

Institutional Biosafety Committee Meeting Minutes

La Jolla Institute
FOR IMMUNOLOGY

Life Without Disease.

February 11th, 2026, meeting

A regular meeting of the Institutional Biosafety Committee of the La Jolla Institute for Immunology was held in person on Wednesday, February 11th, 2026, at 9:30 AM, with the option to join via Zoom teleconference.

The meeting started at 9:35 AM.

IBC: 12 MEMBERS AND 2 ALTERNATES

ATTENDANCE: 9 VOTING MEMBERS, 1 ALTERNATE, 7 MEMBERS REQUIRED FOR QUORUM

Regular Members	Present
Miguel Reina-Campos, Ph.D. (Chair)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mike Barajas (Alternate) CMAR, RLATG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sylvie Blondelle, Ph.D.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Laurence Cagnon, Ph.D.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rose Engel,	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beth Ford, D.V.M.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
David Hall, CSP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Peter Jones, BS, LATG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Alessandro Sette, Ph.D.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stephen Schoenberger, Ph.D.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kristine Suchey, BS, RVT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Renna Wolfe, Ph.D.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Jeremy Young (alternate), BS, MBA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marianne Zupanc, Ph.D.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Others Present: Hayley Simon	

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The December meeting minutes were unanimously approved

PROTOCOL REVIEW

NEW PROTOCOLS

PI	Shresta
Protocol #	BHR25-SS
Title	Antisense proof of concept
Experimental Procedures	
Agent	Adenoviral vectors
Project summary (from form)	Replication-deficient adenoviral vectors expressing identified viral immunogenic sequences, initially from Alphaviruses (Mayaro and Chikungunya), will be tested in established disease models in vivo.
Additional details from the protocol	N/A
Manipulations planned	In vivo injections, pipetting
Recombinant or Synthetic Nucleic Acids	
Source of nucleic sequences (e.g., species)	Adenovirus 5, Mayaro and Chikungunya viruses
Nature of nucleic acid (NA) sequences (e.g., enzyme, oncogene)	Viral vectors (non-replicative), immunogenic peptides
NA Host(s) and Vector(s)	rodents
Risk Assessment/Training	
Risk Assessment	Low
Training	Verified and on record
IBC Assessment	
Proposed Biosafety Level	BSL-2 and ABSL-1 with BSL-2 practices
CA ATP-L	No
NIH Guidelines	III-D-4-a
Category 1 Research	No
Category 2 Research	No
IBC Approval	
Unanimously approved at the proposed biosafety levels with the discussed modifications (addition of experimental timelines and DLAC procedures)	

RENEWALS

PI	Crotty
Protocol #	BHR15-SC
Title	Blood and blood products collected from individuals exposed to SARS-CoV-2 or diagnosed with COVID-19
Experimental Procedures	
Agent	Blood samples, blood products, saliva, and nasal swabs from individuals exposed to SARS-CoV-2 or diagnosed with COVID-19 (caused by SARS-CoV-2 infection)
Project summary (from form)	Our laboratory studies long-term, "memory" immunity to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. We aim to understand how vaccination and/or infection, including from related viruses, generate(s) protective immunity against COVID-19. We also want to understand if individuals who lack or fail to generate such protective immune responses following vaccination and/or infection are at higher risk for recurrent or more severe COVID-19. The knowledge gained from our experiments may help with designing better vaccines or treatments for COVID-19, as well as aid in knowing how durable or long-lived protective immune responses last following vaccination and/or infection. We will study immunity present in the circulation (blood immune cells), and lymphoid tissue, as well as at sites of infection/exposure to the virus, including the nose/upper respiratory tract.
Additional details from the protocol	N/A
Manipulations planned	Centrifuging, pipetting, mixing, plate washing, vacuum aspiration, homogenizing, vortexing, and flow cytometry
Recombinant or Synthetic Nucleic Acids	
Source of nucleic sequences (e.g., species)	N/A
Nature of nucleic acid (NA) sequences (e.g., enzyme, oncogene)	N/A
NA Host(s) and Vector(s)	N/A
Risk Assessment/Training	
Risk Assessment	Low
Training	Verified and on record
IBC Assessment	
Approved Biosafety Level	BSL-2 with BSL-3 practices aimed at containing the aerosols
CA ATP-L	Yes
NIH Guidelines	N/A
Category 1 Research	No
Category 2 Research	No
IBC Approval	
Unanimously approved at the proposed biosafety levels with the discussed modifications	

