

2022 COMMUNICATIONS PLAN & STRATEGY

Prepared by CIRM Public Outreach Team

CONTENTS

- Page 01 – Communications Plan
- Page 14 – Community Outreach Strategy
- Page 21 – Social Media Strategy
- Page 33 – Media Relations Strategy
- Page 35 – Patient Advocacy Strategy



CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE FOR REGENERATIVE MEDICINE (CIRM) Communications Plan 2022



SUMMARY

Why are communication efforts critical to CIRM?

CIRM’s marketing, communications and outreach efforts are critical in ensuring the most relevant information reaches the People of California. As a state organization, CIRM has an obligation to report back to the public on economic benefits to the state, scientific progress and its global impact.

This communications plan will set the path and strategy for ensuring CIRM's target audiences learn about its enormous impact on the field of regenerative medicine, scientific and educational programs, as well as patients and patient advocate communities.

CIRM MISSION STATEMENT

Accelerating world class science to deliver transformative regenerative medicine treatments in an equitable manner to a diverse California and world

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES/GOALS

- To position CIRM as a trusted source of information on stem cell, gene therapy and regenerative medicine.

- To work with patient advocate and community-based organizations—who already hold a position of trust with their members and communities—to raise awareness and share relevant information about CIRM’s work, services, and impact

CIRM COMMUNICATIONS/MARKETING SWOT ANALYSIS

Identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to assess our position in executing the communications plan and guide our strategies moving forward.

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World class, reputable, and loyal staff • Large social media following of 30,000+ followers • Diverse patient stories • Lots of content from grantees, students, and programs • Well-funded agency • Education programs • Strategic Plan with clear goals • Access to scientists who can tell stories • Direct staff experience with clinical trials and CIRM programs • Communications team members with extensive experience in digital media and journalism 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website is difficult to navigate • Staff geographical limitations • Linguistic barriers • Small communications team of 3 • CIRM brand recognition is low outside scientific and patient advocate communities • Lack of consistent, core messaging • Lack of tools to organize content • Low engagement across some social media channels (Instagram, Twitter) • Lack of specific procedures for marketing/communication campaigns and projects • Logo addresses stem cells but not regenerative medicine
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand outreach to diverse, underrepresented communities in California • Grow digital communications/marketing • Leverage CIRM team to spread reach • Inform stakeholders of DEI initiatives • Use Alpha Clinics/Community Care Centers of Excellence to reach new audiences 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 pandemic continues to place barriers around in-person events and meetings • Growing distrust in science across communities • Low awareness of regenerative medicine outside of scientific community • Adverse media attention and coverage

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a robust content strategy to grow our pool of relevant content and photography • Repurpose existing content across various channels • Utilize virtual/digital tools like Zoom webinars, Facebook Lives to reach audiences • Refine messaging to reach wider audience • Utilize Bridge/SPARK students to share stories and experiences • Share updates and content in various languages (e.g. Spanish) to reach more people in California. • Use digital paid advertising (e.g., social media ads, Google Ads) to reach audiences across state • Boost traffic to blog via social media and community outreach strategies • Building social media ambassador program with CIRM staff, grantees, students, and patient advocates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People of California may not see the value in regenerative medicine research • Constantly evolving and shifting social media landscape • Constant changes and shift in content prioritized by social media algorithms. • Inability of industry to overcome obstacles • Predatory Stem Cell clinics share conflicting information with public.
--	---

PUBLIC OUTREACH TEAM ROLES

The following team members will oversee and execute the Communications Plan and Strategy.

- Maria Gonzalez Bonneville - VP, Board Governance & Public Outreach
 - Kevin McCormack – Director of Patient Advocacy
 - Esteban Cortez – Director of Marketing & Communications
 - Katie Sharify – Communications Team Coordinator
-

WHAT CIRM HAS DONE SO FAR

In the last three years, CIRM has hosted around 150 public events either in person or via Zoom. In some cases, these are reaching out to specific audiences such as patient advocate support

groups, or to more general organizations such as Rotary Clubs and Science Cafes. CIRM also uses social media to share a lot of our content.

CIRM also reaches out to different audiences via our blog The Stem Cellar. CIRM has also hosted Facebook Live events featuring live interviews with CIRM-funded scientists, who talked about the importance of their research and answered questions.

CIRM has also engaged on a regular basis with mainstream media – newspapers, TV and radio – but in a time of pandemic, it has been challenging to get coverage on stem cell or gene therapy research that was not directly related to COVID. Those challenges are not likely to change post-pandemic considering many media outlets have made dramatic cuts (close to 30 percent) to their newsroom staff. Radio and TV have made similar cuts and face similar challenges.

However, the decline in mainstream media is being matched by a growing movement online, new digital services and news outlets like STAT news are becoming increasingly important, as are other social media channels. Because of this, CIRM has refocused many of its efforts towards online channels and platforms, but recognizes the importance of non-digital channels (such as display advertising) to reach even more communities.

List of past CIRM Public Outreach/Communication Events

- Rotary Club presentations
- Bay Area Science Festival Discovery Days
- Road shows
- Facebook Live events
- Science Cafes
- Informational webinars

TARGET AUDIENCES

CIRM has several target audiences to consider.



THE PEOPLE OF CALIFORNIA

The people of California have committed billions to regenerative medicine research and have a stake in how their tax dollars are spent. CIRM continues to educate the public about CIRM funded clinical trials and regenerative medicine research. It is important to inform the public about the enormous economic impact CIRM has on California. It is a part of CIRM’s mission to do all it can to reflect [the diversity of the state](#) in the programs it


	<p>funds and the way it functions as an organization. By doing this, CIRM creates a vested interest in scientific research, clinical trials, and the regenerative medicine field. CIRM recognizes that California is a diverse state with many different communities and ethnic groups. As such, CIRM recognizes that “one-size fits all” messaging for the People of California does not work for all.</p>
--	---

- *Key Messages: What does CIRM want to tell them?*
 - Regenerative medicine is a branch of medicine focused on replacing or engineering human cells, tissues or organs to restore or replace those damaged by injury, age or disease.
 - What are stem cells and why are they important?
 - CIRM bring clinical trials and cutting edge therapies to California.
 - CIRM was created by the people of California and its funds are invested in California.
 - CIRM is funding important and innovative research that impacts your community, neighbors, friends, and family.
 - CIRM is committed to DEI across our scientific and educational programs and is working to make them more accessible to underrepresented communities.
 - CIRM has had great economic impact for the state and has created tens of thousands of jobs.
 - Thanks to CIRM and the people of California, the state is a global leader in stem cell and regenerative medicine funding and research.
 - Through CIRM’s education programs, CIRM is growing the next generation of scientists right here in California.

