

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF CAC ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS*

Background

The California Association of Criminalists established the A. Reed and Virginia McLaughlin Endowment Fund in 1991 to provide support for various training and research projects that may have a positive impact on the field of Forensic Science. The purpose of the CAC Endowment Committee is to oversee and make recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding the allocation of funds from the A. Reed and Virginia McLaughlin Endowment Fund. The Endowment Fund is used to promote various activities that benefit the educational and professional needs of CAC members and/or advance the field of Forensic Science, including:

- Research projects
- Scholarships
- Training courses and workshops
- Other items determined to have merit by the Committee and/or Board of Directors

In order to receive funding, interested parties must submit a written proposal outlining the goals, methods of accomplishment, expenses, and other relevant details for consideration. The “Call for Proposals” document announces the open period during which proposals will be accepted and provides guidelines for the formatting and submission of proposals to the Endowment and Training & Resources (T&R) Committees. Proposals for training courses should be submitted directly to the T&R Committee by the interested party. The T&R Committee will then evaluate and prioritize all such submissions, along with their recommendations, before forwarding them to the Endowment Committee for consideration. The Endowment Committee then evaluates the T&R Committee’s recommendations in context with all of the other proposals it has received before submitting a final report with its recommendations for funding to the CAC Board of Directors.

The Endowment Committee does not accept applications or proposals for scholarships directly from students. After a scholarship proposal is received from an accredited academic institution and approved for funding by the Endowment Committee, the money is awarded to a trustee of the institution. The institution is then responsible for the administration and distribution of the scholarship funds to qualified students, with oversight from the CAC.

The Endowment Fund is intended to be self-sustaining through long-term financial investment options as determined by the Treasurer. Approved projects are generally funded from the interest generated by the Endowment. This approach protects the principal in the Endowment account and helps to ensure a perpetual funding source for future years. Due to natural fluctuations in the economy and stock market, the amount of Endowment funding available for projects in a particular year will be greatly determined by the recent performance of the financial products in which the Endowment is invested.

The CAC Endowment Committee is comprised of three core members and two ex-officio members: the CAC President-elect and Treasurer.

Responsibilities

The core members of the Committee serve a three year term, with the second year spent as Chair. The Treasurer and President-elect serve on the Committee as determined by their respective terms in office. The terms of each of the three core members typically end with the conclusion of the Spring CAC Seminar. The responsibilities of each of the core members are outlined below:

First Year Member –

- 1) Review submitted research and training proposals for merit as forwarded by Chair.
- 2) Communicate with Committee members to review endowment funding proposals;
 - Give input on acceptance or rejection of proposals;
 - Vote on the prioritization of accepted proposals.
- 3) Learn how the Committee functions in preparation for assuming Chair position.

Second Year Member (Chair) –

- 1) Distribute the Call for Proposals document to Membership Secretary, Editorial Secretary, and Webmaster for dissemination to the membership at large via e-mail, publication in the CAC News, and posting on the CAC website. The Call for Proposals needs to be updated with the current year and submission deadlines prior to distribution. The deadline for the submission of training proposals to the T&R Committee is usually around the last Friday in February, while the deadline for submissions to the Endowment Committee is usually the last Friday in March; however, this is only a guideline. The deadlines for the T&R Committee are earlier than those for the Endowment Committee in order to allow time for the T&R Committee to meet and confer on the submitted training proposals before forwarding them to the Endowment Committee for consideration. A sample Call for Proposals document is attached (*Attachment 1*).
- 2) As proposals are received by the Chair, they should be reviewed for content and format. If a particular proposal does not include sufficient information regarding how the funds are to be used or other pertinent details that would allow the Committee to fully evaluate the proposal's merit, it is incumbent on the Chair to attempt to contact the submitter to see if these shortcomings can be fixed prior to the application deadline. However, it is still fully the submitter's responsibility to submit a comprehensive proposal to the Committee by the application due date. The Committee is under no obligation to extend the submission deadline to accommodate changes that must be made to a proposal for acceptance by the Committee. If the Chair feels the changes that must be made to a proposal are too significant to be accommodated by the submitter in time to make the deadline, the Chair should recommend to the submitter that they consider re-submitting the proposal during the following year's acceptance period after the recommended changes are made.
- 3) In late March or April, after all of the proposals have been received, the Chair should send copies of all of the documents under consideration to the other Committee members for evaluation. At a

minimum, the Chair should send the President-elect and Treasurer a list of the submitted proposals, but may choose not to send them all of the proposals and associated documents due to financial reasons.

- 4) It is the responsibility of the Chair to arrange a meeting of the members to review the various proposals. This can be accomplished through an in-person meeting, telephone conference call, e-mail exchanges, or a combination of these communication types. The Chair and/or other Committee members may choose to attend a Committee meeting at CAC expense if the Chair considers the travel appropriate based on logistics, information to be exchanged, or other relevant considerations. The CAC maintains a travel budget to reimburse members who must travel beyond a 50-mile radius from their home or work location to conduct CAC business, such as committee meetings. The Chair is responsible for ensuring that the budget allocated for Committee business is sufficient to meet the needs of the Committee, including potential travel, for the coming year. Refer to the CAC Travel Policy (*Attachment 8*).

