

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE

Board of Directors

PAUL B. SEARS, *President*
LAURENCE H. SNYDER, *President Elect*
GEORGE W. BEADLE, *Retiring President*
WALLACE R. BRODE
PAUL M. GROSS
GEORGE R. HARRISON
MARK H. INGRAHAM
PAUL E. KLOPSTEG
CHAUNCEY D. LEAKE
MARGARET MEAD
THOMAS PARK
PAUL A. SCHERER, *Treasurer*
DAEL WOLFLE, *Executive Officer*

DAEL WOLFLE, *Executive Officer*

GRAHAM DUSHANE, *Editor*

CHARLOTTE V. MEETING, *Assistant Editor*

Editorial Board

MARK H. ADAMS	KARL LARK-HOROVITZ
WALLACE R. BRODE	EDWIN M. LERNER
BENTLEY GLASS	WILLIAM L. STRAUS, JR.

Editorial Staff

SARAH S. DEES, JUNE M. FORBES, OLIVER W.
HEATWOLE, YUKIE KOZAI, JEAN MCCARTHY, ELLEN
E. MURPHY, ROBERT V. ORMES, BETHSABE PEDER-
SEN, JOSEPH TURNER, JACQUELYN VOLLMER

EARL J. SCHERAGO, *Advertising Representative*

SCIENCE, founded in 1880, is published each Friday by the American Association for the Advancement of Science at Business Press, Lancaster, Pa. Entered at the Lancaster, Pa., Post Office as second class matter under the Act of 3 March 1879.

SCIENCE is indexed in the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* and in the *Industrial Arts Index*.

Editorial and personnel-placement correspondence should be addressed to SCIENCE, 1515 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington 5, D.C. Manuscripts should be typed with double spacing and submitted in duplicate. The AAAS assumes no responsibility for the safety of manuscripts or for the opinions expressed by contributors.

Display-advertising correspondence should be addressed to SCIENCE, Room 604, 11 West 42 St., New York 36, N.Y.

Change of address: The notification should reach us 4 weeks in advance. If possible, please furnish an address stencil label from a recent issue. Be sure to give both old and new addresses, including zone numbers, if any.

Annual subscriptions: \$7.50; foreign postage, \$1; Canadian postage, 50¢. Single copies, 25¢. Special rates to members of the AAAS. Cable address: Advancesci, Washington.

The AAAS also publishes THE SCIENTIFIC MONTHLY.



New Directions in Research Support

The board of directors of the American Cancer Society has recently approved a bold approach to the problem of support of research and investigators in cancer research. Although the usual project and contract modes of support will be continued, the society has added "program grants" that will permit "freely roaming inquiries into specific areas that have been judged to be of significance to the cancer problem." This approach will permit continuity of support to exploratory work in research and will free the investigator from the all-too-familiar pressure of looking for problems that will yield quick results in order to justify renewal of an annual grant. The program does much of what W. M. Stanley called for in a recent editorial [*Science* 123, 353 (2 Mar. 1956)].

The society has taken a refreshingly realistic look at the requirements for successful scientific exploration and recommends that "the investigator must have freedom to change the direction and emphasis of his investigation . . ." and that he ". . . must be allowed considerable latitude in expending funds." This seems to us to be an enlightened policy that may well stimulate other fund-granting institutions to liberalize the conditions of their grants.

The society departs even further from traditional practice in its proposal to make grants to institutions that will permit them to create additional permanent faculty-level positions. Each grant will provide a capital fund of about \$200,000. This will make possible the creation of one additional suitable position for one investigator with salary from the age of 31 through 65, at the rate of \$6000 for each of the first 3 years with a gradual rise to \$15,000 for the last 17 years.

Both of these steps—the support of a flexible program over a long term and the allocation of funds to create a suitable permanent position for an investigator through the major part of his productive career are eminently practicable departures from current practice. Inasmuch as several new permanent posts will be created every year over a period of years, the ultimate effect will be large.

An additional forward-looking step of considerable significance is the society's decision to make grants of fluid funds—"institutional research grants"—to institutions to provide "grub-stakes" to support the preliminary testing of new and venturesome ideas for research on cancer. It is proposed that such funds be expended with the advice of a committee of scientists within the grantee institution. The continuation of such grants will be dependent on how well the previous grant was expended rather than on proposals for future research that may or may not be pursued. This innovation will constitute a considerable challenge to the local scientific advisory committee that must function with integrity, alacrity, and imagination.

If the program in support of research were narrowly conceived, we would have some reservation about its wisdom. Fortunately, however, cancer research is broadly defined to include fundamental research in the physical and biological sciences.

This new approach to the support of research by the American Cancer Society is no less important than similar steps taken by the Commonwealth Fund and the Ford Foundation in the closing months of 1955. Could it be that we are witnessing the dawn of a new era when granting agencies are accepting more of their ultimate responsibilities? If so, scientists should be aware that if they accept these broadened opportunities they also accept commensurate responsibilities for accelerated scientific progress.—G. DuS.