- *Delivery: How does CIRM want to tell them?*
 - Website
 - Blog
 - Social media
 - Traditional media (news, radio, etc.)
 - Podcast
 - In person presentations
 - Expos and booth events
 - Virtual webinars
 - Display advertising (flyers, info sheets, posters)

- *When: What is the date or the frequency of the communication?*

- Year round
- Targeted campaigns
- *Who: Who is responsible for delivery of message?*
 - Kevin McCormack
 - Katie Sharify
 - Esteban Cortez

	<p><u>PATIENT/PATIENT ADVOCATE COMMUNITY</u></p> <p>CIRM would not be possible if it were not for the tireless efforts of Patients and Patient Advocates. CIRM needs to give patients and their families a platform to share stories. CIRM has an obligation to give them reliable information to guide them in making decisions about stem cell and other regenerative medicine therapies supported by CIRM. With CIRM’s increased emphasis on DEI, the agency is well-positioned to be a reliable resource in patient education and navigation.</p>
---	--

- *Key Messages: What does CIRM want to tell them?*
 - CIRM believes the voice of the patient is an essential part in everything it does.
 - CIRM works to ensure that the treatments and cures funded by CIRM are accessible and affordable to them.
 - CIRM includes patient advocates at every level of decision making, including its board.
 - For many of CIRM’s later stage products, the agency created a panel which includes patient representative to help guide the research.
 - *Awareness* — Regenerative medicine is a branch of medicine focused on replacing or engineering human cells, tissues or organs to restore or replace those damaged by injury, age or disease.
 - CIRM provides resources for patients to navigate stem cell and regenerative medicine therapies and clinical trials.
 - What are stem cells and why are they important?
 - CIRM brings clinical trials and cutting edge therapies to California.
 - CIRM was created by the people of California and its funds are invested in California.
 - As a state agency, CIRM does not have to make a profit, so it looks to fund the best science without considering if it will produce big return on investment (profit).

- CIRM is committed to DEI across our programs and is working to make stem cell/regenerative medicine therapies more accessible to underrepresented communities.
- *Delivery: How does CIRM want to tell them?*
 - In person presentations
 - Virtual webinars
 - Website
 - Blog
 - Social media
 - Traditional media (news, radio, etc.)
 - Podcast
 - Display advertising (flyers, info sheets, posters)
- *When: What is the date or the frequency of the communication?*
 - Year round
 - Targeted campaigns
- *Who: Who is responsible for delivery of message?*
 - Kevin McCormack (primary driver of messages)
 - Katie Sharify (execution of strategy)
 - Esteban Cortez (execution of strategy)

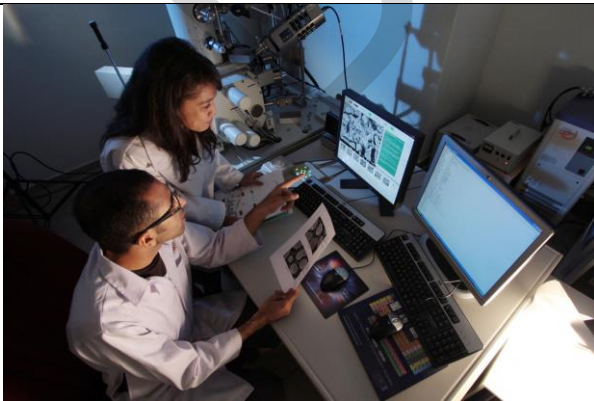


The Media

The media provides CIRM with opportunities to pitch ideas on CIRM-funded projects, specifically the impact CIRM has on the lives of patients/families, the impact on the lives of communities, stories from patients in CIRM-funded trials, and the impact on the regenerative medicine field. CIRM's increased emphasis on DEI complements this and can be effective at engaging reporters on a local level.

- *Key Messages: What does CIRM want to tell them?*
 - CIRM is California's top trusted source in the regenerative medicine and stem cell research field.

- CIRM is a world leader in regenerative medicine and stem cell research.
 - CIRM has helped more than 100 projects reach the clinical trial stage.
 - CIRM has had great economic impact for the state and has created thousands of jobs.
 - CIRM is committed to DEI across our programs and is working to make stem cell/regenerative medicine therapies more accessible to underrepresented communities.
- *Delivery: How does CIRM want to tell them?*
 - Emails
 - Phone calls
 - Press releases
 - Website
 - Blog
 - Meltwater Clips
 - Social media
 - Fact sheets
 - *When: What is the date or the frequency of the communication?*
 - Year round
 - Targeted campaigns
 - *Who: Who is responsible for delivery of message?*
 - Kevin McCormack (primary driver of messages)
 - Katie Sharify (execution of strategy)
 - Esteban Cortez (execution of strategy)
 - Media relations team member (potential hire)



The Scientific Community

The passage of Proposition 14 has raised CIRM's profile worldwide and increased awareness of the agency's ability to fund a wide range of activities. This important audience is critical in several respects. 1) CIRM's outreach to this community gives access to the best science to fund. 2) the science community can be better utilized as a mechanism by which to get CIRM's message across. 3) A deeper relationship with key players in the field acts as a validator for CIRM.

