



**VAN DERMYDEN MAKUS**  
*Investigations Law Firm*

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF  
INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS**

SENS Research Foundation  
Report Concerning Potential Inappropriate Conduct of a Sexual Nature  
October 25, 2021

## I. Brief Introduction And Background

On June 28, 2021, SENS Research Foundation (SRF), through a subcommittee of the Board of Directors, initiated an investigative process in response to allegations against then-SRF Chief Science Officer and Co-Founder Dr. Aubrey de Grey made by two females associated with, but not employed by, SRF. On July 7, 2021, SRF retained Van Dermyden Makus Law Corporation (Firm) to conduct an independent investigation into these allegations (Initial Investigation). We issued an Executive Summary dated September 10, 2021 sustaining certain of the claims of these two females. SRF publicly released this Executive Summary.<sup>1</sup>

During the course of the Initial Investigation, witnesses reported Dr. de Grey may have engaged in inappropriate conduct towards other individuals. As a result of these reports, SRF expanded the scope of the Firm's investigation to address the following issue:

- **Unwelcome Sexual Conduct:** Did Dr. de Grey engage in unwelcome sexual conduct towards current or former SRF employees, or any person associated with SRF, at any point since the founding of SRF in 2009?<sup>2</sup>

This Executive Summary is not intended to be a comprehensive recitation of the evidence. Instead, it provides an overview of the investigative methodology and a summary of our findings.

## II. The Investigative Methodology

**Background.** During the course of the Firm's Initial Investigation, much was written in the press and online about Dr. de Grey and the allegations against him. This occurred in several platforms. The two females whose claims were being investigated went public with their allegations.<sup>3</sup> Dr. de Grey responded.<sup>4</sup> STAT News has written five articles about the events in question.<sup>5</sup> This publicity spawned thousands of responses from supporters and critics of those involved. Amidst this online activity and during our witness interviews, we obtained information that resulted in SRF expanding the scope of the investigation to determine whether Dr. de Grey engaged in unwelcome sexual conduct towards current or former SRF employees, or any other person associated with SRF, at any point since the founding of SRF in 2009.

<sup>1</sup> This October 25, 2021 Executive Summary is intended to be a stand-alone Executive Summary. It does not repeat or address the allegations we sustained in the Initial Investigation.

<sup>2</sup> In reviewing this issue, we also investigated whether Dr. de Grey used his position at SRF in an effort to form romantic and/or sexual relationships with underage females associated with SRF, either through Dr. de Grey's formal or informal mentorships with, or sponsorships of, such underage females. We put emphasis on this issue because we found in the Initial Investigation that Dr. de Grey sent emails of a sexual nature in 2012 when the complainant was ages 17 and 18 years old with the purpose of developing a romantic and/or sexual relationship with her. See the public Executive Summary dated September 10, 2021.

<sup>3</sup> On August 10, 2021 and in subsequent posts, the two publicized their concerns on their personal blogs.

<sup>4</sup> On August 10, 2021 and in subsequent posts, Dr. de Grey responded on Twitter and Facebook. See: <https://twitter.com/aubreydegrey> and <https://www.facebook.com/aubrey.degrey>.

<sup>5</sup> STAT is a health-oriented news website. To date, the five articles, all written by Megan Molteni and one with co-author Mario Aguilar, include the following: "[Anti-aging research pioneer Aubrey de Grey placed on leave over sexual harassment allegations](#)" (August 11, 2021); "[Anti-aging foundation's CEO left amid an investigation of co-founder Aubrey de Grey](#)" (August 13, 2021); "[SENS Research Foundation removes Aubrey de Grey over concerns he was interfering in sexual harassment investigation](#)" (August 22, 2021); "[Scientist Aubrey de Grey made inappropriate sexual comments to two female entrepreneurs, independent investigation finds](#)" (September 11, 2021); and, "[Inside the downfall of longevity crusader Aubrey de Grey — and the cult of personality that concealed a pattern of harassment](#)" (October 4, 2021).