The main focus of this meeting should be to reach a consensus on the priority and funding levels of each proposal that will ultimately be recommended to the Board of Directors. Input from the Treasurer and President-elect at this stage can be particularly helpful in making some of these decisions. The Treasurer can usually provide an update prior to the meeting regarding the anticipated level of funding for any given year.

- 5) Seed money for the two CAC Seminars to be presented in the upcoming year is provided by the Endowment Fund. Although it is generally assumed that these funds will be automatically approved by the Board, it should be added as a line item (usually Priority #1) among the recommended proposals on the report prepared by the Chair (see number 7, below). At the current time, the typical amount awarded as seed money to a CAC Seminar planning committee is \$2,500. If the planning committee for a CAC Seminar wants to request additional funds, they must apply through the T&R Committee.
- 6) For those proposals that the Committee approves, the Committee can recommend any dollar amount above or below that which is being requested, as appropriate. For any rejected proposals, the Chair must send a letter or other communication to the submitter explaining the reason why the proposal is not being recommended for funding and what, if anything, can be improved to allow the proposal to be considered at a later time (e.g., additional information as to how the money will be used, proposal formatting, experimental design). Any rejected proposals must be resubmitted at a later time (usually the next funding cycle, at the earliest) if the interested party wants them reconsidered by the Committee.
- 7) The Chair must then prepare a written report outlining the recommendations of the Committee, with each item prioritized in the form of a numbered ranking with the dollar amount of the proposed funding. Information should also be included to update the Board as to the status of previously funded projects. This information should be gathered by the third year member of the Committee (see below). The report should be prepared in advance of the spring CAC Seminar, for consideration by the Board of Directors and inclusion in the Business Meeting held at the Seminar. A sample Committee Report is attached (*Attachment 2*). The Board will then vote on the proposals based on the amount of money available in the Endowment Fund.

- 8) After the Board of Directors votes on the Committee's recommendations, the Treasurer notifies the Chair as to which of the recommended projects were approved. The Chair then notifies each applicant of the decision to fund or not fund the proposal. A sample Endowment award letter is attached (*Attachment 3*).
 - a. Although a typical award letter should include mention of the fact that a CAC contract is being sent to the recipient, who must then sign it and return it by a specified deadline, the involvement of a contract per se may create a problem for some universities, such as UC Davis (UCD). In the instance of UCD, the University views the involvement of a contract as making the donated money a grant, rather than a gift. While gifts currently are subject to a 6% overhead charge, grants have to be approved by the University's grant office and can be subject to a 52% charge. In order to avoid this excess charge, any award letters sent to UCD announcing approved funding for scholarship proposals should be on CAC letterhead and must omit wording referring to a "contract." A sample award letter for UCD is attached (*Attachment 4*).

In addition, an MOU outlining the terms and conditions of a CAC-UCD Scholarship Fund that has been established should be sent to the Director of the Forensic Science Graduate Program for signing, in lieu of a contract. A sample of the current MOU is attached (*Attachment 5*).

- 9) If training classes, such as those provided through the California Criminalistics Institute (CCI), are approved for funding, the Endowment Committee Chair will notify the Chair of the T&R Committee. The T&R Committee may then track the distribution of the funds or otherwise assist with the class.
- 10) Finally, around June, the Chair sends out contracts to applicants whose proposals have been granted funding. The contracts outline the terms and conditions under which the funds will be awarded. Each contract must be signed by the recipient and returned to the Chair, who then forwards the originals to the Treasurer before the funds are awarded. Samples of a research project contract and a scholarship contract are attached (*Attachments 6 and 7*).

Third Year Member –

- 1) As soon as possible after the Spring Seminar, the third year member must contact the CAC President to obtain the name of the President's selection for first-year Endowment Committee member. The third year member should contact the appointee and forward a copy of this duties statement to the new member, as well as inform the Endowment Chair of the selected appointment.
- 2) Track funded projects that were approved during member's term as Chair.
 - Contact recipients periodically and inquire as to status of projects through their completion;

- Report the current status of all in-progress and completed projects to the Chair for inclusion in his or her report to the Board of Directors prior to the Spring CAC Seminar;
 - For scholarships, a CAC member is typically assigned as a liaison to the recipient university to oversee the awarding of the money. The third year member is tasked with contacting the liaison to document the distribution of the award and reporting this information to the Chair.
 - Each approved proposal, regardless of the form of final completion (report, presentation, etc.), should acknowledge funding from the Endowment. This includes training, research grants, and scholarships. This requirement is stated in the contracts.
 - The third year member is responsible for tracking proposals until they are completed, even if that time period extends beyond the member's term on the Committee.
- 3) Review submitted research and training proposals for merit as forwarded by the current Chair;
- 4) Communicate with Committee members to review endowment funding proposals;
- Give input on acceptance or rejection of proposals;
 - Vote on the prioritization of accepted proposals.

Note: If any Committee member has a personal involvement with a particular proposal under consideration that might create a real or perceived conflict of interest, it is appropriate for that member to abstain from any vote regarding its potential recommendation by the Committee.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Sample Call for Proposals

Attachment 2: Sample Endowment Committee Report

Attachment 3: Sample Endowment Award Letter

Attachment 4: Sample UCD Endowment Award Letter (Scholarship)

Attachment 5: Sample CAC-UCD Scholarship Fund MOU

Attachment 6: Sample Research Project Contract

Attachment 7: Sample Scholarship Contract

Attachment 8: CAC Travel Policy

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