



Program Announcement 08-06: CIRM Conference Grants

I. PURPOSE

The California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) recognizes the value of supporting high quality scientific conferences to support its scientific mission. The CIRM Conference Grant Awards will fund conferences held in California on topics related to stem cells and regenerative medicine. A scientific conference is defined as an organized event where persons physically assemble to exchange scientific information or explore a defined scientific subject. Support of such conferences is contingent on the fiscal and programmatic priorities of CIRM.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

1. Funds Available

CIRM plans to allocate up to \$300,000 annually to support the development and conduct of scientific conferences relevant to stem cell research.

This Program Announcement (PA) invites applications for CIRM funding from non-profit organizations that intend to organize and carry out a conference (or series of conferences) related to stem cells and regenerative medicine.

Under this PA, the grantee will be solely responsible for planning, directing, and executing the conference. Multiple year awards may be made to a grantee organization for recurring scientific conferences held annually or biennially, but applications for recurring conferences may not exceed three years. Multi-year awards are contingent upon receipt of a progress report, including attendee assessment of conference presentations and overall quality.

It is anticipated that the size and duration of Conference Grant Awards will vary. The total amount awarded and the number of awards will depend upon the number, quality, timing, and costs of the proposals received, and on CIRM's programmatic priorities. The maximum award (i.e., total for all years requested) that will be supported under this PA is the lesser of \$50,000 or 50% of the total conference budget, unless otherwise approved by the ICOC.

CIRM may issue a separate PA requesting applications to support a conference that addresses a specific topic of interest, need, or importance to CIRM. The PA will specify

the terms for such an award, which may include the participation of CIRM staff in the design and execution of the conference.

2. Eligible Costs

Allowable costs include rental of a conference facility and necessary equipment (e.g., audio/visual and internet connectivity); transportation, lodging and per diem or subsistence allowances for the organizers and speakers as described in the CIRM Grants Administration Policy for Academic and Non-Profit Institutions (Chapter V, Section B-1); supplies needed for conduct of the meeting (only if purchased and received for use during the budget period); conference services; publicity and publication costs; speakers expenses; and indirect costs (limited to a maximum of 5% of direct allowable costs).

Non-allowable costs include purchase of equipment; costs exceeding those allowed under the CIRM Grants Administration Policy (see section VIII.A of this RFA, and http://www.cirm.ca.gov/reg/pdf/reg100500_policy.pdf); visas; passports; entertainment; alcoholic beverages; personal telephone calls; laundry charges; dues; salary support for organizers; honoraria for speakers; alterations or renovations.

3. Reporting Obligations

For all conference grants awarded, CIRM requires a final report on the conference that includes all actual costs incurred under the grant, a summary of outcomes, a sample of materials produced (e.g., DVD, abstract book or webcast), and an assessment by attendees of the presentations and overall quality of the conference. The report is due 3 months after the conference end date, and is required annually for multiple year awards.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

All CIRM-funded conferences must be held in California.

A. Institutional Eligibility

Applications for conference grant awards may be submitted by any non-profit organization in California. Non-profit organization means either: (1) a governmental entity of the state of California; or (2) a legal entity that is tax exempt under Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3) and California Revenue and Taxation Code section 23701d.

B. Program Director (PD) Eligibility

The Program Director (PD) can be any individual with the skills necessary to direct the planning and execution of the proposed conference. CIRM encourages applications from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, women, and individuals with disabilities.

IV. REVIEW PROCESS AND CRITERIA

CIRM's governing board, the Independent Citizens Oversight Committee (ICOC) has delegated to the President of CIRM authority to review and make funding decisions for grants up to \$50,000. The President will designate another CIRM official to review and make funding decisions regarding any application that would present a conflict of interest for the President, as determined by CIRM's Conflict of Interest policies. The ICOC will make funding decisions on applications for conference grants in excess of \$50,000, if recommended for funding by the President. The President will publicly report to the ICOC semi-annually on the award and disbursement of conference grants.

Applications under this PA will be accepted, reviewed and approved on an ongoing basis. To allow time for appropriate conference planning, it is recommended that there be at least four months between receipt of an application and the start date of the scientific conference. The availability of funds is a key determinant of the number of applications funded in any year. CIRM may choose not to fund any applications during a review cycle. The following criteria will be considered in the review and decision on funding.

- A. Relevance:** What is the relevance of the proposed scientific conference to CIRM's mission and programmatic needs?
- B. Impact and Significance of the Conference:** Does this conference address an important topic in stem cell biology and/or regenerative medicine? How will this conference move research forward compared to other conferences that also address the topic? If the aims of the proposal are achieved, how will scientific knowledge or clinical practice in stem cell biology and/or regenerative medicine be advanced?
- C. Approach and Setting:** Are the format, duration, scope, scale, timing, target audience, speakers, and publicity plans for the meeting appropriate for achieving the goals of the conference? Are plans for inclusion of women, minorities, and persons with disabilities adequately addressed and appropriate? How appropriate is the meeting site? Do the proposed meetings, exhibits, interactions, etc., take advantage of unique features of the environment or employ useful collaborative arrangements? Has the applicant raised funding from other sources to support this meeting?
- D. Qualifications of Personnel and Applicant Organization:** Does the PD have experience and a track record in the successful organization and implementation of comparable conferences? Are the key personnel and selected speakers appropriate? Does the applicant organization have the experience and resources to run a successful conference?

V. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Applicant institutions and program directors must follow these instructions for submitting an application for a CIRM Conference Grant. To ensure that a decision is made within a timeframe that will allow for appropriate conference planning, it is recommended that

there be at least four months between receipt of an application and the start date of the scientific conference.

A. Application Instructions

The application form is available online at <http://www.cirm.ca.gov/grants/default.asp>. The application for CIRM Conference Grants consists of three parts:

Part A: Application Information and Proposal Form (Adobe PDF template).
Part A includes: Conference Plan, Key Personnel, and Budget (section numbers 1, 2, and 3 below).

Part B: Supporting Documentation (No template is provided)
Attach documentation confirming the participation of key speakers/co-chairs/organizing committee members in the conference.

Part C: Related Business Entities Disclosure Form (Adobe PDF template): All subcontractors that are for-profit entities must complete a Related Business Entities Disclosure Form and submit to CIRM with the application. Part C is required only if a service subcontractor that is a for-profit entity is listed in the application.

The application for CIRM Conference Grant includes the following sections:

1. Conference Plan (*up to 3 pages in Part A*)
Describe the objectives, specific program, format and topics to be covered; and the contributions the conference will make. Provide a detailed justification for the conference, including the scientific need, timeliness, and usefulness of the meeting to the scientific community. Address the relevance of the proposed conference to CIRM's mission and programmatic needs. Identify related meetings held on the subject during the past two years.

Address the experience of the PD and the applicant organization in the organization and conduct of conferences. Describe the composition and role of the organizing committee. Provide the names for key participants in the meeting. Attach documentation (Part B) of their agreement to participate in the conference.

Describe plans to encourage the participation of women, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities in the planning and implementation of the proposed meeting. Estimate the expected size and composition of the audience, as well as the method of selection. Describe plans for publicizing the meeting and publication of the proceedings. If this is one of a series of periodic meetings held by the applicant, briefly describe and evaluate the last meeting in the series. Address how the conference will be evaluated.

Discuss the meeting site and layout and how the venue will contribute to achievement of the goals of the conference.

Discuss the conference budget and funding needs and what sources, other than CIRM, have committed and/or will be approached for meeting support.

Applications requesting multiple years of support must provide the following additional information for each future year requested in as much detail as possible: meeting topic(s); tentative dates, locations, and participants; and contingency plans for future meetings dependent upon, for example, the outcome of the first year's meeting or developments in the field.

2. Key Personnel (*included in Parts A, B*)
Key personnel are the Program Director (PD) and those responsible for the scientific planning and organization of the meeting. List all key personnel.
3. Budget (*included in Part A*)
Provide all budget information requested in the budget section of the Application Information Form. All allowable costs for research grants are detailed in Section II.2 of this PA and in the CIRM Grants Administration Policy (GAP, see section VIII.A of this RFA). Subcontractors that are for-profit entities must complete a Related Business Entity Form and submit to CIRM with the application.

VI. SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

Applications for Conference Grant Awards under this PA will be accepted, reviewed and approved on an ongoing basis. To ensure that a decision is made within a timeframe that will allow for appropriate conference planning, it is recommended that there be at least four months between receipt of an application and the start date of the scientific conference.

The application for CIRM Conference Grants consists of three parts:

Part A: Application Information and Proposal Form (Adobe PDF template provided at <http://www.cirm.ca.gov/grants/default.asp>.)

Part B: Supporting Documentation (No template is provided): documentation confirming the participation of key speakers/co-chairs/organizing committee members in the conference

Part C: Related Business Entities Disclosure Form (Adobe PDF template): All subcontractors that are for-profit entities must complete a Related Business Entities Disclosure Form and submit to CIRM with the application. Part C is required only if a service subcontractor that is a for-profit entity is listed in the application.

All parts of the application for CIRM Conference Grants (see section V of this PA) must be submitted **in electronic form; electronic signatures are required in Part A of both the PD and the applicant institution's Authorized Organizational Official (AOO).**

Candidates must use the appropriate CIRM template to complete Part A. This template is available at <http://www.cirm.ca.gov/grants/default.asp>. Send electronic copies of all parts of the application as attachments in a single email to ConferenceGrants@cirm.ca.gov.

VII. CONTACTS

For information about this program:

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VIII. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. CIRM Grants Administration Policy

CIRM's Grants Administration Policy (GAP) for Academic and Non-Profit Institutions (Non-Profit GAP) provides the standard terms and conditions of grant awards issued by CIRM. All research conducted under this award must comply with the stated policy. The Non-Profit GAP can be found at http://www.cirm.ca.gov/reg/pdf/reg100500_policy.pdf.