Since the investigation began on July 7, 2021, we did the following in an effort to conduct a thorough review: (1) conducted 37 interviews of 25 witnesses, including current and former employees and non-employees; (2) conducted an extensive, four-phase review of Dr. de Grey's SRF emails over a 12-year period; (3) reviewed extensive social media posts and articles; (4) cross-referenced names with internet searches and employees, both current and former; (5) researched and, where appropriate, interviewed or sought to interview identified individuals; and, (6) made efforts to identify and interview other possible affected individuals or witnesses. As it relates to this expanded-scope investigation, we had limited information regarding specific conduct, the identities of those who may have been involved, context, dates, or other potential evidence related to the allegations. In some instances where we were able to identify potential witnesses, they did not respond to multiple outreaches for an investigative interview.

**Employment Status.** As of the time of this Executive Summary, Dr. de Grey was no longer employed with SRF. SRF terminated him on August 21, 2021, following a finding by this Firm that he interfered with the Initial Investigation. Those findings were made public by SRF in the Executive Summary dated September 10, 2021.

**Standard of Review.** We draw our conclusions in this Executive Summary from the totality of the record and a thorough analysis of all the facts. We reviewed, compared, and analyzed the information provided under a preponderance of the evidence standard to determine whether the allegations were with or without merit. "Preponderance of the evidence," for purposes of this Executive Summary, means that the evidence on one side outweighs, or is more than, the evidence on the other side. This is a qualitative, not quantitative, standard.

**Independence.** SRF and its representatives allowed us discretion to conduct this review as we determined to be necessary. SRF gave us complete access to all requested witnesses and documents. No person interfered with, or attempted to influence, the findings in this Executive Summary.

**Credibility Determinations.** In reaching the findings, we carefully considered the perspectives, observations, and information contained in all evidence. In resolving factual disputes, we utilized credibility factors, including motivations of parties and witnesses, corroborating or lack of corroborating evidence, plausibility of events, consistent and inconsistent evidence, material omissions, proximity in time, comparator factors, and articulated rationale for actions or decisions.

### III. Findings

Based on the scope of this investigation and our methodology, we reach the following findings by a preponderance of the evidence.

➤ ***Unwelcome Sexual Conduct Since SRF Was Founded In 2009***

**Through our email search, we find the following:**

During a 12-year period, Dr. de Grey regularly used his work email for personal communications, including to send emails of a sexual nature (in particular during a period from 2009-2015). In this Firm's extensive four-phase review of Dr. de Grey's emails, we reviewed over 18,847 email documents, dated between September 12, 2009 and July 10, 2021. Many of the emails we reviewed were of a sexual and sometimes graphic nature. Nevertheless, with the limited exceptions discussed in this report and the Initial Investigation, none of the email threads we reviewed demonstrate non-consensual sexual

communications or conduct towards current or former SRF employees, or any person associated with SRF. Further, with the limited exceptions discussed in this report and the Initial Investigation, none of the emails suggest Dr. de Grey's comments were offensive or unwelcome to the recipients; instead, the emails suggest mutual engagement.<sup>6</sup>

**Through our witness interviews, and sometimes corroborated by documentation, we find the following:**

One, at some point in June or July 2012 in Cambridge, United Kingdom, Dr. de Grey met with a female individual not affiliated with SRF. This individual alleged Dr. de Grey kissed her without her consent at this time, specifically at the Green Man Pub in Cambridge in late June 2012. While documentary evidence suggests a meeting took place between Dr. de Grey and this individual at the Boathouse on Chesterton Road in Cambridge, United Kingdom, on July 1, 2012, we were unable to establish by a preponderance of the evidence whether Dr. de Grey kissed this individual without her consent around this time.

