

Bridges to Stem Cell Research Award Extension

Proposal

Request ICOC approval for an extension of the Bridges to Stem Cell Research Awards for an additional three years.

Overview

- Purpose: to extend CIRM support for the Bridges to Stem Cell Research Awards for three additional years (beyond the initial three-year funded period)
- Eligibility: institutions with a currently CIRM-funded Bridges Program which are in good standing and have demonstrated effective program performance
- Eligible costs: program funding per year will remain as originally awarded to support trainee expenses, program administration and educational enhancement activities, and indirect costs, except that additional funds will be available to cover increases in trainee tuition and fees (up to \$7000 per year for each trainee).
- Total program cost: \$27 million

Rationale

The CIRM Bridges to Stem Cell Research initiative supports research opportunities for undergraduate and Masters level students from California State Universities and community colleges. This program seeks to expand the pool of laboratory personnel trained in techniques essential for stem cell biology and to provide exposure to this field to students who otherwise might not consider more advance educational opportunities. The CIRM initiative supports 160 trainees per year in the 16 Bridges programs. These trainees participate in specialized courses and other educational activities at their home institutions, stem cell techniques courses at CIRM-supported Shared Lab Facilities, and research internships in laboratories at research-intensive universities and biotech companies.

The 3-year award period for these training programs will come to the end beginning in 2012. CIRM seeks to continue support for successful programs by extending the award period for up to 3 years so that programs maintain continuity, training is not interrupted and the ongoing contributions of these programs are retained.

The extension of these awards is proposed to be made on a conditional basis. The condition for extending an award beyond the original 3 years is the demonstration of successful training outcomes, continuation of productive relationships with internship-host institutions and ongoing commitment from the home institution. Each program is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the supported activities are successfully addressing these key goals and providing a high quality training experience. In addition, the annual Bridges Trainee Meeting provides an opportunity for direct interaction between trainees and CIRM staff.

All Bridges programs are currently in good standing and advancing the goals set out in the RFA. All programs are providing comprehensive training for students in state-of-the-art techniques required for stem cell research and are exposing trainees to the broader fields of stem cell biology and regenerative medicine. CIRM has received extremely positive feedback from mentors, program directors, and other CIRM grantees about the quality, enthusiasm, and performance of Bridges trainees. Although the individual programs have been in operation for only 1-2 years, there is already significant evidence that the Bridges program is fulfilling, and in many cases exceeding, desired outcomes. For example, a survey reporting on 134 trainees who have completed the program indicates that 28% of the students were accepted into graduate or professional school programs (e.g. MD or PhD programs) and 51% of the trainees obtained research jobs, primarily in stem cell labs and frequently in the laboratories of their CIRM-supported internships. Bridges program directors report a growing interest in these programs as well as an increasing demand for their graduates by both industrial and academic labs.

CIRM Bridges to Stem Cell Research Awards Extension – Requested Amounts

Grant	PI	Institution	Total YR4-6
TB1-01175	Walsh, Daniel W.	California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo	\$1,601,173
TB1-01176	Adler-Moore, Jill	California State Polytechnic University, Pomona	\$1,549,678
TB1-01177	Wang, Ching-Hua	California State University, Channel Islands	\$1,858,647
TB1-01181	Patel, Nilay V.	California State University, Fullerton	\$1,429,523
TB1-01182	Klig, Lisa S.	California State University, Long Beach	\$1,686,998
TB1-01183	Cohen, Randy W	California State University, Northridge	\$1,755,657
TB1-01184	Heffernan, Laurel G.	California State University, Sacramento	\$1,429,523
TB1-01185	Bournias-Vardiabasis, Nicole	California State University, San Bernardino	\$1,446,688
TB1-01186	Mothe, Bianca	California State University, San Marcos	\$1,858,647
TB1-01188	Zimmerman, Carin	City College Of San Francisco	\$1,343,699
TB1-01190	Varkey, Jacob	Humboldt State University	\$1,858,647
TB1-01192	Eversole-Cire, Pamela L.	Pasadena City College	\$1,858,647
TB1-01193	Glembotski, Christopher C.	San Diego State University	\$1,858,647
TB1-01194	Domingo, Carmen Regina	San Francisco State University	\$1,858,647
TB1-01195	Boothby, John Thayer	San Jose State University	\$1,858,647
TB1-01197	Des Rochers, Barbara	Berkeley City College	\$1,363,438
TOTAL:			\$26,616,906