitments, addressing issues in liability, intellectual property, and equitable distribution.

He mentioned he was not yet seeing anything with that level of rigor and comprehensiveness being done around scaling up of testing or addressing issues in that area around supply chain bottlenecks with, for example, reagents or unique swabs.

Tom then stated that Schmidt Futures has begun an accelerated process of twice-weekly funding decision-making meetings which has resulted in the funding of 40 grants so far including:

- The [Federation of American Scientists](#) is trying to help with the process of congressional appropriation.
- The [National Academy of Science](#) has a proposal for additional support.
- The National Governors Association [Center for Best Practices](#) is being utilized as a mechanism for distributing best and promising practices to Governors who are on the front line.
- [Open Innovation Labs](#) and [Luminary Labs](#) using open sourcing.
- Activities relate to vulnerable populations with [Recidiviz](#) to protect prison populations.
- [Ford Foundation](#), Schmidt Futures, [Open Society Foundation](#) and the [Annie E. Casey Foundation](#) have launched a fund to provide direct relief for workers and families, raised \$27M and is looking for supporters.
- In PPE, they are supporting an effort to support open source blueprints for media supplies by the [Prakash lab](#) at Stanford University, which is being co-supported by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, trying to produce low cost design for ventilators, clever repurposing of scuba masks for PPE and new approaches to decontamination.
- Stu Feldman is working to support projects at the [Broad Institute](#), the [Center for Emerging and Neglected Diseases](#) at UC Berkeley, and [Mayo Clinic](#).

Schmidt Futures is interested in a "smart restart," figuring out what tools states and counties need to support a return to business as usual; including proposals from Oregon State that is supported by the [David and Lucile Packard Foundation](#).

Additionally, they would like to create a network of universities looking to support states (for example [Carnegie Mellon University](#), [University of Pittsburgh](#), and [University of Pennsylvania](#) in PA), and they have been reaching out to [the National Science Foundation](#) to build a research

coordination network.

Valerie moderated a discussion amongst our members during which the following projects were mentioned. Please click on any of the link below for more information:

- The March 2020 WHO Report: [A COORDINATED GLOBAL RESEARCH ROADMAP: 2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS](#)
- Research in humanitarian crises: [R2HC research ethics tool/guide](#)
- COVID-19 [research project tracker](#). Joint initiative between UKCDR (Marta) and Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness (GloPID-R)
- Cochrane's [COVID-19 rapid reviews](#)
- [COVID-Zero](#): Wellcome's initiative to develop a business coalition to help fund R&D, treatments, testing and vaccines. Scroll down on the link to get info on what CEPI is doing, the new therapeutics accelerator, WHO solidarity response fund and Foundation for innovative new diagnostics (FIND)