CONCEPT PLAN

RFA 15-06: FUNDING OPPORTUNITY FOR THE SUMMER PROGRAM TO ACCELERATE REGENERATIVE MEDICINE KNOWLEDGE (SPARK)

The mission of CIRM is to accelerate the development of stem cell therapies to patients with unmet medical needs. To serve this mission, CIRM is proposing a new educational program for high school level students from diverse California communities that could:

- Encourage students to pursue future careers in regenerative medicine
- Educate students so that they could act as young advocates in their communities for patients and for stem cell and regenerative medicine

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the SPARK initiative are to:

- Inspire, educate and motivate high school students to become involved in CIRM's mission of accelerating stem cell treatments to patients with unmet medical needs
- Provide summer training opportunities and broaden participation in stem cell research to high school students who represent the diversity of California's population and who might not otherwise have opportunities to take part in summer research internships due to socioeconomic constraints

AWARD INFORMATION

What is the requested funding allocation, project funding and project term?

CIRM requests up to $4 million to support up to 10 awards. Each award will support up to 10 trainees per year, and programs will be supported for up to 5 years. CIRM will provide each program with direct project costs of up to $72.5K per year. The indirect cost rate will be set at 10%. Funding for years four and five will be dependent on review by CIRM and

confirmation of appropriate program performance; CIRM request $2.4 million for years one through three, $0.8 million for year four, and $0.8 million for year five.

How is the SPARK training program structured?

Each SPARK training program will be led by a qualified Program Director based at the awardee Institution who will be responsible for the management and coordination of all activities supported by the program as well as the recruitment of qualified students. Research internships, which are a central component of these programs, will take place at host laboratories at the awardee's institution that are non-profit research universities or institutes.

What activities will CIRM fund?

CIRM funds will support the following activities under SPARK:

- Trainee Expenses including
  - Trainee and mentor stipends during summer internship period
  - Research-related funds to each hosting laboratory
  - Travel/accommodation expenses for SPARK Poster Day

- Program Expenses
  - Administrative support salaries and Activities

How will funds be awarded?

All applications for SPARK programs will be considered in a single review cycle. Awards will be made in the form of a grant. CIRM will disburse funds pursuant to a Notice of Award.

ELIGIBILITY

What types of programs are eligible for funding?

To be eligible, the proposed program must have the following components:

1. Patient and Healthcare Engagement Activities designed to engage trainees with patients. As one component of these activities, programs **must** include participation in blood donation, bone marrow registry or similar awareness campaigns.

2. Internships in which trainees participate in human stem cell-related research in internship-host laboratories.

3. Auxiliary Educational Activities that prepare trainees for internship research and enhance the internship experience.

4. Community Outreach Activities in which trainees participate in engaging diverse California communities about stem cells and regenerative medicine via social media.

Who may apply?

Applicant institutions must be California public universities or colleges, or private, non-profit academic institutions in California that are accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). Applicant institutions must have an existing high school summer internship program. Non-profit organization means either: (1) a governmental entity of the state of California; or (2) a legal entity that is tax exempt under Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3) and California Revenue and Taxation Code section 23701d.

Each eligible applicant institution may submit only a single application.

Who can serve as the Program Director?

The Program Director must be an employee with relevant experience at the applicant institution.

SCHEDULE AND DEADLINES

Applications Due	October 1, 2015
Grants Working Group (GWG) Review	November 2015
ICOC Review and Approval	January 2016
Award Start	May 2016