



Department of Energy
Office of Science
Washington, DC 20585

Office of the Director

November 14, 2005

Dr. Keith O. Hodgson
Director, Stanford Synchrotron Radiation Laboratory
Department of Chemistry
Stanford University
Stanford, CA 94305

Dear Dr. ^{Keith}Hodgson:

The Biological and Environmental Research (BER) program supports the operation of the Joint Genome Institute (JGI), including the Production Genomics Facility (PGF), as a national scientific user facility. The JGI/PGF is located in Walnut Creek, California, and is jointly managed by a laboratory consortium presently consisting of Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Los Alamos National Laboratory, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, and Oak Ridge National Laboratory. The mission of the JGI/PGF is to provide highly efficient, cost effective, high quality and high throughput DNA sequencing for the scientific needs of programs supported by BER and for researchers needing access to DNA sequencing.

I am charging BERAC with organizing and conducting a review of the JGI, including the PGF, to evaluate its present performance in five areas: safety, management, operations, science, and user services. This will be both a programmatic review and an operational review. I request that this review be conducted as expeditiously as possible so that it can be discussed at the December 2005 BERAC meeting.

I would like the review to address the following questions:

Science:

1. Is the science conducted by the JGI/PGF cutting edge? How does it support the JGI/PGF role as a user facility?
2. How does the science conducted by the JGI/PGF support DOE mission and/or national interests? How does the JGI ensure an appropriate balance between mission-related sequencing and making DOE's unique resources available to the scientific community for basic research?
3. What is the status of plans for the Laboratory Sequencing Program and how will it be implemented?



Management:

1. Are the JGI, PGF, and the management lab consortium's roles and responsibilities clearly defined and effectively carried out and coordinated?
2. Is the way that the JGI/PGF management sets priorities, responds to BER imperatives, tracks progress, and resolves problems that impact laboratory operations the most effective approach?
3. Is the way that priorities are determined between BER needs, scientific community needs, internal science needs, and Work-for-Others (WFO) needs the most effective approach?
4. Are the JGI/PGF plans to maintain its sequencing and genome annotation capabilities to the "best in class" standard the most reasonable and effective?
5. Are there adequate resources to accomplish the BER mission at the JGI/PGF in the context of a flat budget (FY 2006 and outyears)?
6. Is the JGI/PGF's allocation and management of BER resources (manpower and funds) to achieve maximum impact the most effective.
7. How are the BER missions at the JGI/PGF impacted by non-BER sources of Operations or Capital Equipment funding?

Operations:

1. Safety: Do JGI systems adequately foster safe operations, and ensure that ES&H and Security requirements are met?
2. User services: Does the JGI/PGF have appropriate procedures in place for identifying, reviewing requests from, supporting, and coordinating users? Does the JGI/PGF interact with users, both present and future in the most effective and productive way, reflecting their evolving needs?
3. Business practices: Do business systems and practices adequately ensure conformance with financial requirements and demonstrate sound business practices?

I very much appreciate your assistance in this matter. The insights and recommendations of your review team will be important to our future management of the JGI/PGF. I look forward to receiving your Committee's formal report no later than January 2006.

Sincerely,



Raymond L. Orbach
Director

cc:

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