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Creating Opportunities through Mentorship and Partnership Across Stem Cell Science (COMPASS)

EDUC 5

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS
02.25.22

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Creating Opportunities through Mentorship and Partnership Across Stem Cell Science (COMPASS)

EDUC 5

Objective

CIRM's mission is to accelerate world class science to deliver transformative regenerative medicine treatments in an equitable manner to a diverse California and world.

The objective of the COMPASS Training Program is to prepare a diverse cadre of undergraduate students for careers in regenerative medicine through the creation of novel recruitment and support mechanisms that identify and foster untapped talent within populations that are historically under-represented in the biomedical sciences, and by combining hands-on research opportunities with strategic and structured mentorship experiences to enhance transition of students to successful careers. This program will afford interested and open-minded students the opportunity to explore a variety of ways in which their research skills can be applied towards improving human health through career paths in both the public and private sectors. A parallel objective is to foster greater awareness and appreciation of diversity, equity and inclusion in trainees, mentors, and other program participants.

Specifically, this program will:

- Create novel mechanisms to identify and cultivate untapped talent amongst undergraduate populations representing the depth and diversity of California's population
- Provide foundational knowledge in stem cell/regenerative medicine and related science through coursework and hands-on research internships in cutting edge regenerative medicine laboratories and/or biotech companies
- Create Mentorship Programs to foster an environment of inclusivity and awareness, to guide program participants through their educational experience, and to facilitate their progression to successful and rewarding careers in regenerative medicine
- Produce a cadre of stem cell scientists and regenerative medicine practitioners with an awareness and appreciation of inequities that impact development of therapies for all

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Award Information

How is the COMPASS Program structured?

Each COMPASS Program will be led by a team that includes a qualified Program Director, who will oversee all activities supported by the program; a Mentorship Facilitator, who will design and execute a Mentoring Program to ensure all trainees receive customized, appropriate and meaningful mentorship throughout their time in the program; and a Diversity and Outreach Coordinator, who will strategize and evaluate efforts to recruit diverse and qualified students from under-represented and disadvantaged populations and bring value to CIRM's mission. The COMPASS Program must be integrated within a bachelor's degree program at the applicant institution and provide resources and opportunities for students to participate in hands-on research in stem cell biology, gene therapy, or related regenerative medicine activities, either at the applicant institution or with a partnering "host" institution, which may be biotech or pharmaceutical companies, research universities or institutes. Trainees, including those who may be recent transfers from community colleges, should be supported as "COMPASS Scholars" for two to three years while they complete required coursework and participate in research internships and Mentoring Program; they will continue to have access to the Mentoring Program to the time of graduation and will be encouraged to participate further as peer mentors.

What is the award amount and duration?

The CIRM Governing Board has allocated $58.22 million to support up to 20 awards for a duration of five years. Each award will provide direct project costs of up to $2.7M, as detailed below. Non-profit organizations may request up to 10% indirect costs on eligible expenses. The maximum total award amount per program is $2.91M.

What activities will CIRM fund?

1. Trainee Related Funds The award will support undergraduate trainees for two to three appointment periods (years), at the following amounts per trainee:

a) Trainee Stipends – Up to $18,000 per year per student, comprising
   - Up to $9,000 (not to exceed $1,000/month) support during academic year, participation in Mentoring Program activities
   - Up to $9,000 (not to exceed $3,000/month) for a laboratory research internship. The research internship can take place over a summer, an academic quarter, or may be distributed on a part time basis over several months to a year, as is most suitable to the program and/or individual trainee.

b) Tuition and Fees – up to 100% of the first $3,000 incurred Core Program Requirement courses, and 60% thereafter up to a maximum of $9,600 (to the institution)

c) Research Related Funds – up to $2,200 for research project costs to the internship host laboratory

d) Program Related Travel expenses – up to $1,000, including attendance at a CIRM sponsored conference

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2. Program Administration Funds

Up to $200,000/year may be requested to develop and administer the program, including:

- Developing and administering an Adaptive Outreach and Recruitment Plan
- Developing and administering a Mentoring Program and associated activities
- Support for Patient Engagement and Community Outreach activities
- Administrative support salaries and mentorship incentives
- Funds for developing a general education course/workshop on Diversity in Science

Generally, not more than 40% of the Program Administration Funds may be requested for salary support of the Program Leadership Team (Program Director, Diversity and Outreach Coordinator, and Mentorship Facilitator roles) and administrative personnel. Adequate justification for all Program Administration expenses must be provided including percent effort and salaries for key personnel.