PI	Kronenberg
Protocol #	BHR20-MK
Title	Salmonella enterica serovar Typhimurium infection for gastroenteritis
Experimental Procedures	
Agent	Salmonella enterica serovar Typhimurium
Project summary (from form)	The overall aim of this work is to understand the function of subsets of white blood cells that are types of T cells, but that function as part of the innate immune system. The main focus is a population called natural killer T (NKT) cells, but we also study mucosal associated invariant T (MAIT) cells and T cells that express a gamma delta T cell antigen receptor.
Additional details from the protocol	N/A
Manipulations planned	Bacteria growth, in vivo infections, pipetting, centrifugation
Recombinant or Synthetic Nucleic Acids	
Source of nucleic sequences (e.g., species)	N/A
Nature of nucleic acid (NA) sequences (e.g., enzyme, oncogene)	N/A
NA Host(s) and Vector(s)	N/A
Risk Assessment/Training	
Risk Assessment	Low
Training	Verified and on record
IBC Assessment	
Approved Biosafety Level	BSL-2 with BSL-3 practices aimed at containing the aerosols and ABSL-2
CA ATP-L	No
NIH Guidelines	N/A
Category 1 Research	No
Category 2 Research	No
IBC Approval	
Unanimously approved at the proposed biosafety levels with the discussed modifications	

PI	Sette
Protocol #	BHR03-ADS
Title	Normal Donor Human Blood
Experimental Procedures	
Agent	Human blood from normal donor
Project summary (from form)	Human PBMC from whole blood will be examined for the presence of T cell responses specific for immune-modulating pathogens, including but not limited to allergens, tuberculosis, B. pertussis, zika virus, Chikungunya, and/or dengue virus, and noninfectious human cell lines used as control and HLA restriction.
Additional details from the protocol	N/A
Manipulations planned	Tissue culture, PBMC purification, in vitro assays, flow cytometry, cell sorting, pipetting, centrifugation
Recombinant or Synthetic Nucleic Acids	
Source of nucleic sequences (e.g., species)	N/A
Nature of nucleic acid (NA) sequences (e.g., enzyme, oncogene)	N/A

NA Host(s) and Vector(s)	N/A
Risk Assessment/Training	
Risk Assessment	Low
Training	Verified and on record
IBC Assessment	
Approved Biosafety Level	BSL-2
CA ATP-L	No
NIH Guidelines	N/A
Category 1 Research	No
Category 2 Research	No
IBC Approval	
Unanimously approved at the proposed biosafety levels	

PI	Sette
Protocol #	BHR07-ADS
Title	Dengue Virus – Epitope Identification in Infectious Agents
Experimental Procedures	
Agent	PBMCs, plasma and all blood products derived from people previously or currently infected with Dengue.
Project summary (from form)	Human PBMCs, plasma and all blood products derived from people previously or currently infected with Dengue. Will be examined for the presence of T cell responses specific for Dengue Virus using overlapping peptides. We will not use actual virus in our research.
Additional details from the protocol	N/A
Manipulations planned	Tissue culture, PBMC purification, in vitro assays, flow cytometry, cell sorting, pipetting, centrifugation
Recombinant or Synthetic Nucleic Acids	
Source of nucleic sequences (e.g., species)	N/A
Nature of nucleic acid (NA) sequences (e.g., enzyme, oncogene)	N/A
NA Host(s) and Vector(s)	N/A
Risk Assessment/Training	
Risk Assessment	Low
Training	Verified and on record
IBC Assessment	
Approved Biosafety Level	BSL-2
CA ATP-L	No
NIH Guidelines	N/A
Category 1 Research	No
Category 2 Research	No
IBC Approval	
Unanimously approved at the proposed biosafety levels with the discussed modifications	

