



March 27, 2019

To the Whitehead Community:

Throughout its 37 years, Whitehead Institute has been fortunate to have a succession of extraordinary scientists serve as Director: David Baltimore, Gerald Fink, Susan Lindquist, and for the past 15 years, David Page.

Today, with David's planned announcement that he will complete his service as Director in summer 2020, we begin the formal process of choosing the next leader for this unique institution: The Whitehead Institute Board of Directors is launching an international search for David's successor.

David's tenure as Director has been a period of incredible richness for Whitehead Institute. It has been rich in the path-breaking science that our researchers have done; in the intellectual ferment and creative environment that Whitehead Members have fostered; and in the sense of community and common purpose that David has nurtured. David has led us through a dynamic period of growth and continuous exploration, and he will pass to his successor an organization primed to tackle the challenges offered by the swiftly evolving landscape of biomedical research.

Whitehead Institute and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) have been David's professional home since he earned an M.D. from Harvard Medical School and the Harvard-MIT Health Sciences and Technology Program and completed research in David Botstein's lab at MIT in 1984. After serving as the Institute's first Whitehead Fellow, he became a Whitehead Member and MIT faculty member in 1988; subsequently, he was appointed Associate Director of the Institute in 2002, Interim Director in 2004, and Director in 2005.

Throughout his 35 years at Whitehead Institute, David has run a thriving and highly productive research lab. His groundbreaking studies on the Y chromosome changed the way biomedical science views the function of sex chromosomes. That work earned him wide recognition, including a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship and a Searle Scholar Award; and he has been a

Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator since 1990. His research twice earned inclusion in *Science* magazine's "Top 10 Breakthroughs of the Year," first for mapping a human chromosome and then for sequencing the human Y chromosome. Today, his lab is pursuing a deep understanding of the role of sex chromosomes in health and disease -- work with the potential to fundamentally change the practice of medicine and improve the quality of care for women and for men.

As Director, David has made a mark on all facets of our organization. During his tenure he reorganized and greatly strengthened internal management, oversaw the creation of the Institute's Intellectual Property office; strengthened our core facilities, and established new platforms such as the Metabolomics Center. He also enhanced the leadership structure by appointing Associate Directors; and supported the creation of the child care center. Perhaps most important for the long run, David has guided, and continues to guide, a robust renewal of faculty, worthy successors to our Founding Members.

I am particularly pleased to announce that the search for the next director will be guided by a committee of noted leaders in education, biomedical research, and non-profit organizations. They include:

Susan Hockfield, Ph.D. (Chair)

Professor of Neuroscience and President Emerita at MIT

Laurie H. Glimcher, M.D.

President and Chief Executive Officer, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, and former Dean of Weill Cornell Medical College

Alan Grossman, Ph.D.

Praecis Professor of Biology and Department Head, MIT Department of Biology

Paul L. Joskow, Ph.D.

Former President and Chief Executive Officer of Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, and the Elizabeth and James Killian Professor of Economics Emeritus at MIT

Amy E. Keating, Ph.D.

Professor in the Departments of Biology and Biological Engineering at MIT

David Sabatini, M.D., Ph.D.

Whitehead Institute Member and Associate Director, and Professor of Biology at MIT

Phillip A. Sharp, Ph.D.
Nobel Laureate, Institute Professor and Professor of Biology at MIT

Sarah Williamson
Chief Executive Officer of FCLT Global, and former Partner at Wellington Management Company

(Joskow, Sharp, and Williamson are also members of the Whitehead Institute Board of Directors.)

The committee will be assisted by global executive search firm Russell Reynolds Associates. The board will keep the Whitehead community apprised of the search's major benchmarks.

I close this letter with the perspective of our search committee chair, Susan Hockfield: "Whitehead Institute is one of the world's premier research institutions. It possesses an innovative and collaborative culture; rich talent and intellectual capital; a robust relationship with MIT; and a place at the heart of the Kendall Square innovation community. These factors make it an ideal opportunity for a Director with vision, scientific courage, and a passion to address basic biomedical science's most significant challenges."

Susan is correct on all points, and I have no doubt that our next Director will embody the same qualities of leadership, scholarship, collaboration, and scientific courage that Baltimore, Fink, Lindquist, and Page have possessed.

All who care about, and particularly the extraordinary scientists who make Whitehead Institute so remarkable, agree with Susan and are delighted she will lead this important global search for our next Director.

With best regards,

Charles D. Ellis
Chair, Board of Directors
Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research