3. Accessibility Fund

A special discretionary fund may be requested (based on $3,000/year/trainee), to be used conditionally and with CIRM's Prior Approval, to enable a trainee to join or stay in program if a specific hardship arises and can be addressed. The Accessibility Fund will be capped at $30,000/year.

How will funds be awarded?

Awards will be made in the form of a grant. CIRM will disburse funds pursuant to a Notice of Award. The first payment will be issued upon initiation of an award and continued funding will be contingent upon timely progress, as outlined in the project milestones and timeline established under the Notice of Award. In addition, CIRM will only disburse stipend-related funds upon submission of a signed Appointment Form for an eligible trainee.

Eligibility

What types of projects are eligible for funding?

(1) To be eligible, the proposed program must include the following components:

a. **Foundational coursework in stem cell/regenerative medicine** that is integrated within a trainee's bachelor's degree curriculum. Coursework must also include some introduction to:
   - FAIR principles of data sharing (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable)
   - Good research habits (planning, documentation, time management)
   - Principles of translational research
   - Specialized options of value, for example computational biology, bioengineering, data science or analysis, statistics, etc.

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b. A structured **Mentoring Program, led by Mentorship Facilitator** who will identify and train a small team of individual(s) including external advisors that will serve as role models for students, and who will bring culturally aware knowledge and perspectives representing the targeted student groups that may not be present in the resident faculty of the academic institution. The Mentoring Program must include:

- Individual development plans for students
- Formal mentor[1] training for research advisors, including implicit bias training and access to any institutional courses or resources relating to promoting Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) in the scientific and broader community
- Development of mentoring agreements between students, research advisors, and/or any other key mentors supporting preparation and presentation of a culminating Capstone Project (see below)
- Cohort-wide activities to guide personal and professional growth such as life skills workshops, resume/interview workshops, and networking events
- Activities to develop soft skills such as presentation and scientific writing
- Career counseling and introduction to diverse opportunities for applying regenerative medicine skillsets in the workforce such as manufacturing, quality control and assurance, regulatory affairs, entrepreneurship and business development, scientific communications, etc.
- Plans for Sharing of Mentoring Program approaches and outcomes within and outside of the institution

c. An **Adaptive Outreach and Recruitment Plan (AORP),** to identify and foster talent within students that may otherwise go unrecognized, and that is targeted to students who are open to and interested in variety of alternative career possibilities in regenerative medicine besides graduate or medical school. **The AORP will be developed and executed by a dedicated Diversity and Outreach Coordinator** and must include:

- Defined goals and expected outcomes of the AORP and COMPASS Program
- Novel approaches to identify and select scientifically talented students in lieu of typical practices that have relied on factors such as highest SAT scores, grades, educational pedigree, etc.
- Regularly scheduled assessment and analysis of disparities within the applicant institution's STEM programs
- Adaptive strategies to address program-specific disparities in representation of socioeconomically disadvantaged groups, first generation college students and/or other underserved populations through increased outreach and other targeted approaches

[1] For the purposes of this award, the general term "mentor" is applied primarily to individuals who will work directly with students throughout their time as COMPASS scholars. The terms "internship mentor" or "research advisor" refer specifically to the subset of mentors who will supervise and guide students during the research internship period of their appointment.