- *Key Messages: What does CIRM want to tell them?*
 - CIRM provides funding for innovative regenerative medicine, stem cell, and gene therapy research.
 - CIRM is a world leader in regenerative medicine and stem cell research.
 - CIRM provides a platform for scientists and researchers to share stories and spread awareness of the innovative research their institutions are doing.
 - CIRM funds a wide variety of education and research training programs to train the next generation of scientists, with an emphasis on DEI.
 - CIRM is working to create greater collaboration and data sharing within the Scientific Community.
 - CIRM provides the physical infrastructure for stem cell and regenerative medicine treatments to be delivered to patients right here in California.
 - CIRM helps connect the scientific community to industry to accelerate the development and commercialization of their products.
 - CIRM connects scientists with experts to help them advance their projects and work with the FDA.
 - CIRM works to overcome barriers to advance the field, such as manufacturing problems.

- *Delivery: How does CIRM want to tell them?*
 - Website
 - Email (MailChimp)
 - Blog
 - Scientific Journals (Cell publication, Nature, etc.)
 - Social media (LinkedIn and Twitter, in particular)
 - Podcast
 - In person presentations
 - Virtual webinars
 - Display advertising (flyers, info sheets, posters)

- *When: What is the date or the frequency of the communication?*
 - Year round
 - Targeted campaigns

- *Who: Who is responsible for delivery of message?*
 - Kevin McCormack (execution of strategy)
 - Katie Sharify (execution of strategy)
 - Esteban Cortez (execution of strategy)
 - Medical Affairs (Science Communications) team member (new hire)



Industry

As part of the mission to accelerate therapies, CIRM's Business Development team keeps the business community informed about partnering opportunities with CIRM-funded researchers/companies.

- *Key Messages: What does CIRM want to tell them?*
 - CIRM is a world leader in regenerative medicine and stem cell research.
 - CIRM can connect industry with stem cell and regenerative medicine research at different levels.
 - CIRM has an Industry Alliance Program (IAP) that provides a direct opportunity for the industry to partner with CIRM.
 - CIRM funding to California academic institutions has enabled the launch of more than 40 spinout companies (economic growth).
 - CIRM has created one of the largest iPSC repositories in the world to help advance scientific research in California and worldwide.
 - CIRM grantees drew in over \$8B in biopharma industry partnerships.

- *Delivery: How does CIRM want to tell them?*
 - Website
 - Email (MailChimp)
 - Press/news releases
 - Scientific Journals (Cell publication, Nature, etc.)
 - Social media (LinkedIn and Twitter, in particular)
 - Articles in business targeted publications
 - In person presentations (individual, Expos, conferences)
 - Virtual webinars
 - Display advertising (flyers, info sheets, posters)
 - Blog
 - Podcast

- *When: What is the date or the frequency of the communication?*
 - Year round
 - Targeted campaigns

- *Who: Who is responsible for delivery of message?*
 - Shyam Patel, Director of Business Development (primary driver of message)
 - Kevin McCormack (execution of strategy)

- Katie Sharify (execution of strategy)
- Esteban Cortez (execution of strategy)

	<p><u>State/Federal Lawmakers</u></p> <p>CIRM maintains a strong relationship with state and federal lawmakers due in large part to the work of our Vice-Chair and members of the CIRM team. CIRM keeps the state and federal lawmakers up to date on programs, economic impact, and general information. CIRM's strong ties to state and federal agencies builds awareness.</p>
---	---

- *Key Messages: What does CIRM want to tell them?*
 - CIRM was created by the people of California and our money is invested in California.
 - CIRM has had great economic impact for the state and has created tens of thousands of jobs.
 - Thanks to CIRM, California is a global leader in stem cell and regenerative medicine.
 - Through education programs, CIRM is growing the next generation of scientists right here in California.
 - CIRM is funding important and innovative research that impacts your community, neighbors, friends, and family.
 - Regenerative medicine is a branch of medicine focused on replacing or engineering human cells, tissues or organs to restore or replace those damaged by injury, age or disease.
 - CIRM works with lawmakers to crack down on predatory stem cell clinicals and treatments to protect the people of California.
 - What are stem cells and why are they important?
 - CIRM brings clinical trials and cutting edge therapies to California.
- *Delivery: How does CIRM want to tell them?*
 - Participation in National Academy of Science conferences
 - Collaborations with NIH
 - Conversations with GAO (General Accountability Offices)
 - In person presentations
 - CFAOC annual meeting
 - News clippings (Meltwater)
 - News/press releases

- Blog
- Social media (Twitter, LinkedIn)
- Print publications (Fact sheets, annual reports, strategic plan, etc.)
- *When: What is the date or the frequency of the communication?*
 - CFAOC annual meeting
 - Year round
 - Targeted campaigns
- *Who: Who is responsible for delivery of message?*
 - CIRM Vice Chair
 - CIRM Team



The Medical Community

As more and more stem cell and regenerative medicine therapies move towards approval by the FDA, CIRM needs to do outreach to the medical community to make them aware of these therapies. This also comes with the need to educate about predatory clinics to guide patients accordingly.

- *Key Messages: What does CIRM want to tell them?*
 - To be developed in collaboration with Medical Affairs team
- *Delivery: How does CIRM want to tell them?*
 - To be developed in collaboration with Medical Affairs team

ONGOING PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

- Email Marketing
- Stem Cellar Blog
- Podcast
- Website
- Brand strategy
- Display marketing

IMMEDIATE STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Supplemental Plans & Strategy

- Community Outreach Plan & Strategy
- Social Media Plan & Strategy
- Media Relations Plan & Strategy
- Patient Advocacy Plan & Strategy

DRAFT

CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE FOR REGENERATIVE MEDICINE (CIRM)

Community Outreach Plan & Strategy 2022



WHY COMMUNITY OUTREACH IS CRITICAL TO CIRM

As a state agency created by the People of California, CIRM's duty is to educate the public about our impact across the state, the importance of regenerative medicine, and how our work/services benefits [California's diverse population](#).

CIRM has done a lot of work to reach scientific and patient/patient advocate communities but recognizes that it needs to expand outreach to historically underrepresented communities and geographic areas across the state of California. This includes Community-Based Organizations (CBOs).

