



Dear

The HMS team would like to thank you one more time for the submission of the proposals, which we reviewed last week. The team recently met, and through further discussions created the following summary of the proposals, their perceived intent and the next steps to be discussed in a workshop in July, scheduled for July 10 to 12, 2007 in Lisbon.

Briefly, in all three major areas, the Basic Science Doctoral Programs, Translational and Clinical Research, and Public Content, we received proposals for the creation of national consortia. We also received several proposals for cores and infrastructure, but we would like to treat them for the time being as subsidiary projects within the three major areas in order to make sure that they support the national efforts. When we met, it struck us that all of the proposals could fit into an overarching national consortium that would provide the framework, guidance and governance for the various efforts. For the time being, we are calling this entity **“The National Consortium for Biomedicine and Health Sciences.”** We think this national consortium could hold great promise for strengthening and integrating biomedical and health research and education throughout Portugal, including the country’s medical and health science schools, universities, research institutes, and population at large.

At the present time and in concordance with the technical annex, we have identified the following four **Components of the National Consortium:**

**1. National PhD and MD-PhD Programs in Biomedicine and Health Sciences**

We feel that most of the more “regional” proposals could fit very well under the overall umbrella of the national program, and the details should be discussed at the workshop (see below). Some characteristics of this program may include:

- a. These programs would be open to a limited number of highly qualified students being able to enter through any of the participating institutions
- b. The money would support and follow the candidate and the candidate could move if (s)he so desires
- c. Didactic content would be housed in the individual institutions for the most part but common venues (real and virtual) should be encouraged if they seem to add value
- d. Students can spend part of their time in collaborating HMS institutions if the area of research or subject matter warrant it

HMS could collaborate in the following manner:

- a. Co-development in planning, design and implementation of the national consortium, starting with mission statement, strategic objectives, and governance/management model
- b. Co-development in planning, design and implementation of the doctoral programs, including admissions, faculty selection, faculty development, student advising, curriculum, required and elective courses, laboratory rotations, qualifying examination, thesis research, thesis preparation and defense, teaching/community education requirement (if any), extracurricular activities, and external advisory committees
- c. Co-development in planning, design and conduct of *national and international* workshops and closed conferences (e.g. Gordon conference type) in Portugal [parts can be open to whole scientific community or public if desired]
- d. Co-development in planning, design and conduct of symposia featuring among others the work by the candidates

*Original Letter Sent to Institutions in Response to the Proposals*

- e. Visiting faculty, collaborators and mentors
- f. Biomedical research to be complementary with these programs
  - i. High quality research proposals will be requested and funded to support areas of scientific interest and national interest
  - ii. This research is to be collaborative with HMS
  - iii. Investigator, post-doc and student exchanges with HMS
- g. Post-doc programs and support
- h. Post-doc positions in research to support these efforts with positions available at HMS

Topics for discussion for the workshop in July:

1. Agreement on the concept
2. Governance
3. Request for specific research proposals to support and complement the degree programs; the discussions should include **specific items for the expected science collaborations** (e.g. proposal topics, preferably targeting "Frontiers in Human Biology", budget scale, number of positions per consortium to be supported at both Portugal and HMS labs, etc).
4. Timeline and developmental plan

**2. Graduate Programs in Translational and Clinical Research**

Given the exciting proposal for a national consortium, we felt that this should become a component of the overall Consortium. The team felt that one way to start this would be by creating a core planning group for the programs in translational and clinical research, and have them participate in some of the existing degree and certificate programs at HMS. During the time in Boston, the group could develop a curriculum outline for the national program. The suggested steps are summarized below:

- a. Core planning group to attend appropriate Training (Master's) Programs in Boston and meet with their leadership
- b. Co-develop concept and curriculum at that time

Topics for discussion for the workshop in July:

1. Agreement on the concept
2. Governance especially relationship to MOH, the hospitals and commercial entities
3. Timeline and development plan

**3. Cores In Support of the Above**

As mentioned above, the cores should be in support of the overall endeavor and build on existing infrastructure, much of it is already in place. Below is a short list of possible cores:

- a. Administrative
- b. Data and resources
- c. Technical
- d. Programs and training
- e. Facilities

Topics for discussion for the workshop in July:

1. Agreement on the concept
2. Review of existing infrastructures at the various institutions
3. Governance and coordination
4. Timeline and development plan

#### **4. Public Content**

We received proposals for the creation of an “open access” information system for all levels of education and the creation of a public portal concerning public health issues. The team felt that these efforts could again be woven into the overall Consortium, and aid in the support of the national programs. Clearly, there will need to be a significant amount of additional content creation to serve the biomedical and health science community, media, teachers at all levels and the 250 Million people living in countries, whose official language is Portuguese. Here are the suggested next steps:

- a. Build on the main proposals and combine/coordinate
- b. Work with Ciência Viva and UMIC to coordinate with other areas of public content development
- c. HMS to provide workshops for media and help create similar workshops for Portugal and European environment
- d. HMS to help co-develop workshops for teachers at all levels of biomedical and health sciences education.
- e. HMS to make available, as requested, already-created content about health and illness for the general public, to be integrated into an open access public portal created by the Consortium (translated into Portuguese and adapted to reflect local medical practice)
- f. HMS to support editing, educational development, platform development, etc., as requested

#### Topics for discussion for the workshop in July:

1. Agreement on the concept
2. Governance and roles of various parties
3. Timeline and developmental plan
4. Relationship to the Consortium

As mentioned above, these are the team’s initial reactions to what we received, and we are eager to have discussions to create a more fleshed out and detailed development plan. We hope to be able to discuss the above issues in the workshop in July focusing especially on the areas of science to be included in the programs. The discussions will be quite practical and need to include specific discussions concerning human resource requirements, budgets, facilities, etc. in order to create a realistic proposal for the future. The team felt that the number of participants should be limited, and should include one person from each institution who could address the academic side and one person who could speak to the specific scientific endeavors. We would like to especially encourage the participation of researchers in the associated laboratories and medical schools who may not have perceived that our original request for proposals applied to them. *The participation and creative input of all the best life-science and health-science researchers and teachers in Portugal will be required if the concept of a national consortium is to be successful.*

Please contact me at anytime to discuss. I will be in Portugal during the week of June 25<sup>th</sup>, staying at the Tulip Altis Hotel in Lisbon the nights of June 25, 26, and 27. I will be monitoring my email and can be reached by mobile at +1 617 319 2881.

Warmest regards and hoping to see you soon.

For the Harvard Team, H. Thomas Aretz, MD