- Regularly scheduled assessment and analysis of the success of AORP strategies in meeting the goals and expected outcomes of the program, including consultation with members of underrepresented communities to gain perspective and insight on outreach and recruitment strategies (e.g., Advisory Committee, see item h.)

d. **Laboratory Research Internships** where trainees participate in hands-on, regenerative medicine-related research involving stem cells, gene therapy and/or other critical research relevant to understanding or treating a human condition or disease. Internships will take place under the direction of a laboratory mentor within the applicant institution or at a partnering, host institution and culminate in a poster presentation at a CIRM-hosted event. Research internships must be the equivalent of 2-3 months full time work and can take place over the summer or can be distributed as part time effort over an extended or different period as suits program and individual. Each trainee must complete at least 1 research internship while appointed as a COMPASS Scholar.

e. **A Capstone Project** to be developed under the guidance of mentor(s), highlighting training outcomes including results of research internship experience(s) and any special mentored projects, per program design.

f. **Patient Engagement and Community Outreach Activities** to raise awareness of patient needs and to foster sensitivity around issues of access and inclusion that differentially impact communities in California, particularly those that are disadvantaged by socio-economic status and/or other factors.

g. **An Alumni Tracking and Engagement Plan** to enable annual assessment and reporting on post-graduate employment positions taken by program alumni, and to encourage their continued participation in the Mentoring Program to inspire and motivate future COMPASS Scholars.

h. **A Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan** that addresses:

- How the COMPASS Program will promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the development and implementation of the program;
- What the applicant institution has done previously to support DEI;
- How the applicant team will include perspectives from communities that are systematically underrepresented in STEM to inform recruitment and outreach strategy (for example through consultants or by forming an Advisory Committee that includes members of these communities);
- How the program will provide trainees with access to coursework and resources within their institution that relate to promoting DEI in scientific research and in the broader community

(2) Must be ready to initiate work on the funded project within 90 days of approval

Given the urgency of CIRM's mission, all approved awardees must initiate work on the funded project within 90 days of approval and authorization for funding by the Application Review Subcommittee of the Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee.

(3) Must include a Mentorship Facilitator

The project team must include a Mentorship Facilitator with experience in developing and executing mentorship programs, knowledge and skill in working with people from targeted underrepresented populations, and who is able to devote at least 10% percent effort to the program.

(4) Must include a Diversity and Outreach Coordinator

The project team must include a Diversity and Outreach Coordinator who is knowledgeable about issues of diversity, equity and inclusion in an academic environment, who has appropriate qualifications to design and execute effective outreach to persons from targeted, underrepresented populations, and who is able to devote at least 10% percent effort to the program.

(5) Co-funding is not required

However, if the project requires funding over and above that which CIRM provides, documentation demonstrating the commitment of funds to cover the proposed co-funding amount must be provided at the time of application submission (e.g., copy of executed term sheet showing amount of co-funding, conditions, and source).

(6) Application must be accurate and complete

All required components of the application must be completed and may not contain false or inaccurate information.

(7) Applicant must be in "good standing"

In order to be eligible to apply for CIRM funding, an applicant must certify that it is in good standing, as follows:

a. If in existence for less than five years:

   (i) The applicant's Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, and Program Director must not have been convicted of, or currently under investigation for, crimes involving fraud/misappropriation; and

   (ii) The applicant must have accounting systems in place that are capable of tracking CIRM funds.

b. The Program Director or key personnel must not be currently under investigation for research misconduct by the applicant institution or a funding agency and must not be currently debarred by HHS Office of Research Integrity.

Who can apply?

Applicant institutions must be California public universities or colleges or private, non-profit academic institutions and have an accredited bachelor's degree program in biology, bioengineering, biomedical sciences, or other STEM disciplines relevant to regenerative medicine.

Applicant institutions intending to host research internships internally must include participating faculty with federally or CIRM supported research programs in regenerative medicine-related disciplines. Applicant institutions without this

necessary research infrastructure may partner with another organization, such as a research university or institute or appropriate biotechnology/pharmaceutical company, to provide appropriate internship opportunities.

Applicant institutions that currently have an active CIRM Bridges Award that supports undergraduate level students must clearly differentiate between the two programs to be eligible. Applicants will be expected to outline differences in program goals and targeted student population, as well as demonstrate the capacity of the institution to recruit and support both programs.

CIRM will accept only one application per institution.

Who can serve as the Program Director (PD)?