As CIRM's focus on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) grows, so too must CIRM's strategy for community outreach.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- **Community outreach** involves providing professional services, or services of a specific expertise, to a group of people who may not otherwise have access to those services. It is performed where those in need are located. [\[Source\]](#)
- **Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)** are public or private not-for-profit resource hubs that provide specific services to the community or targeted population within the community. CBOs include but are not limited to aging and disability networks, community health centers, childcare providers, home visiting programs, state domestic violence coalitions and local domestic violence shelters and programs, Adult protective services programs, homeless services providers, and food banks that work to address the health and social needs of populations. CBOs are trusted entities that know their clients and their communities and want to be engaged. [\[Source\]](#)
- **Historically Underrepresented** - This term refers to groups who have been denied access and/or suffered past institutional discrimination in the United States and, according to the Census and other federal measuring tools, includes African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanics or Chicanos/Latinos, and Native Americans. This is revealed by an imbalance in the representation of different groups in common pursuits such as education, jobs, and housing, resulting in marginalization for some groups and individuals and not for others, relative to the number of individuals who are members of the population involved. [\[Source\]](#)

TARGET COMMUNITIES

CIRM will conduct outreach to historically underrepresented populations through this Community Outreach strategy, including but not limited to:

- Latin/Hispanic
- Black/African American
- Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI)
- Native American
- People with disabilities
- Retirees
- LGBTQIA+
- Economically disadvantaged

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS (CBOS) BY GEOGRAPHIC AREA

CIRM will target the following and similar CBOs to gain insights about the needs of their communities and partnership opportunities. Patient Advocate groups, and CBOs that specialize in and provide health, medical, and education (STEM) services will also be prioritized.

▪ **Bay Area CBOs**

- [100 Black Men of the Bay Area, Inc.](#)
- [Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment \(ACCE\) Institute](#)
- [Asian Pacific American Community Center](#)
- [Centro Legal de La Raza](#)
- [East Bay Asian Youth Center](#)
- [East Oakland Youth Development Center](#)
- [Instituto Familiar de la Raza](#)
- [La Clinica](#)
- [La Familia](#)
- [Mission Asset Fund](#)
- [Oakland LGBTQ Center](#)
- [Unity Council](#)

▪ **Fresno/Central CA**

- [California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation](#)
- [Centro La Familia Advocacy Services](#)
- [Community Alliance \(newspaper\)](#)
- [Fresno Building Healthy Communities](#)
- [Fresno EOC LGBTQ+ Resource Center](#)
- [Fresno Metro Black Chambre of Commerce](#)
- [Healthy Fresno County](#)
- [Madera Coalition for Community Justice](#)
- [National Women's Political Caucus Fresno](#)
- [Radio Bilingue](#)
- [The California Advocate \(African American newspaper\)](#)
- [UC Merced Community & Labor Center](#)
- [West Modesto Community Collaborative](#)

▪ **Los Angeles/Orange Country**

Note: [List of orgs for reference](#)

- [100 Black Women Los Angeles chapter](#)
- [Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Los Angeles](#)
- [Asian Youth Center](#)
- [California Community Foundation](#)
- [EmpowHer](#)

- **San Diego/Southern CA**
 - [BIPOC Support Foundation](#)
 - [Champions For Health](#)
 - [Curebound](#)
 - [Dreams for Change](#)
 - [Father Joe's Villages](#)
 - [Heaven's Windows](#)
 - [Logan Heights CDC](#)
 - [MAAC Project](#)
 - [MANA de San Diego](#)
 - [San Diego Black LGBTQ Coalition](#)
 - [San Diego Latino Health Coalition](#)
 - [San Ysidro Health](#)
 - [SBCS \(formerly South Bay Community Services\)](#)
 - [Southern California Care Community Free Clinic](#)
 - [The Asian Pacific American Coalition](#) (APAC)
 - [The Chicano Federation](#)
 - [The San Diego LGBT Community Center](#)

- **Sacramento/Northern California**
 - [Access Humboldt](#) (community media)
 - [Arcata Chamber of Commerce](#)
 - [Asian Pacific State Employees Association](#) (APSEA)
 - [Black Humboldt](#)
 - [California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation](#)
 - [OCA SACRAMENTO - Asian Pacific American Advocates](#)
 - [Rise, Inc.](#) (Yolo County)
 - [Sacramento Chinese Community Service Center](#)
 - [Sacramento LGBT Community Center](#)
 - [United Way of Northern CA \(Redding\)](#)

- **California Desert/Palm Springs/Riverside**
 - [AIDS Assistance Program – Food Samaritans](#)
 - [Angel View](#) (supports children with disabilities)
 - [Council on Aging Southern California](#)
 - [Desert AIDS Project Health](#)
 - [Desert Outreach Foundation](#) (no longer active?)
 - [FAIR Foundation](#) (*organ transplant services*)
 - [Golden Rainbow Center \(SAGE\)](#)

- [One Future Coachella Valley](#)
- [SMaRT Education](#)
- [Society of Extraordinary Women \(SOEW\)](#)

- **Statewide**
 - [Black Futures Lab](#)
 - [California Alliance for Retired Americans \(CARA\)](#)
 - [California Girls in STEM Collaborative](#)
 - [California Native Vote Project](#)
 - [Equality California](#)
 - [Latino Community Foundation](#)
 - [National Association of Hispanic Nurses](#) (various state chapters)

- **National**
 - [Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs](#)
 - [Association of American Indian Physicians](#)
 - [Institute for Women’s Policy Research](#)
 - [Latin American Youth Center](#)
 - [Latino Coalition Against COVID-19](#)
 - [Salud Con Tech](#)
 - [Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science \(SACNAS\)](#)
 - [Vision y Compromiso](#)
 - [Zocalo Health](#) (launched in 2022)

QUESTIONS TO ASK COMMUNITY LEADERS & CBOS

- Which languages are primarily spoken by your communities/constituents?
- What do you know about the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM)?
- What do you know about regenerative medicine?
- What would you like to know about regenerative medicine?
- What are some of the ways CIRM can partner with you to provide information to your community/constituents?
- What information around Regenerative Medicine/stem cells do you/your constituents want to know?
- What disease/research areas are important to your community/constituents?
- Is there information around CIRM’s funding areas that your community wants to know?*
- What opportunities can CIRM provide/serve for you?

- What are the main ways your constituents/community want to receive information?
- Are there any questions you/your community has around clinical trials?
- Questions around education? STEM for children?