Two, based upon the available, limited evidence, we find Dr. de Grey exchanged personal emails that included certain innuendos with a female individual between 2011 and 2014 when she was employed with SRF. Further, the preponderance of the evidence suggests Dr. de Grey kissed this individual on at least one occasion; and, this individual lived with him in 2013, while employed with SRF. Despite multiple outreach attempts, the individual did not respond to our requests for an interview. Based upon the available evidence, the evidence suggests Dr. de Grey's actions were not unwelcome.

Three, we find that in November 2014, Dr. de Grey made an inappropriate comment to a non-employee, which he encouraged her to use her "physical attributes" to "influence those who have major potential" to further the "war" against aging. In a follow-up email to her, he reiterated his belief in this strategy.<sup>7</sup> (Investigator's note: A materially similar allegation was made by one of the female complainants in the Initial Investigation, which we sustained).

Four, in 2015, Dr. de Grey on one occasion rubbed the leg of a then-employee who gave him a ride home from a work event.<sup>8</sup> After this employee reported this conduct as awkward and uncomfortable, SRF's then-Chief Executive Officer counseled Dr. de Grey.

Five, following a work event in approximately 2019, an SRF employee gave Dr. de Grey a ride home. At the end of the ride, Dr. de Grey leaned in towards the employee in a manner that did not make her personally uncomfortable, but which she recognized could make others uncomfortable. This resulted in an informal, unwritten request that SRF employees not give Dr. de Grey rides home.

Six, on an unknown date in the recent past, Dr. de Grey told one employee to "encourage" another female employee to "get close" to a donor to obtain financial support for SRF. However, the record

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<sup>6</sup> While reviewing Dr. de Grey's emails, the Firm reviewed an email in which a former employee of SRF wrote Dr. de Grey in May 2021 (after she was no longer employed at SRF), noting he kissed her without her consent on an unspecified date that was "a \*long\* time ago." Dr. de Grey did not recall engaging in this conduct, but did not deny it occurred, based on his attraction to this individual at the time. The evidence demonstrates that in 2007, prior to the founding of SRF, Dr. de Grey, while consuming alcohol, kissed this individual without her consent at an event. (Investigator's note: This incident fell outside the scope of the Initial Investigation and the expanded scope, because it pertains to conduct prior to the founding of SRF in 2009.)

<sup>7</sup> In reaching this finding, we also considered this witness does not recall this occurrence or the subsequent email, nor does she recall Dr. de Grey being "inappropriate." Nonetheless, based upon the undisputed message in Dr. de Grey's email, we reach this finding, despite the witness' recollection.

<sup>8</sup> Dr. de Grey acknowledged touching this employee's leg, but said it was because he was comforting her about her personal life.

shows Dr. de Grey did not utter this comment to the female employee in question. This female employee denied (without solicitation) that Dr. de Grey engaged in any conduct that she felt was “offensive or inappropriate” or otherwise “boundary-crossing.” She affirmatively said he has not done anything to make her feel “uncomfortable.”

Seven, we considered other allegations that Dr. de Grey engaged in sexual misconduct, including those referenced in social media and news articles. Some were vague, or based on layers of hearsay, without specified details, locations, dates, or identities. This made it difficult for Dr. de Grey to respond. It also made it challenging for this Firm to ask follow-up questions and otherwise assess the credibility of these allegations. In the end, after extensive review – *and except as otherwise identified by the Firm in this Executive Summary in paragraphs one through seven, as well as in the separate Executive Summary dated September 10, 2021 concerning the Initial Investigation* – we do not find evidence Dr. de Grey engaged in conduct that constituted unwelcome sexual conduct towards current or former SRF employees, or any person associated with SRF, since the founding of SRF. Similarly, through our extensive email search and witness interviews, we did not identify any evidence that Dr. de Grey used his position at SRF to form romantic and/or sexual relationships with underage females associated with SRF – *again, with the one exception detailed in the public Executive Summary dated September 10, 2021.*



This concludes the investigation.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sue Ann Van Dermyn