To be eligible, the PD must satisfy the following requirements:

- Must be an employee of the applicant organization or be accountable for the conduct of the proposed project to the applicant organization through a formal contract.
- Must commit at least 5% effort to working on the project. Any effort for which salary from CIRM is claimed must be expended in California.
- Must be authorized by the applicant organization to assume the responsibilities of the PD.
- Must not currently have another application pending review or approval under this funding opportunity.
- Must not currently have another application that is substantially similar or has overlapping activities pending review or approval under any CIRM opportunity.

Who can partner as an internship host institution?

Internship-host laboratories can be at California non-profit doctorate granting research universities, research institutes, California laboratories of for-profit biotech or pharmaceutical companies, including CROs and CDMOs.

Schedule and Deadlines

Applications Due	May 17, 2022, 2:00pm Pacific Time
Grants Working Group (GWG) Review	Approximately 60 days post submission
ICOC Review and Approval	Approximately 90 days post submission
Award Start	Must start within 90 days of award approval (i.e., approximately 180 days post submission)

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Application Review Information

What is the process for evaluating an application?

Eligibility Review

CIRM will assess whether the applicant and proposed program meets eligibility requirements under this RFA. If CIRM determines, in its sole discretion, that an applicant or proposed program does not meet the eligibility requirements, CIRM will notify the applicant of its decision, and the application will not be reviewed.

Scientific Review

The scientific and educational merit of each application will be assessed by the CIRM Grants Working Group (GWG), which is composed of fifteen subject matter experts from outside California, seven patient advocate and nurse members of the Independent Citizens Oversight Committee (ICOC), and the Chair of the ICOC. The list of scientific members who may participate in the GWG review can be found at http://www.cirm.ca.gov/WorkingGroup_GrantsReview. The composition of the ICOC can be viewed at http://www.cirm.ca.gov/GoverningBoard.

The fifteen participating scientists on the GWG will evaluate the applications and score them according to scientific and technical merit, applying the review criteria described below. The GWG scientific members will score each application and the full GWG will make funding recommendations to the ICOC's Application Review Subcommittee.

The ICOC's Application Review Subcommittee will make final funding decisions giving consideration to the GWG recommendations and any CIRM team recommendations.

Confidentiality

CIRM's confidentiality and conflict screening rules apply to everyone who will have access to applications or who will attend any review meeting in which confidential information is discussed, including but not limited to CIRM team members, reviewers and members of the ICOC. (Per Gov. Code §6254.5(e) non-public records may be disclosed to government agencies under confidentiality agreements.)

How will the educational and technical merit of an application be evaluated?

Scientific members of the GWG will evaluate and score applications based on the following key criteria:

1. Does the proposed program hold the necessary significance and potential for impact?

Is the program likely to impact trainees representing the broad diversity of California's population, including students from underserved and socio-economically disadvantaged communities? Is the proposed training program likely to have a meaningful, positive impact on trainee's career development in stem cell science,

gene therapy and/or regenerative medicine related fields? Is the program likely to foster a commitment among trainees and program participants to CIRM's Mission? Is the program likely to have a significant impact on recruitment and mentoring practices that enable and sustain participation of trainees whose innate talents and creativity may have gone unrecognized due to a lack of opportunity, resources or support? Is the program likely to build a diverse and sustainable pipeline of future contributors to the regenerative medicine and related workforce?

2. Is the training program well planned and designed?

Adaptive Outreach and Recruitment Plan

Does the Adaptive Outreach and Recruitment Plan (AORP) establish clear goals and expected outcomes, with appropriate plans for periodic self-assessment and modification of approach in response to this analysis? Does the AORP propose feasible strategies for addressing disparities in representation that are specific to the applicant institution's STEM programs, for example through targeted outreach to socioeconomically disadvantaged populations or recruitment from community colleges? Does the plan target students who are open to and interested in variety of alternative career possibilities in regenerative medicine besides graduate or medical school? Does the AORP outline feasible, alternative approaches to identify talent and potential to succeed in trainees, without reliance on factors such as class rank, pedigree, or SAT score?