GOALS & STRATEGY TO REACH COMMUNITIES

SMART Goal (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Based)

1. Connect with 30 community leaders/CBOs by July 31st to gain insights into the needs of their community.

Strategy/Tactics

Note: This Community Outreach strategy is part of a “living, breathing” plan that will be updated periodically.

- Leverage existing relationships with CBOs, patient advocate organizations, and community leaders to make inroads to reach new underrepresented communities.
 - California Primary Care Association
 - LifePoint Global Institute for Women
 - Adrienne Shapiro, sickle Cell disease patient advocate
 - Nancy Rene, sickle cell disease patient advocate
 - Judy Roberson, Huntington’s disease patient advocate
 - Katie Jackson, Huntington’s disease patient advocate
- Utilize services of Jacqueline Hantgan, Senior Advisor, Community Outreach and Engagement—to make calls/emails to CBOs and community leaders
- Develop survey and share with CBOs and community leaders via social media, direct email, and one-on-one conversations.
- Leverage social media to gain community feedback and insights
 - Facebook/LinkedIn Groups
 - Utilize hashtags to monitor conversations
 - Connect with CBOs and community leaders directly
 - Monitor online forums (Reddit, etc.)
- Utilize Community Care Centers of Excellence (CCCE) to conduct outreach into communities
 - CCCE workshop
 - CCCE RFA will address community outreach
- Assess and measure success/challenges periodically, and update strategy often
- Deploy additional outreach tactics based on community/CBO insights and partnership opportunities

NEXT STEPS

The overall goal is to position CIRM as a trusted resource for community-based organizations and their communities. Asking for their feedback is the first step in building trust and relationships.

Based on feedback received from various CBOs and community leaders, CIRM will have a better understanding of the messages and information that is most important to them. The CIRM communications team will review and assess feedback to help guide our future outreach and marketing campaigns.

DRAFT

CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE FOR REGENERATIVE MEDICINE (CIRM) SOCIAL MEDIA PLAN & STRATEGY 2022



Introduction/Summary

“Social media is what makes your brand's marketing ecosystem come alive. It's more than just a way to advertise. It's a place to start conversations, forge relationships, tell stories, and get details about your audience the way you would with a new friend at a party.”

Social media is an essential and inexpensive way to reach CIRM's target audiences where they are, gain valuable insights, and grow CIRM's brand. With more than 30,000 combined followers across CIRM's social media channels—and the opportunity to reach even more—it's important that CIRM develops a social media strategy to better engage and inform target audiences.

CIRM uses social media—mostly Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram—to help amplify the Stem Cellar blog and website traffic, plus inform followers about upcoming events, funding, and CIRM's impact. This **Social Media Plan and Strategy** addresses how CIRM will implement best practices and tactics to meet its goals.

Why is Social Media Important to CIRM's marketing/communications efforts?

- Many people get their information from social media first
- Widest outreach to the most diverse audience
- CIRM's social media platforms (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram) have a large combined audience (30,000+ followers)
- Community outreach and listening — Allows CIRM to educate itself about different communities, learning from them what's important to them
- Able to target specific segments of the audience through targeted campaigns/ads
- Able to tailor messages to different audiences
- Able to use it any time
- No cost to use most social media platforms
- Helps CIRM build relationships with a wider community and different segments of that community
- Allows CIRM to position itself as trusted experts in this field without asking anything of people in return
- Increases CIRM's visibility—particularly if done regularly and consistently—so that people become more familiar with and comfortable with the agency

SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

First Step - SOCIAL MEDIA AUDIT

In order to gain a better understanding of CIRM's audiences and content across social media, the CIRM communications team first conducted a social media audit. Through this social media audit, the team aimed to find out:

- What's working, and what's not?
- Who is engaging with CIRM on social media?
- Which networks do CIRM's target audiences use?
- New opportunities to grow and engage CIRM's audiences

AUDIT TASK OVERVIEW

▼ To - dos

		People	Status
General discussion about CIRM's social media			Done
Identify team roles in social media audit			Done
Set audit dates/timeline			Done
Identify and record all existing social media channels			Done
Ensure consistent branding across social media channels			Done
Gather audience and stakeholder feedback			Done
Review social media channel demographic and define audiences			Done
Review and record top social channel analytics			Done
Review and record CIRM website and blog social media referral traffic			Done
Conduct a content audit			Done
Competitors/Industry friends social media research			Done
Evaluate social media channel performance			Done
Decide which channels to prioritize and opportunities			Done
Create or find system to track results/metrics			Done
Set goal for each social media channel			Done
Create a social media content calendar			Done
Set schedule for follow-up audits			Done

Identify Existing CIRM Social Media Platforms (as of Dec. 2021)

Platform	Followers
Facebook	11,483 (10,705 likes)
LinkedIn (page)	1,952
LinkedIn (group)	4,601
Instagram	2,271
Twitter	14,588
Pinterest (castemcell)	202
Pinterest (cirmmedia)	2
YouTube	7,850
Yelp	N/A
Indeed	N/A

Glassdoor	N/A
Crunchbase	N/A

Other Accounts Discovered During Online Search

- [Wikipedia](#)
- [Newswise](#)
- [ZoomInfo](#)
- [Biocom California](#)
- [BioSpace](#)
- [RegMedNet](#)
- [AllGov](#)
- [The BioCalendar](#)

Other findings

- Google Business listing is not claimed

Ensure consistent branding across social media channels

Task completed. Most of CIRM's social media platforms featured old branding, including old mission statement and outdated logos. The CIRM team updated each of CIRM's platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn) with the agency's updated mission statement and high-res logo with consistent branding.

Gather audience and stakeholder feedback

Ongoing task. So far, the team has had conversations with CIRM staff and monitoring comments and messages throughout social media platforms. Some key findings and recommendations from stakeholders:

- Facebook audience wants information about clinical trials, CIRM-funded research, availability of treatments for various disease areas.
- It's difficult to find CIRM on LinkedIn when searching for jobs.
- CIRM staff often identifies LinkedIn as their top platform of choice.
- There are lots of opportunities for utilizing new storytelling tools like Instagram Reels.
- Develop a toolkit and streamlined way for CIRM grantees and students to share content.

