

## **The Grants Working Group Programmatic Review and Recommendations for RFA 12-03 and RFA 12-04**

The goal of RFA 12-03 is to fund a single organization to derive 3 hiPSC lines each from 3000 tissue donors, while the goal of RFA 12-04 is to fund a single organization to bank the original 3000 source cell samples, the corresponding 9000 hiPSC lines and additional hPSC lines derived in California. As derivation and banking demand a fair amount of coordination, CIRM encouraged applicants to these two RFAs to propose coordinated efforts.

CIRM received six applications in response to RFA 12-03 and four applications in response to RFA 12-04. Each application was considered and scored (in parentheses) individually by the Grants Working Group (GWG) during scientific review.

### **RFA 12-03 / Derivation**

ID1-06557 (84)  
ID1-06560 (79)  
ID1-06617 (76)  
ID1-06576 (73)  
ID1-06577 (63)  
ID1-06542 (<60)

### **RFA 12-04 / Repository**

IR1-06600 (89)  
IR1-06595 (82)  
IR1-06564 (71)  
IR1-06554 (<60)

Some applicants proposed coordinated efforts and requested consideration as a matched pair. These include the following:

ID1-06557 (84) / IR1-06600 (89)  
ID1-06617 (76) / IR1-06595 (82)

## **EVALUATION OF AND VOTING ON RFA 12-03 / RFA 12-04 PAIR COMBINATIONS**

The GWG was asked to identify desirable pairs among the applicants for the Derivation and Repository Awards, and provide a ranking of the pairs based on their ability to generate, bank and distribute the hiPSC resource envisioned by the CIRM hiPSC Initiative. The GWG identified one Deriver / Repository pair as their top choice and recommended two additional pairs in rank order of their preference, should the first choice not be feasible or selected.

Reviewers discussed the strengths and weaknesses of proposed Derivation and Repository applicant combinations. Attributes of individual applications were considered as well as broader issues that might impact on the success of the desired Deriver and Repository. For example, reviewers observed that applicants from academic institutions requested funds for facilities and indirect costs that were significantly higher than other applicants. This reduced the enthusiasm for such proposals, as less of the total funds would be devoted to direct project costs. Reviewers were also concerned about potential licensing issues related

to hiPSC derivation technology for all deriver applicants and urged CIRM to examine this further for the derivers in recommended pairs.

**ID1-06557 (84) / IR1-06600 (89): First choice pair combination**

- Reviewers identified the contemplated coordination of derivation and banking efforts between these two top-scoring applicants as a major strength of this combination, including the co-localization of the Derivation and Repository efforts in the same facility.

PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW

A motion was made to recommend ID1-06557 and IR1-6600 as the first choice pair combination for RFAs 12-03 and 12-04. The motion passed.

**ID1-06617 (76) / IR1-06600 (89): Second choice pair combination**

- Although reviewers questioned the suitability of the proposed space for this Derivation proposal, this concern was exacerbated by the plan to house both the Derivation and partner Repository facility (IR-06595) in that space. However, combining this otherwise strong Derivation proposal with this highest ranked Repository proposal was considered a strong alternative to the first choice pair combination.

- Since this Repository applicant proposes to subcontract hiPSC line expansion, reviewers suggested that this Derivation applicant be considered as the subcontractor for cell expansion, rather than the alternative proposed by the repository applicant, if this pair combination were funded.

PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW

A motion was made to recommend ID1-06617 / IR1-06600 as the second choice pair combination for RFAs 12-03 and 12-04. The motion passed.

**ID1-06617 (76) / IR1-06595 (82): Third choice pair combination**

- There is a clear advantage to the integration of activities afforded by this preformed pairing, in this case by the same PD and applicant organization for both applications.

- An important weakness of this pair combination relates to the facility to be used for both hiPSC derivation and hPSC banking activities. The space, although identified, has not yet been leased, and there was concern whether it is adequate, both in regard to suitability for cell work and to overall size, especially if this applicant was awarded both the Derivation and the Repository Award. Otherwise, this Derivation / Repository combination is strong.

PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW

A motion was made to recommend ID1-06617 / IR1-06595 as the third choice pair combination for RFAs 12-03 and 12-04. The motion passed.

**ID1-06576 (73) / IR1-06564 (71): not recommended for funding**

- Geographically, this Deriver / Repository combination would be challenging to coordinate.

- Reviewers felt that this Repository should only be considered for funding if a unique synergy could be identified between it and a specific Deriver. This was not the case.

PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW

A motion was made to recommend ID1-06576 / IR1-06564 as the third choice combination for RFAs 12-03 and 12-04. The motion failed.

**ID1-06576 (73) / IR1-06564 (71): not recommended for funding**

PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW

A motion was made to recommend ID1-06576 / IR1-06564 as the fourth choice combination for RFAs 12-03 and 12-04. The motion failed.

**ID1-06560 (79) / IR1-06600 (89): not recommended for funding**

- The specific culture method proposed by the applicant Deriver would require that hiPSC lines be adapted to the applicant Repository's methods. Although this was of concern to some reviewers, it was not considered a major hurdle.

- Since the applicant Repository intends to subcontract hiPSC line expansion, this Derivation / Repository combination would in effect be executed by 3 organizations. In addition, the Deriver and Repository would be located relatively far apart in California, adding logistic hurdles to the execution of this combination.

- Reviewers emphasized their strong concern regarding the ability of the PD for ID1-06560 to commit adequate time to this project due to many other commitments.

PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW

A motion was made to recommend ID1-06560 / IR1-06600 as the fourth choice combination for RFAs 12-03 and 12-04. The motion failed.