Mentoring Program

Does the Mentoring Program provide suitable plans to recruit a team of mentors that can bring culturally aware knowledge and perspectives that may not be present in the resident faculty at the applicant institution? Are there appropriate plans to provide training in mentorship skills and principles of DEI to prospective mentors and research advisors? Does the program propose individualized development plans, mentorship agreements and cohort wide activities that support personal and professional growth of COMPASS Scholars? Are there feasible plans to introduce trainees to diverse career possibilities that build from a regenerative medicine skillset, such as regulatory affairs, manufacturing, scientific communications? Are there appropriate plans in place to evaluate the Mentoring Program and disseminate best mentoring practices with other institutions to allow broader impact of program success?

Trainee Experience

Is the training program appropriately designed to provide all trainees with a foundation in stem cell/regenerative medicine related coursework from qualified instructors, including an introduction to principles of translational research, good research habits and FAIR data sharing? Will the program provide trainees with a quality, first-hand laboratory experience in stem/progenitor cells, gene therapy and/or other critical laboratory research relevant to understanding or treating a human condition? Does the program provide valuable opportunities for trainees to participate in patient engagement and community outreach? Does the program provide valuable and appropriate soft skills and enhancements to support a trainee's successful transition from academia to career, or to post-graduate education?

Alumni Tracking and Engagement

Have adequate mechanisms and procedures been established for tracking of trainee outcomes, including further education and/or post-graduate employment positions taken by program alumni? Are alumni encouraged to continue participation in the Mentoring Program to inspire and motivate future COMPASS Scholars or other trainees?

3. Is the proposed program practical and achievable?

Structure and Institutional Resources

Does the program have access to all the necessary resources, including personnel, key partnerships, and research infrastructure to implement and carry out the proposed training program? Is the program appropriately scaled to support the proposed number of COMPASS Scholars? Does the institutional commitment and track record support achievement of program objectives? If the applicant has other undergraduate, STEM-focused training programs, does the COMPASS Program address an unmet need in this context?

Program Team

Is the Program Director appropriately qualified to manage and lead the training program? Are the qualifications of the Diversity and Outreach Coordinator appropriate to deliver an innovative and effective Adaptive Outreach and Recruitment Plan? Does the Mentorship Facilitator have the appropriate skills and experience to develop and deliver a quality Mentoring Program and disseminate best practices?

Track Record and Outcomes of a Prior Training Program (if applicable)

Does the program have outcomes reported for prior CIRM-funded or other undergraduate-focused training programs that demonstrate success in recruiting qualified students of diverse cultural and socio-economically challenged backgrounds? Does analysis of program outcomes demonstrate success (e.g., previously enrolled trainees have gained positions or progressed to further education in a science related field)?

4. Does the program thoughtfully incorporate strategies to support Diversity, Equity and Inclusion?

Does the program propose a well-considered plan that promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion in the development and implementation of the program? Does the Program Team incorporate perspectives from communities that are systematically underrepresented in STEM, including those that may not be present on the Program Team, by, for example, establishing an Advisory Committee that includes those perspectives and that can inform recruitment, outreach, and mentoring strategies? Are there plans in place to provide trainees and other program participants with access to resources within the institution that relate to promoting DEI in scientific research and the broader community?

Application Components and Submission

How does one apply?

Applications must be completed online using the CIRM Grants Management Portal at https://grants.cirm.ca.gov. Any prospective Program Director (PD) must create a login in the system to access application materials and apply. Applications are available in the system only to the PD. A PD may submit only a single application in response to this RFA.

Applications are due by 2:00 PM (Pacific Time) on May 17, 2022.

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What is required to prepare a complete application?

The Grants Management Portal provides instructions for completing all the necessary components and submitting a final application. The application is designed to collect information necessary to appropriately evaluate the proposal and for CIRM to rapidly initiate an award if approved for funding. Applicants are required to indicate key personnel involved in the program, describe how the program will address the COMPASS Program objectives, provide a detailed plan of proposed activities, and summarize trainee lab opportunities. Letters confirming support and commitment of the applicant institution and any partnering organizations should be included.

The main body of the proposal contains the following sections:

1. Program Summary: High level overview of the proposed program of training including the overall recruitment strategy; the number of trainees to be supported and the duration of their appointment; the scientific and ancillary curricula; mentoring plans and associated activities; and the range of research internship opportunities available to trainees in the program.