Next steps for gathering feedback:

- Polls/surveys
- Ask for feedback directly on social media and email
- Continue to have conversations with CIRM staff, Board members, scientists, grantees, students
- Community outreach to CBOs
- Continue to monitor social media direct messages and comments

Social Media Audience Demographics

- Facebook
 - General Demographics
 - 2 billion+ monthly active users
 - FB is the 3rd most visited website (2020)
 - FB is the most popular social media platform across all age groups
- LinkedIn
 - General Demographics
 - Roughly 774 million user-base, with 21% of that being U.S. internet users
 - Roughly 60% of users are between 25 and 34 years of age
 - 51% of U.S. adults who have a college education use LinkedIn
- Instagram
 - General Demographics
 - 500+ million users are active on the platform every day
 - Users spend an average of 10.3 hours a month on IG
 - eMarketer forecasts that Instagram will reach 1.1 billion users in 2022
- Twitter
 - General Demographics
 - Twitter's user base reached over 320 million users in 2021
 - Roughly a quarter of Americans use Twitter
 - Twitter ranks #12 in the world's most visited websites

Review top social channel analytics and create system to track social media metrics

Task completed on Monday.com, example:

LinkedIn EC Invite / 1 Activity + Add to board

Add board description

Main Table + Integrate Automate

New Item Search Person Filter Sort Filter Sort Filter Sort

FY 2021-2022	Total Followers	New Followers	Unique Visitors	Post Impressions	Unique Impressions	Custom Button Cli...	Page Vie
July	1,628	48	229	4,221	2,153		438
August	1,692	64	271	7,635	4,065		742
September	1,728	36	148	3,869	1,931		325
October	1,833	105	187	2,881	1,617		356
November	1,887	54	205	3,769	1,969		408
December	1,967	80	171	4,747	2,713		382
January	2,043	76	200	6,984	3,793		461
February	2,187	144	278	17,047	10,413	25	589
March	2,288	101	273	7,764	4,923	31	585
April							
May							
June							

+ Add Item

Review and record CIRM website and blog social media referral traffic

CIRM Website

- 2021 social media user traffic = 3,404
- 2020 social media user traffic = 3,764
- 2019 social media user traffic = 5,073
- 2018 social media user traffic = 3,357
- 2017 social media user traffic = 4,330
- 2016 social media user traffic = N/A (no analytics)

Stem Cellar

- 2021
 - Facebook = 8,619 views
 - LinkedIn = 2,206 views
 - Twitter = 2,516 views
 - Instagram = 62 views
 - Pinterest = 26 views
- 2020
 - Facebook = 13,076 views
 - LinkedIn = 1,054 views
 - Twitter = 2,695 views
 - Instagram = 71 views

- Pinterest = 36 views
- 2019
 - Facebook = 21,081 views
 - LinkedIn = 570 views
 - Twitter = 3,465 views
 - Instagram = 66 views
 - Pinterest = 40 views
- 2018
 - Facebook = 16,839 views
 - LinkedIn = 1,335 views
 - Twitter = 5,848 views
 - Instagram = 123 views
 - Pinterest = 39 views
 - Reddit = 162
- 2017
 - Facebook = 24,934 views
 - LinkedIn = 1,335 views
 - Twitter = 6,726 views
 - Instagram = 110 views
 - Pinterest = 18 views
 - Reddit = 232

Social Media Content Audit

CIRM staff conducted a data-driven content audit to determine top/bottom performing posts.

- Facebook content audit:
 - Top performing content:
 - Science facts of the day paired with bright high-quality photos
 - Facebook live posts
 - Posts for the Stem Cellar with interesting or popular topics attached (e.g. cancer therapies)
 - Posts with mentions, hashtags, interesting/descriptive captions have a higher reach when paired with an action shot or bright HQ image
 - Underperforming content:
 - Awareness days and low-quality photos are the lowest performing posts
 - Dull pictures (e.g. gray microphone for podcast announcement) or photos of patients and scientist that don't convey anything/not action shots (e.g. Evie Vaccaro post vs. Evie Jr. post)
 - Vague captions (e.g. "A CIRM funded trial for a rare pediatric disease has showed promising results in one patient using a gene therapy approach")
 - Captions lacking mentions and hashtags
- Instagram content audit:

- Top performing content:
 - Posts that feature patients or CIRM scholars paired with high quality images as well as science facts of the day make up the majority of the top content on IG. Time of posting varies and doesn't seem to have a major impact on reach
 - Posts about popular topics like COVID-19, aging, and cancer garner the most attention
- Underperforming content:
 - Awareness days, particularly when paired with low quality images, make up the majority of low performing posts
- Twitter content audit:
 - Top Tweets by impression include hashtags and tags of well-established research institutions. Almost all top Tweets include a media attachment (image)
 - Majority of the top Tweets by impression were posted between 8am-10am.
 - Top tweets often include mention of a well-known researcher or account with lots of followers
 - No specific trend for top tweet re: content. Content varies from organoids, women's history, to cancer research, to CIRM funding, events, etc.
 - Top Tweets by likes include similar content and trends, as well as "science facts of the day" tweet
 - Most Top liked Tweets were tweeted between 8 am - 11am
 - Bottom posts by impressions tend to be replies, lack images, or feature low-res pixelated images
 - Bottom posts by engagements tend to be replies, lack images, or feature low-res pixelated images.
 - Awareness Days don't tend to do well when simply posting about the day
- LinkedIn content audit:
 - Top 5 Posts by Impressions
 - Trends: Top posts include either image attachment or high-quality image preview. All posts also tag other accounts/institutions/researchers. Many also include hashtags. All focus on researchers. One post feature students. Top post also saw engagement between followers and CIRM staff.
 - Top 5 Posts by Clicks
 - Trends: Includes 4 of the 5 top posts by impressions. All posts also tag other accounts/institutions/researchers. Many also include hashtags. All focus on researchers.
 - Top 5 Posts by Likes
 - Trends: Includes same posts featured in top posts by Impressions and Clicks. Same trends as above.
 - Top 5 Posts by Comments

- Trends: Overall, of the 202 posts made in time range, only 12 LinkedIn posts received comments in the past year. Top commented post was about Henrietta Lacks.
- Top 5 Posts by Shares
 - Trends: Top shared posts all relate to CIRM activity, such as its podcast, clinical trials, funding, and workshops/events. Many of those posts were shared by staff.
- Top 5 Posts by Click-Thru Rate (CTR)
 - Trends: For CIRM, CTR Insights are not as important as other analytics.
- Top 5 Posts by Engagement Rate
 - Trends: Not a useful insight as high engagement rate posts may also include posts with low impressions.