PI	Sette
Protocol #	BHR11-ADS
Title	PBMC derived from subjects with active infection from species of the Mycobacterium tuberculosis complex
Experimental Procedures	
Agent	PBMC derived from subjects with active infection from species of the Mycobacterium tuberculosis complex, primarily M. tuberculosis or M. bovis.
Project summary (from form)	We plan to identify and examine specific immune signatures (IMS) that are associated with the expansion and/or contraction of an individual's T cell pool when they have M. tuberculosis (Mtb) infection, latent tuberculosis, or if they have received the BCG vaccination. Characterization of IMS in different MTB exposure states will aid in the understanding of antigen-specific immune responses and has the potential to improve immunomonitoring of disease progression and evaluation of vaccine candidates. Through this research, we hope to better understand the immune response and to enable improved vaccine design and novel immunodiagnostic tests.
Additional details from the protocol	N/A
Manipulations planned	Tissue culture, PBMC purification, in vitro assays, Flow cytometry, cell sorting, pipetting, centrifugation
Recombinant or Synthetic Nucleic Acids	
Source of nucleic sequences (e.g., species)	N/A
Nature of nucleic acid (NA) sequences (e.g., enzyme, oncogene)	N/A
NA Host(s) and Vector(s)	N/A
Risk Assessment/Training	
Risk Assessment	TBD
Training	Verified and on record
IBC Assessment	
Approved Biosafety Level	BSL-2 with BSL-3 practices aimed at containing the aerosols
CA ATP-L	No
NIH Guidelines	N/A
Category 1 Research	No
Category 2 Research	No
IBC Approval	
Unanimously approved at the proposed biosafety levels with the discussed modifications	

PI	Sette
Protocol #	BHR14-ADS
Title	PBMC derived from subjects with active Zika infection
Experimental Procedures	
Agent	Zika virus?
Project summary (from form)	Characterization of T cell responses using peptide megapools in cohorts of previously exposed and ZIKV+ patients with well-documented clinical symptoms and laboratory-confirmed diagnosis.
Additional details from the protocol	N/A
Manipulations planned	Tissue culture, PBMC purification, in vitro assays, Flow cytometry, cell sorting, pipetting, centrifugation
Recombinant or Synthetic Nucleic Acids	
Source of nucleic sequences (e.g., species)	N/A

Nature of nucleic acid (NA) sequences (e.g., enzyme, oncogene)	N/A
NA Host(s) and Vector(s)	N/A
Risk Assessment/Training	
Risk Assessment	Low
Training	Verified and on record
IBC Assessment	
Approved Biosafety Level	BSL-2
CA ATP-L	No
NIH Guidelines	N/A
Category 1 Research	No
Category 2 Research	No
IBC Approval	
Unanimously approved at the proposed biosafety levels with the discussed modifications	

PI	Sette
Protocol #	BHR15-ADS
Title	Blood derived from subjects exposed to Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2)
Experimental Procedures	
Agent	Blood and saliva samples from individuals exposed to Novel Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2)
Project summary (from form)	The PBMC samples from subjects previously exposed to SARS-CoV-2 will be used to characterize antigen-specific T cells. We will study cohorts of healthy donors that have been previously exposed to the infection based on positive serology but do not have an ongoing infection to characterize the epitope recognized. We will additionally quantify and dissect qualitatively the response of individuals in the acute phase of the SARS COV-2 disease.
Additional details from the protocol	N/A
Manipulations planned	Tissue culture, PBMC purification, in vitro assays, Flow cytometry, cell sorting, pipetting, centrifugation
Recombinant or Synthetic Nucleic Acids	
Source of nucleic acid sequences (e.g., species)	N/A
Nature of nucleic acid (NA) sequences (e.g., enzyme, oncogene)	N/A
NA Host(s) and Vector(s)	N/A
Risk Assessment/Training	
Risk Assessment	Low
Training	Verified and on record
IBC Assessment	
Approved Biosafety Level	BSL-2 with BSL-3 practices aimed at containing the aerosols
CA ATP-L	Yes
NIH Guidelines	N/A
Category 1 Research	No
Category 2 Research	No
IBC Approval	
Unanimously approved at the proposed biosafety levels with the discussed modifications	