2. Adaptive Outreach and Recruitment Plan (AORP):

a) AORP Goals: Description of the overall goals and expected outcomes of the AORP towards identifying and fostering talent within students that may otherwise go unrecognized and who are open to and interested in variety of alternative career possibilities in regenerative medicine besides graduate or medical school.

b) Prospective Trainee Recruitment: Description of the overall recruitment strategy, including how disparities in the applicant institution's STEM programs will be initially and periodically assessed.

c) Trainee Selection: Description of how trainees with diverse cultural and socio-economically challenged backgrounds will be discerned and selected for the program, using novel or alternative approaches that identify scientific talent and potential to succeed without reliance on standard academic practices such as highest SAT scores, class rank or educational pedigree.

d) Assessment and Adaptation: Description of how AORP performance will be assessed towards meeting the defined goals, and how outcomes analysis will be used to "adapt" COMPASS program outreach, recruitment, and selection strategies to address or overcome identified gaps and disparities in the applicant institution's STEM programs.

3. Mentoring Program:

a) Mentor Recruitment and Preparation: Description of plans to identify and train a small team of individual(s) including external advisors that will serve as role models for students, and who will bring culturally aware knowledge and perspectives representing the targeted student groups that may not be present in the resident faculty of the applicant institution. Description of how future COMPASS alumni will be encouraged to participate in the Mentoring Program. Elaboration of how mentors, including those serving as research internship advisors, will be prepared to interact with students including implicit bias training and access to institutional courses or resources related to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

b) Mentored Trainee Activities and Resources: Description of activities and resources that will be provided to trainees throughout their time in the COMPASS program, including individual development plans and mentoring agreements, cohort-wide activities for personal and professional growth, soft

skills workshops, career counseling and introduction to diverse opportunities for applying regenerative medicine skillsets in the workforce.

c) Mentorship Practices Sharing Plan: Description of how practices and activities developed through the COMPASS program will be evaluated for success, and how successful practices will be shared broadly so that students at other institutions may benefit.

4. Trainee Coursework, Activities and Research:

a) Foundational Coursework: Description of foundational courses in stem cell biology/regenerative medicine to be provided, and how these will be integrated into a trainee's bachelor's degree curriculum. Description of how principles of translational research, FAIR data sharing and good research habits will be incorporated within this curriculum, as well as specialized courses of value that will be required or made available to trainees.

b) Laboratory Internships: Description of laboratory internship opportunities that will be available to trainees, including their relevance to stem cell/regenerative medicine, how trainees will be placed in laboratories, and the number, duration and timing of internships proposed per trainee (at least 1 per trainee, or up to 1 per year, etc.). Description of strategies to recruit and qualify new host sites/internship mentors, if applicable. Laboratories and internship mentors that have already committed to hosting COMPASS trainees should be described separately (sections 8-10).

c) Capstone Project: Description of plans to provide a culminating capstone experience for trainees under guidance of mentor(s) that includes highlights of training outcomes, including results of research internship experience(s) and/or any special projects.

d) Patient and Healthcare Engagement Activities: Description of planned activities, nature of trainee involvement and their value towards enhancing trainees' understanding of the challenges of being a patient.

e) Community Outreach and Education Activities: Description of planned activities focused on sharing experiences and/or educating diverse California communities about stem cells, gene therapy and regenerative medicine, and to gain awareness of socio-economic issues and disparities around health care and access. Description of any plans to develop a general education course or workshop on Diversity in Science.

5. Alumni Tracking and Engagement Plan: Description of plan for annual assessment and reporting on post-graduate employment positions taken by program alumni, and to encourage their continued participation in the Mentoring Program to inspire and motivate future COMPASS Scholars.

6. Program Leadership and Administration: Description of plans for the educational and administrative leadership and program oversight; description of the qualifications for the roles of Program Director, Mentorship Facilitator, and Diversity and Outreach Coordinator, as well as any other key personnel that are integral to program success. Plans to establish an Advisory Panel to inform program administration should be addressed in the DEI Plan (see section 14).