Social Media Channel Evaluation

• Facebook

- FB continues to be one of the most popular and one of CIRM's top social media platforms. CIRM's FB page has nearly 12k followers which is split pretty evenly between the two genders. Through this audit, CIRM's communications team discovered that the 25-34 age group is the largest followed by the 35-44 age group. The largest demographic was men aged 25-34. The smallest age group is 18-34. FB consistently continues to be the largest driver of traffic to the website and the blog.
- FB tends to be a great platform for sharing info about CIRM supported research as well as general science information/facts. Posts with hashtags have higher reach. Content with brighter & high-quality photos tend to do better as well.

• LinkedIn

- CIRM's LinkedIn page has experienced the most growth over the years. The majority of page followers are in the bay area (28%) followed by greater SD area (12%) and greater Los Angeles area (11%). The top three job functions of page followers are in research (24%), followed by business development (15%) and education (10%). One of the biggest takeaways was that tagging institutions and people tend to increase the post's reach. Comments on this platform are low averaging between 10-20 per month. LinkedIn traffic to the website has decreased over the last couple of years (3,400 in 2021), however traffic to the blog has more than doubled (2,206 views).
- Top performing updates/posts include high quality image attachments or previews, and the majority of the top posts focus on people including researchers and students. Bottom performing posts use low resolution images

and stock photos. LI tends to be the platform of choice for CIRM staff.

- **Twitter**

- CIRM has a very large audience/following on Twitter with more than 14,500 followers. The volume of tweets has decreased in the last few months due to restructuring of social media strategy. Twitter follower growth tends to be slow averaging between 15-20 followers per month. Traffic to the website from twitter has decreased over the years. Since 2017, traffic to the blog has decreased but it has remained stable for the last couple of years.
- Tweets with media attachments and images perform best. Top tweets often mention well-known researchers/institutions or other accounts with large followers. A variety of contents do well on Twitter ranging from organoids to cancer research and women's history. Bottom performing posts tend to lack images or feature low resolution images. Twitter is a great platform for sharing science and research focused updates as CIRM has a large following of scientists/researchers.

- **Instagram**

- Instagram is an important platform for CIRM but has not been used as widely as other platforms. CIRM's top age demographic is 25-34 followed by 35-44. The overall largest demographic on CIRM's Instagram is women aged 25-34. Engagement on IG has been low in the past year due to posts with low quality images and lack of dynamic content. Great platform to share visual updates from students and scientists. CIRM's IG provides opportunity to share lab photos, science imagery, and fun graphics. In 2022, IG experienced significant growth primarily because CIRM's team have been sharing HQ images and making more deliberate posts.
- Instagram traffic to CIRM's website tends to be low but there is potential to increase this traffic using tools like LinkTree. IG provides great opportunity to engage younger audiences (e.g. SPARK and Bridges students, young scientists). Instagram is also a great platform for sharing HQ images and videos.

Social Media Platforms to Prioritize

- **LinkedIn:** Scientific articles, research-related updates, staff/people updates, research discoveries, CIRM grantee accomplishments, Institution/Agency partnerships, job posts, sharing CIRM's impact across California, economic impact (jobs created, etc.), industry events, polls, videos

- **Facebook:** Clinical Trial updates, disease-focused research, blog articles, personal stories (patients, patient advocates), science facts of the days, sharing CIRM's impact across California, economic impact, videos, Q&As
- **Twitter:** Scientific articles, engage in conversations, research updates, polls, science fact of day, funding updates, staff/people updates, research discoveries, CIRM grantee accomplishments, videos
- **Instagram:** People focused (tailored to younger audiences), high-quality images from CIRM's programs, scientist/lab photos, petri dish/cell photos, fun graphics, Instagram Stories, videos, Reels, carousel posts (swipe thru posts), hashtags, facts of the day

Monitor These Platforms:

CIRM team recognize the potential in these platforms, and will develop strategies to potentially implement them into CIRM's social media outreach efforts:

- Pinterest
- TikTok - monitor trends and popular content
- Reddit - monitor popular posts and science subreddits
- Metaverse - monitor launch date, trends, content
- Discord (online communities for chat, etc.) - What is discord? Why is it popular?
- YouTube – Developing a video strategy

Social Media SMART Goals (*Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound*)

- **Instagram:**
 - Awareness/Brand Perception goal — To reach at least 1,000 people/accounts each month
- **Facebook:**
 - Awareness/Brand Perception goal — To reach at least 2,500 people/accounts each month
- **LinkedIn:**
 - Awareness/Brand Perception goal — To gain 500 new followers by June 30, 2023
 - Awareness/Brand Perception goal — To achieve 5,000 post impressions per month
- **Twitter:**
 - Awareness/Brand Perception goal — To achieve at least 10,000 tweet impressions each month
 - Engagement goal — To achieve at least 20 retweets per month

Strategy—Next Steps

- *Execution of plan and team roles* — Esteban, Katie & Kevin
- *Develop a content strategy* – Developing templates, toolkits, streamlining content gathering, create a social media calendar
- *Social media ambassador/partnerships* - Utilize staff, grantees, students to share CIRM content to expand reach
- *Community Outreach* – Follow CBOs and community groups and leaders to gain further community insights and conduct further outreach
- *Gain audience insights* — Create a survey and utilize polling features to gain audience insights
- *Targeted/Paid Social Media Ads* — Utilize Facebook and Instagram ads to meet campaign goals and reach audiences and develop a paid-ad strategy.
- *Monitoring* — Monitor CIRM’s website and blog social media traffic to ensure CIRM is meeting goals
- *Regular monitoring and assessments* — Continue to assess and regularly update social media plan to ensure it is effective and improve tactics
- *Determine the right content mix* — 80% of content should educate, inform and engage audiences about CIRM, 20% is to highlight the field as a whole, creating an image of us as a leader in the field but not just promoting the agency all the time
- *Training* — Enroll in social media trainings and courses to ensure the CIRM team is staying on top of trends

CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE FOR REGENERATIVE MEDICINE (CIRM)

Media Relations Plan & Strategy 2022

Why are Media Relations important to CIRM?

