
Interdisciplinary Stem Cell Training Grant at UCSD III

Grant Award Details

Interdisciplinary Stem Cell Training Grant at UCSD III

Grant Type: Research Training Grant

Grant Number: EDUC4-12804

Project Objective: This UCSD based program will support 5 graduate, 5 postdoctoral, and 2 clinical fellows annually and will merge an understanding of basic and clinical Sciences with advanced engineering and bioinformatic methods.

Investigator:

Name:	Alysson Muotri
Institution:	University of California, San Diego
Type:	PI

Award Value: \$4,992,446

Status: Pre-Active

Grant Application Details

Application Title: Interdisciplinary Stem Cell Training Grant at UCSD III

Public Abstract:

Statement of Benefit to California:

This training opportunity will bring the following benefits to California:

1-Training the next generation of stem cell biologists. The strength of our commitment to research training, the value of our experience, and the positive effect of strong mentoring is manifest in the success of our past group of CIRM trainees, who have published an outstanding volume of high-impact papers in the field, gaining excellent careers in industry, clinical endeavors, and academia, with many becoming faculty members themselves, thus extending the impact of the training program to new generations of scientists. Moreover, many of these past trainees have also received other prestigious prizes, awards, and fellowships, including the Hertzberg-Schechter Prize for Stem Cell Research, the Product Development Breakthrough Award, the Larry Hillblom Foundation fellowship, NIH K99/R00s, Ruth L. Kirschstein fellowship, best dissertation thesis, best poster in meetings, etc. We have a total of 87 past CIRM trainees from 49 different UCSD mentors. Of all trainees, 57% of these were women, and 81% continue researching in the USA (including 72% in California).

2-Health and Economic Benefits. The work from our CIRM trainees has led to new treatment and several ongoing clinical trials (including spinal cord injury, different types of cancer, Alzheimer's Disease). Moreover, the work from our trainees becomes inventions and patents, many being licensed by our faculty-based spin-offs based in California.

3-Public communication and outreach. Californians will also benefit from our proposed dissemination and outreach activities. Our strong partnership with UCTV has resulted in unique collaborations like Stem Cell Science with Alysson Muotri, to produce high-quality, easy-to-understand, 12-15 minutes videos about stem cells and their applications. To effectively reach diverse populations, including non-English-speaking people and racial and ethnic minorities, these episodes are translated into both Spanish and Portuguese. A pilot video of this channel received the 2018 Telly Award for excellence in science communication and, another episode received another Telly Award in 2019. This initiative alone brought in over 1 million views across its first season and consistently ranked in the top position for programming across all of the Universities of California. We also established the "Closer Look" online series, aimed to stimulate expert conversation between a basic scientist and a clinician about emerging stem cell research and clinical strategies tackling a variety of diseases. This has become a trendy venue for our scientists to meet and answer questions from the public. The average attendance is about 300 people by zoom. All the videos are recorded and made available on YouTube. We will also reinstitute an annual Stem Cell Day celebration and bring trainees to present their work to the public.

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