7. Prior or Similar Training Programs (If applicable): Description of any prior experience with undergraduate focused research training, including success in recruiting qualified students of diverse cultural and socio-economically challenged backgrounds and quantitation of program outcomes (success rate of previously enrolled trainees that have progressed to careers or further education in science related fields, and relative success rates for trainees from different backgrounds).

8. Institutional Resources and Environment: Description of the facilities and environment (including those of a partnering institution, if applicable) in which the training activities will be conducted, and the resources available for training in stem cell/regenerative medicine research. Indicate which of these facilities and resources are available within the applicant institution or provided through the partnering institution(s).

9. Host/Partnering Institutions (for programs where external partners will host laboratory research internships or other key program components): List of internship-host institutions with which agreements or arrangements for trainee placement or training have been established.

10. Laboratory Internship Mentors: List of research advisors/internship mentors available to supervise or host trainees for the laboratory research component of their training.

11. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan:

- How the COMPASS Program will promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the development and implementation of the program;
- What the applicant institution has done previously to support DEI;
- How the applicant team will include perspectives from communities that are systematically underrepresented in STEM to inform recruitment and outreach strategy and mentoring activities (for example, through consultants or by forming an Advisory Committee that includes members from these communities);
- How the program will provide trainees with access to relevant coursework and/or resources within their institution that relate to promoting DEI in scientific research and in the broader community

Because CIRM is prohibited from taking race, ethnicity, national origin and gender into account in making grant decisions, applicants should refrain from focusing exclusively on race, ethnicity, national origin, or gender in describing their team personnel. However, it is allowable and expected that presentation of trainee outcomes data and trainee outreach plans will necessarily refer to race, ethnicity, national origin, and gender.

Who are Key Personnel?

In the application, we ask you to identify by name pertinent Key Personnel and their specific roles in the program. Key Personnel include the Program Director, Mentorship Facilitator, Diversity and Outreach Coordinator, and any key administrative personnel. Do not include internship-host mentors or advisory committee members in this section.

What should one know before preparing the budget?

All budgetary requests must be indicated on the online application form. Limits for each budget category are indicated above (Award Information: Award Information: What Activities Will CIRM Fund?) and must be observed. Budget justification for "Program Administration Funds" should provide sufficient detail to allow evaluation of the appropriateness of the costs in relation to the activities proposed. Budget justification for "Trainee Funds" is not required; however, the number of trainee positions should be justified in the "Program Summary" section of the proposal.

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How much can an applicant claim for indirect costs?

Indirect costs will be limited to 10% of the total direct costs (Trainee Funds and Program Administration Funds).

Applicant institutions are not allowed to incur additional Indirect Costs on any subcontract costs proposed for the project.

Award Administration

Issuance of Award

A CIRM COMPASS Award is issued via a Grant, which is the formal contract that defines the terms and conditions of an award and documents the commitment of funds from CIRM.

Reporting

Grantees will be required to provide periodic reporting to CIRM according to the terms of the Notice of Award. These include periodic progress reports, annual financial reports, trainee appointment and completion forms.

Trainee appointment forms include the planned activities for each trainee and are submitted prior to start of the appointment period. The forms must be updated periodically to include description of research internship projects as appropriate. Completion forms are due at the end of the appointment period that include a summary of the trainee activities and post-award plans.

CIRM will only disburse trainee related funds upon submission of a signed Appointment Form for an eligible trainee. Program Administration funds will be disbursed on an annual basis based on successful progress towards project objectives.

Fund Carry-forward and No-Cost Extensions

CIRM allows carry-forward of any obligated trainee funds from one grant year to the next. All unobligated trainee funds at the end of each trainee appointment must be returned to CIRM and cannot be used to fund additional internships, additional program administration funding or for any other purpose unless specifically approved in advance by CIRM for exceptional circumstances. CIRM will allow carry-forward of unobligated program administration funds from one grant year to the next, in order to allow use of those funds in a way that best serves the trainees.

No-cost extensions (NCEs) are only permitted under exceptional circumstances, where an extension would facilitate the completion of a trainee's normal internship term; such an extension would require specific approval by CIRM.

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Contacts

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