PI	Vijayanand
Protocol #	BHR03-PV
Title	Blood derived from subjects exposed to SARS-CoV-2
Experimental Procedures	
Agent	Blood and lung tissue from individuals exposed to SARS-CoV-2
Project summary (from form)	To advance our understanding of immune protection against SARS-CoV-2 and explain the variability in disease severity, this ongoing project aims to comprehensively characterize T cells by profiling thousands of individual cells from COVID-19 patients and healthy donors. Here, we are investigating the mechanism of cross-reactivity to determine if pre-existing T cells generated against common pathogens, such as Cytomegalovirus (CMV), can recognize SARS-CoV-2 and provide early protection. This research seeks to identify the precise immune signatures required for providing essential data to inform the design of future therapeutics.
Additional details from the protocol	N/A
Manipulations planned	Tissue culture, in vitro assay, flow cytometry, pipetting, centrifugation
Recombinant or Synthetic Nucleic Acids	
Source of nucleic sequences (e.g., species)	N/A
Nature of nucleic acid (NA) sequences (e.g., enzyme, oncogene)	N/A
NA Host(s) and Vector(s)	N/A
Risk Assessment/Training	
Risk Assessment	Low
Training	Verified and on record
IBC Assessment	
Approved Biosafety Level	BSL-2 with BSL-3 practices aimed at containing the aerosols
CA ATP-L	Yes
NIH Guidelines	N/A
Category 1 Research	No
Category 2 Research	No
IBC Approval	
Unanimously approved at the proposed biosafety levels with the discussed modifications	

AMENDMENT FOR IBC REVIEW

PI	Shresta
Protocol #	BHR17-SS
Title	Host response to Chikungunya virus
Experimental Procedures	
Agent	Chikungunya virus
Amendment summary (from form)	Adding sequential infection
Additional details from the protocol	Biosafety Note: The lab wants to generate an immune response with a first virus and at least 28 days later infect with a second virus to assess whether the first infect provides an immunity to the second virus. The new experiments will not change the biosafety level or the assessed risk as the first virus will be cleared by the time of the second infection
Manipulations planned	Same as on the original protocol.
Recombinant or Synthetic Nucleic Acids	
Source of nucleic sequences (e.g., species)	N/A
Nature of nucleic acid (NA) sequences (e.g., enzyme, oncogene)	N/A
NA Host(s) and Vector(s)	N/A
Risk Assessment/Training	
Risk Assessment	Medium
Training	Verified and on record
IBC Assessment	
Approved Biosafety Level	BSL-3 and ABSL-3
CA ATP-L	No
NIH Guidelines	N/A
Category 1 Research	No
Category 2 Research	No
IBC Approval	
Unanimously approved at the proposed biosafety levels with the same discussed modifications as the new protocol BHR25-SS (addition of experimental timelines and DLAC procedures)	

GENERAL BUSINESS

AAALAC Site Vit (2/8/2026)

Successful site visit with no findings or suggestion for improvement. AAALAC accreditation for another 3 years.

BSL-3 ANNUAL SHUT-DOWN and COMMISSIONING UPDATE.

The BSL-3 was shut down from 12/19/2025 to 1/27/2026, for annual maintenance and third-party evaluation after facility disinfection by TSS. Cornerstone recommissioned the facility.

BSL-3 INCIDENTS

None

NIH REPORTABLE INCIDENTS

None

DURC

None

Meeting adjourned at 10:32 am