Proposal for research collaboration between Adam Jaffe and the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research.

MSFHR is British Columbia's health research funding agency. Funded by the province of BC, MSFHR helps develop, retain and recruit the talented people whose research improves the health of British Columbians, addresses health system priorities, creates jobs and adds to the knowledge economy. MSFHR has two fellowship programs (the Research Trainee Program and the Scholar Program) that have been running for 17 years, and has recently significantly expanded its portfolio of programs to eight annual funding streams.

MSFHR has a variety of evaluation and program improvement efforts already underway. They have been using the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences impact assessment framework, which calls for identification of desired outcomes in specific categories (e.g. increasing the knowledge base, increasing research capacity, informing decision making) and development of indicators for the identified outcomes. They are fairly sophisticated in thinking about the counterfactual problem, having undertaken analyses of their fellowship program comparing the subsequent success of fellows in attracting funding from outside BC to the success of their 'near miss' applicants.

MSFHR is interested in undertaking additional analyses that would allow it to paint a more nuanced and complete picture of the impacts of its funding for British Columbia, and fine-tune its funding mechanisms and processes to maximize those impacts. We have specifically discussed work that would develop additional metrics for desired outcomes, and/or refine and expand their statistical analysis of their historical data. They are also interested in thinking about what kind of experiments they could undertake that would be appropriate for expenditure of the public funds they handle, and how to think about reasonable time frames for collecting data from such experiments.

I hereby request funding from NBER/Sloan for two trips from Boston to Vancouver. The initial trip would be in November, and would allow us to brain-storm possible projects that could be undertaken by their staff with my input or by me. The second trip would be sometime in 2019, at which we would review the findings from the initial projects, and consider possible additional projects that might be undertaken, possibly involving proposals for additional funding in order to include a PhD student or other additional researchers.

Budget: Round trip economy airfares Boston/Vancouver 2@$700=$1400
4 days (2 days each trip) lodging and other expenses in Vancouver @ Federal per diem for Vancouver ($310) = $1240

Total: $2640

CV: https://motu.nz/assets/Documents/about-motu/people/Jaffe-CV-2018.pdf

Letter of support from MSFHR is attached.

MICHAEL SMITH FOUNDATION
FOR HEALTH RESEARCH

Discover. Connect. Engage.

September 27, 2018

Adam B Jaffe
Senior Lecturer, M.I.T. Sloan School
Research Professor, Brandeis University
Senior Research Fellow, Motu Research
Adjunct Professor, Queensland University of Technology

RE: NBER Science of Science proposal

Dear Dr. Jaffe,

In my capacity as the President & CEO of the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research (MSFHR), I am pleased to provide a letter of support for your proposal to the NBER Advancing the Science of Science Funding initiative.

MSFHR is British Columbia's health research funding agency. For the past 17 years we have been designing funding programs and initiatives aimed at developing, recruiting and retaining the health research talent our province needs. We currently offer a suite of eight funding programs, including the Research Trainee and Scholar programs which we have offered since our founding in 2001, and several new programs that that we have designed and launched over the past several years.

While we have robust strategies and processes in place to support evaluation, continuous improvement and research impact assessment for our programs, we are keen to further grow our capacity in the science of science funding. We are particularly interested in working with you to explore approaches to additional analyses that would allow us to paint a more nuanced and complete picture of our funding, to inform funding program design, impact assessment and our overall strategy.

We look forward to collaborating with you.

Sincerely,

Bev Holmes

Bev Holmes, PhD
President & CEO, MSFHR

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