

THE ROCKEFELLER INSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH
66th Street and York Avenue
New York City 21, N. Y.

September 15, 1956

SEP 20 1956

The National Science Foundation
2101 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Sirs:

It seems desirable in recommending a research grant for Dr. Leo Szilard to outline the nature of his relationship to our faculty as I picture it.

It frequently happens that biological research workers reach a point at which they possess high skills and energy for advanced investigation, and need the stimulus of serious discussion with interested scholars outside their own field. This kind of association can be of inestimable value, in providing perspective, and in obliging the research worker to recapitulate the major logical steps in his philosophy. Best of all, it helps him to perceive the significant past and future experiments which will best demonstrate or define his discoveries for intelligent scholars in another discipline. Inasmuch as biochemical and biological research rests ever more and more upon a foundation of physical understanding, a physicist who is interested in biology can be a stimulating and valuable colleague wherever this potential of energy and skill is not being optimally utilized. This kind of association happens only peripherally at the national scientific congresses as they grow in size and busyness.

Dr. Szilard is superbly suited to play this role in a number of laboratories, wherever he can be made to feel welcome. I would take it to be the function of the proposed program to give him the requisite status at each of the participating institutions so that this stimulatory function, which he already plays unofficially in a number of places, can be made available to research groups who do not have access to his quick, penetrating intelligence at present, who in fact do not know that such fruitful discussion can be had anywhere.

I believe this Institute can supply this environmental status and potential for the utilization of Dr. Szilard's talents in several of its laboratories. It would be premature, not to say presumptuous, to attempt to suggest which of its various faculty members would enjoy contact with him and deliberately foster his participation in the uncompromisingly logical evaluation of their work. I have witnessed how his insight has already sharply altered the philosophy and design of certain experiments in muscle physiology carried out here by Dr. Czapo. Our own microbial genetics and physiology group, comprised of Dr. Maurice Fox, Dr. Muriel Roger and myself, with a number of pre-doctoral and post-

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doctoral associates, will probably not see him much more than at present, five or six days, and several lunches, during a year. But I look forward fully as much to being at hand sometimes when his attention is focused on other subjects, as I am sure it will be. It is important to point out from direct experience that his advice and suggestions while theoretically oriented are always refined in mutual discussion until they result in altogether concrete and practical experimental questions.

Concerning the personal requirements, I know that Dr. Szilard's objective and analytical logicalness and his candor are effectively balanced by his perspicacity, considerateness, and sensitiveness to the interests of others. Association with him is at its most stimulating and rewarding level when not continuous, but shared with a number of institutions and colleagues, as projected.

Finally, making an appointment of this nature will be something of an opportunity for exploring new ways of furthering scientific progress. It would be in the highest interests of science if an official and nationally affiliated institution will make available funds from time to time to investigators of proven productivity without requiring the usual statement of precise work to be attempted, or institutional location. In representing this Institute, I can say that granting research support for Dr. Szilard's work will, without doubt, be a fruitful step in bringing together in a number of areas the concrete material of biology and the analytical thinking of modern physical science and mathematics.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Rollin D. Hotchkiss

Rollin D. Hotchkiss
Member

RDH:jp

September 15, 1956
August 30th, 1956

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Sincerely yours,

/s/ Rollin D. Hotchkiss

Rollin D. Hotchkiss
Member

RDH:jp

Hotchkiss

file

The Quadrangle Club
The University of Chicago
Chicago 37, Illinois
September 19, 1956

Dr. Rollin D. Hotchkiss
The Rockefeller Institute for
Medical Research
66th Street and York Avenue
New York City 21, New York

Dear Hotchkiss:

You should have received by now from Pasadena copies of the application to the National Science Foundation which is being submitted by Cal Tech on my behalf. Since I last discussed this matter with you there has been a slight change in plans and, as you may have seen, the application now refers to a "grant for the support of research" and does not refer to a "Senior Research Scientist-At-Large". Through an oversight the papers sent off by Cal Tech in Beadle's absence include the original version of my memorandum, and I am sending therefore to Washington twenty copies of the attached corrected version of my memorandum so that Mr. Consolazio may attach the corrected version to the twenty application copies that were sent to him.

I cannot reach Consolazio now but I expect to talk to him over the telephone Friday morning, September 21st, and I will then ask him whether he would prefer to have a "corrected version" of your letter also. If he does, then you might perhaps want to send him such a corrected version of your letter. Since they appear to need twenty copies in Washington of everything and since time is getting very short, I had twenty-four corrected dittoed copies made

Dr. Rollin D. Hotchkiss

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September 19, 1956

corrected
of your letter which I am enclosing for your convenience. You will still have to have the original typed in case you want to make use of these copies (of which twenty should be sent to Washington).

After I talk to Consolazio on Friday, I will try to reach you at the Institute and tell you whether you may throw this letter away, together with its enclosures, or whether Consolazio feels that he would like to have a corrected letter from you in order to have it conform with the application submitted by Cal Tech.

I regret this mix-up which, I think, was mainly caused by Beadle's absence from Pasadena.

With kind regards,

Sincerely,

Leo Szilard

m
Encl.

file personal

February 20, 1957

Dr. Rollin Hotchkiss
Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research
66th Street and York Avenue
New York City, New York

Dear Hotchkiss:

Attached you will find two copies of a memo - one of them for Fox - which might perhaps interest you. You might tell me what you think of it when I see you in New York.

I will be in New York on February 28th and will stay certainly until Sunday, when I might fly to Columbus, Ohio for the Biophysics Meeting. Otherwise, I might hang around in New York until March 23rd or thereabouts. On or about the 23rd I thought of going to Washington for two weeks in response to the letters which are attached.

I was wondering whether my appointment as Affiliate Member of your Institute has been processed in the meantime. Do I have the privilege of paying for my own lunch now? Will the Librarian be responsive to my queries about books or periodicals that I may have difficulty in finding? Is there some, temporarily unoccupied, office which I might use between March 4th and April 15th? Are there any pretty secretaries (or to be more accurate, are there any non-ugly secretaries) available, who may be able to read their own shorthand?

With kind personal regards,

Sincerely,

Leo Szilard

m
Encl.

THE ROCKEFELLER INSTITUTE
FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

66TH STREET AND YORK AVENUE
NEW YORK 21, N. Y.

Jan. 4, 1960

Dr. Leo Szilard
Kindness Mrs. Szilard

Dear Leo:

I have looked on as from a distance yet with warm interest (much as with a telephoto lens, which gives a picture which looks intimate, yet is not) on your recent clinical experiences. My chief concern has been to feel that all the best decisions were made available and being analyzed. That seems to be the case, and it is of no importance that I would have been glad to help if I were only the type of person and had the type of experience that could help.

Just now, in the absence of Maury Fox, I took a message for him and will relay it to you. He had left your paper on enzyme formation with Frank Brink. He has read it and thinks it would be very appropriate to publish it in the Journal of General Physiology. Mirsky has seen it and concurs, with the further information that it would not take very long for it to appear there. They both indicated that they would be pleased to have it published there.

With all kind regards,

Sincerely

Rollin
Rollin D. Hotchkiss

Copy to Maury in
Fla. when possible