

Internship Programs

CIRM-Funded Internship Programs: SPARK and Bridges

We are dedicated to supporting the next generation of stem cell scientists. The field of stem cells is still in its infancy and will require a well-trained workforce of scientists, physicians and technicians throughout the 21st century and beyond to fully realize and implement the potential of stem cells to treat patients with unmet medical needs. CIRM funds two separate educational internship programs in the state of California. The SPARK awards support summer research internships for high school students at leading stem cell institutes in California while the Bridges to Stem Cell Research awards support year long internships for undergraduate and master's level students. For more information about these programs and how to apply, see below.

SPARK Program (High School)

Summer Program to Accelerate Regenerative medicine Knowledge (SPARK) offers California high school students an invaluable opportunity to gain hands-on training in stem cell research at some of the leading research institutes in California. SPARK program specifically select students who represent the diversity of California's population, particularly those who might not otherwise have opportunities to partake in research internships to due socioeconomic constraints.

SPARK students will spend the summer learning about stem cells and regenerative medicine and will conduct a six week research internship in a stem cell lab. At the end of their program, students get to show off their hard work by presenting their research at the SPARK annual conference.

Currently, there are seven active SPARK programs located in Northern and Southern California. Each program has its own application process and way of selecting students for their SPARK program. If you are a student, teacher or family member interested in learning more information about how to apply or when application deadlines are, **please visit the individual SPARK program websites in the table below for details about each program.**

If you have questions about the SPARK program, please email the CIRM SPARK director, Todd Dubnicoff (tdubnicoff@cirm.ca.gov).



2016 SPARK Student Conference

SPARK Program	Location	Program Director	Contact
Northern California			
Children's Hospital Oakland Research Institute (CHORI)	Oakland	Ellen Fung	efung@mail.cho.org
Stanford	Palo Alto	PJ Utz	pjutz@stanford.edu simr-program@stanford.edu (Program Staff)
UC Davis	Davis	Gerhard Bauer	gbauer@ucdavis.edu

UC San Francisco	San Francisco	Katherine Nielsen	Katherine.Nielsen@ucsf.edu
Southern California			
Caltech	Pasadena	Henry Lester	Victoria Fox, drvictoriafox@outlook.com
Cedars-Sinai	Los Angeles	Virginia Mattis	Virginia.Mattis@cshs.org
City of Hope	Duarte	Paul Salvaterra	PSalvaterra@coh.org

Learn more about our SPARK program on the [Stem Cellar Blog](#) and on [Instagram](#):

- California high schoolers SPARK interest in stem cell research through social media
- Don't Be Afraid: High school stem cell researcher on inspiring girls to pursue STEM careers
- Life after SPARK: CIRM high school intern gets prestigious scholarship to Stanford
- Young minds shine bright at the CIRM SPARK conference
- CIRM Instagram Page (Follow the hashtag #CIRMSPARKlab)



CIRM SPARK Videos:

- SPARK student stem cell pitches (2016)
- CIRM Creativity music videos (2015)

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Bridges Program (Undergraduate and Masters)

The objective of CIRM's Bridges to Stem Cell Research and Therapy Program is to prepare California's undergraduate and master's graduate students for highly productive careers in stem cell research and therapy development.

Started in 2009, the program provides paid stem cell research internships to students at universities and colleges that don't have major stem cell research programs. Each Bridges internship includes thorough hands-on training and education in stem cell research, and direct patient engagement and outreach activities that engage California's diverse communities.

There are currently fourteen active Bridges programs throughout California, each with its own eligibility criteria and application process. If you are interested in applying, please see the table below for more details about each program.

If you have questions about the Bridges program, please email the CIRM Bridges director, Todd Dubnicoff (tdubnicoff@cirm.ca.gov).



Bridges students present their research at the 2016 annual Bridges Meeting

Bridges Program	Program Director	Contact
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Northern California		
City College of San Francisco	Carin Zimmerman	czimmerm@ccsf.edu
California State University, Sacramento	Lisa Hammersley	hammersley@csus.edu
California State University, Humboldt	Amy Spowles (Co-Director) Jacob Varkey (Co-Director)	aes54@humboldt.edu jpv1@humboldt.edu
San Francisco State University	Lily Chen	lilychen@sfsu.edu
San Jose State University	Tzvia Abramson	tzvia.Abramson@sjsu.edu
Southern California		
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo	Trevor Cardinal	tcardina@calpoly.edu
California State University, Channel Islands	Nikita Parmar	nitika.parmar@csuci.edu
California State University, Fullerton	Nilay Patel	stemcell@fullerton.edu or npatel@fullerton.edu
California State University, Long Beach	Lisa Klig	ls.klig@csulb
California State University, Northridge	Cindy Malone	cmalone@csun.edu
California State University, San Bernardino	Nicole Bournias-Vardiabasis	nicole.bournias@gmail.com
California State University, San Marcos	Bianca Mothé	bmothe@csusm.edu
Pasadena City College	Pamela Eversole-Cire	pleversole-cire@pasadena.edu
San Diego State University	Ralph Feuer	rfeuer@mail.sdsu.edu

Learn more through these stories about the CIRM Bridges to Stem Cell Research and Therapy Programs

CIRM Stem Cellar Blogs:

- Investing in Student Researchers Now for Future Stem Cell Therapy Homeruns
- Advancing Stem Cell Research at the CIRM Bridges Conference
- Science and Improv: Spotlight on CIRM Bridges Scholar Jill Tsai

CIRM Videos:

- Training the Next Generation of Stem Cell Scientists
- Building California's Stem Cell Research Workforce

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