- Mainstream media still has a wide reach. More and more people are getting their news through smartphones, computers etc. and traditional media drives online news through their own news sites or via Facebook, Twitter, and other social media platforms. And during times of crisis or breaking news, such as COVID, more and more people are finding their way back to the network TV news.
- Local television news, closely followed by national television news and regional or local newspapers, all rank higher than online news in the latest [Reuters Digital News Report](#).
- Third party journalism carries a stronger imprint than blogs or many forms of social media. The traditional news media are considered more trustworthy because they offer more “exhaustive”, “in-depth” and “accurate” information

What are CIRM’s objectives

- To more effectively use the mainstream/traditional media to get CIRM’s story out to the public
- To create stronger ties with local media outlets in California
- To create stronger ties with community-based news media

SMART Goals

- Pitch 3-5 stories quarterly to reporters on CIRM-funded/supported research and activities
- Identify and reach out to 10 new community-based publications and media outlets
- Produce 3 high-quality podcast episodes quarterly
- Pitch CIRM scientists and staff as guests on other podcasts

What CIRM has done so far

- Placed articles in community newspapers such as the [San Francisco Bay View](#), a newspaper serving the City’s Black community.
- Worked to create connections with other community-based newspapers and media outlets around California such as the Los Angeles Sentinel, Sacramento Observer and San Diego Voice & Viewpoint.
- Partnered with institutions such as UCLA to highlight progress against conditions like sickle cell disease ([LA Times article](#))

Where does CIRM have good connections?

- Major newspapers around California – SF Chronicle, LA Times, Sacramento Bee etc.
- Radio stations like KCBS and KPCC
- Reporters such as Gina Kolata (NY Times) and Laurie McGinley (Washington Post)
- TV stations in the SF Bay Area (KRON-TV, KABC and KPIX) as well as stations in LA (KNBC and KABC)

What is our strategy

- To continue to identify reporters most interested in reporting on regenerative medicine and pitch them story ideas.
- To work with reporters at the national level so they consider us a trust-worthy third party to talk to about key issues surrounding regenerative medicine.
- To reach out to **community-based newspapers, radio and TV** – they are still widely read listened to and watched and if CIRM highlights a local link – such as a researcher or patient from that community - CIRM can make a stronger connection. Many of these newspapers are also free and CIRM can submit articles. This is an excellent way of reaching specific communities that are often overlooked.
- **To develop ties with local radio** – Again, if CIRM can create a local link, have a researcher from that community talk, it can be an effective way of spreading news about the agency and the work it does. Also a way of reaching specific communities that are often underrepresented.
- **To explore greater use of podcasts** – Be guests on shows, get CIRM grantees to be guests etc.
- **To pitch CIRM's story to community shows on local TV** – weekend shows are always looking for guests to discuss topical issues like health and medicine and DEI in clinical trials etc.
- To direct reporters to CIRM's website and position it as a valuable resource for them.
- To partner with media relations colleagues in academic institutions and companies CIRM funds to support each other's efforts to get wider media attention.

Where does CIRM need to make in-roads?

- Increase outreach to other community-based publications
 - Community Alliance
 - Radio Bilingue
 - Oaklandside, etc.
- Continue media strategy/assess and update plan quarterly
- Identify reporters interested in covering issues important to diverse communities around California

CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE FOR REGENERATIVE MEDICINE (CIRM)

Patient Advocacy Strategy 2021

Just like CIRM's Community Outreach Plan, CIRM will continue to leverage existing relationships with Patient Advocacy groups and help build a sense of trust.

Why is Patient Advocacy important to CIRM?

- Because patients and patient advocates were the driving force behind the creation of CIRM and its funding under Proposition 14
- Because patients are at the heart of everything CIRM does, from membership on CIRM's Board/GWG to CAPs/TAPs
- Because it is essential to have the voices of patients and patient advocates heard when CIRM is developing and setting priorities
- Because as CIRM places more emphasis on DEI, the agency needs to create a sense of trust and highlight the work CIRM does, and the best way to do that is through patient and patient advocate communities
- Because CIRM needs to ensure that patients feel that they are respected as equal partners in all decisions CIRM makes that involve them

What is CIRM's Patient Advocate strategy?

In the past, CIRM's patient advocacy strategy was more focused on reaching out to different disease communities - e.g. holding a Facebook Live on stroke or ALS – or reaching out to the broader community through conferences like the World Stem Cell Summit or Rotary clubs etc.

With an increased emphasis on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI), CIRM has set the following strategy:

- Start by identifying one community – e.g. Sickle Cell Disease community – and use that to build experience, develop messaging, test best practices
- Survey key opinion leaders and groups and set up “listening sessions” within the target community to find out what is important to them, what issues matter to them, what do they know about us, is collaboration something that would interest/benefit them.

- When applicable, highlight any discovery, translational, pre-clinical, or clinical trials that CIRM is funding that is related to their area of interest
- Highlight the efforts CIRM has already taken to incorporate DEI into its funding criteria
- Highlight the important role that patient advocacy plays in different areas of CIRM such as science communication efforts (Annual Report), advisory panels (CAP and TAP), ICOC Board representation, and CIRM's educational programs (patient advocacy requirement component).
- Set priorities based on the results of this survey/listening session
- Create a template to use in developing similar outreach programs to other communities.
- Develop specific marketing materials that address these goals and are appropriate for different audiences in terms of content, language etc.

Other targets of the strategy:

- Develop online outreach communications tools to reach broad groups like Rare Disease Communities that work with a diverse array of rare diseases.