



Nominations for Appointment to the Grants Working Group (GWG)

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Elizabeth Bhoj, MD, PhD
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, University of Pennsylvania

Referral: Dr. Bhoj was identified by Dr. Linda Nevin.

Expertise Relevance to CIRM GWG: Dr. Bhoj's expertise in genetics of novel pediatric syndromes will be invaluable in reviewing Discovery, Translational, and Clinical stage program applications.

Prior Service in CIRM Reviews: Dr. Bhoj has participated in Discovery and Clinical stage program reviews.

Bio:

Dr. Elizabeth Bhoj is Assistant Professor, Division of Human Genetics, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and Department of Pediatrics, at the University of Pennsylvania. She is also Director of the Clinical Laboratory at the Center for Applied Genetics, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. She is also the co-director of the Penn PREP program, an NIH-funded Post-Baccalaureate Program to prepare scholars who are underrepresented in research as they apply for graduate school. She started an independent laboratory in 2018 at CHOP as an Assistant Professor (tenure-track). Her laboratory focuses on gene discovery in pediatric disorders, and a deep mechanistic understanding of those diseases. She uses many modalities, including mouse models, iPSCs, patient-derived cells, and computational biology.

She received her MD and PhD through the Medical Scientist Training Program at University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas with a focus on patient-driven gene discovery. She also completed a Masters of Translation Research from Penn, where she gained additional translational research skills. For clinical training, she graduated from the pediatrics/medical genetics combined residency program and clinical molecular genetics fellowship at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP). As a result, she is board-certified in three specialties: pediatrics, clinical genetics, and molecular genetics. After clinical training she joined the Center for Applied Genomics under Hakon Hakonarson as a postdoctoral research/instructor. She joined the CHOP/Penn faculty in 2018 to start a translational genomics lab, which has received funding from the Burroughs-Wellcome Foundation, Society for Pediatric Research, Landenberger Family Foundation Award, Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, NICHD, NLM, and NINDS. She has led multiple disease-discovery consortia, some with over 100 collaborators from dozens of countries. She was the winner of the Bowes Award in Medical Genetics from Harvard/Partners in 2018 and the ASCI Young Physician-Scientist Award in 2022.

Christopher Mecoli, MD, MHS
Assistant Professor of Medicine, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

Referral: Dr. Mecoli was identified by Dr. Mark Furth.

Expertise Relevance to CIRM GWG: Dr. Mecoli's expertise in clinical rheumatology, novel treatments for scleroderma, and myositis will be invaluable in reviewing Clinical and Translational program applications.

Prior Service in CIRM Reviews: Dr. Mecoli has participated in Translational stage program reviews.

Bio:

Dr. Christopher Mecoli is Assistant Professor of Medicine at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, serving on the faculty at Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center and Johns Hopkins Scleroderma Center. He is also Director of Research Operations and Physician Lead for the Myositis Precision Center of Excellence. His primary clinical expertise is in rheumatology and his research interests include rheumatology, biomarker development, scleroderma (including development of precision medicine approaches), pulmonary hypertension, digital ulcers, telangiectasias, development of patient-reported outcome measures, and the relationship between cancer and inflammatory muscle disease (myositis).

Dr. Mecoli earned his MD from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey/Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. He completed an internal medicine residency at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania and a rheumatology fellowship at Johns Hopkins. He also holds an MHS in clinical investigation from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. He has published over 50 articles in journals such as and his awards include membership in the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society in 2010, the Dr. Jacob Dreskin Award for Clinical Excellence, the Ralph Schumacher Award in Rheumatology, the Jerome L Greene Foundation Scholar, and the Johns Hopkins Clinician Scientist Award. He receives research support from the NIH/NIAMS and is an active member of the American College of Rheumatology.

REAPPOINTMENTS

CIRM is seeking the reappointment of the individuals listed in the table below. Their updated biographies follow.

Proposed Reappointments to GWG

Last	First	Term	Years	Expertise
Perlingeiro	Rita	3	6	Pluripotent Stem Cells, Skeletal and Cardiac Muscle Differentiation, Muscle Regeneration, Transplantation, Clinical Translation, Muscular Dystrophies, Disease Modeling
Zúñiga-Pflucker	Juan-Carlos	3	6	T Cell Development, Hematopoiesis, Thymus Biology, Notch Signaling
Mitalipov	Shoukhrat	3	6	Gamete, Embryo, & Stem Cell Biology; Pluripotency

Rita Perlingeiro, PhD

Dr. Rita Perlingeiro is the Lillehei Professor in Stem Cell and Regenerative Cardiovascular Medicine at the Lillehei Heart Institute. She received her BSc in Biochemistry and Pharmacy from the Federal University of Santa Maria in Santa Maria--RS, Brazil and her MSc in Pharmacology and her PhD in Biological Sciences from the University of Campinas in Campinas--RS, Brazil. She completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research, Massachusetts Institute for Technology.

Dr. Perlingeiro's laboratory is interested in understanding the molecular mechanisms controlling lineage-specific differentiation of pluripotent stem cells, with the goal to generate tissue-specific stem/progenitor cells for clinical translation. Much of her work is focused on muscular dystrophies.

Dr. Perlingeiro sits on the editorial boards for the *Skeletal Muscle Journal*, and is a member of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Skeletal Muscle and Exercise Physiology (SMEP) Study Section and the MDA Research Advisory Committee (RAC). Dr. Perlingeiro has recently served for the TREAT-NMD Advisory Committee for Therapeutics (TACT) Panel. She is a member of several professional societies including the American Society of Gene and Cell Therapy and the International Society for Stem Cell Research.

Dr. Perlingeiro has served on the GWG for almost 10 years. She has reviewed for Discovery and Translational stage programs, as well as Tools and Technologies and Research Leadership awards.

Juan Carlos Zúñiga-Pflücker, PhD

Dr. Juan Carlos Zúñiga-Pflücker is Professor of Immunology at the University of Toronto. He is also Senior Scientist in Biological Sciences for the Odette Cancer Research Program, and Director for the Sunnybrook Research Institute Centre for Cytometry and Scanning Microscopy. Dr. Zúñiga-Pflücker has over 30 years of experience with

immunology and various stem cells. He has numerous areas of research interests, but there is common theme related to T cell development from hematopoietic stem/precursor cells, immune cell signaling related to the formation of T cell precursors, and the in vitro generation of immune cell progenitors from pluripotent stem cells. These discoveries led to co-founding Notch Therapeutics, for which he serves as co-chair of the scientific advisory board.

Dr. Zúñiga-Pflücker earned his BSc in Zoology from the University of Maryland and his doctorate in Genetics - Immunology from George Washington University. He completed his postdoctoral fellowship at the NIH National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease (NIAID) where he continued his studies in molecular immunology. Upon completion of his postdoc, Dr. Zúñiga-Pflücker became an Assistant Professor in the Department of Immunology at the University of Toronto. He was promoted to an Associate Professor in 1999, and also became a Senior Scientist at the Sunnybrook Research Institute (SRI) in 2001. From 2004-present, he was promoted to Professor of Immunology at the University of Toronto and was Chair of the Department of Immunology from 2012 to 2023. He has served as the Director for the Advance Regenerative Tissue Engineering Centre at SRI, served as the Section Editor for *The Journal of Immunology*, and served as president of the Canadian Society for Immunology. He was honored with the 2020 AAI Distinguished Service Award for the invaluable service he provided to American Association of Immunologists (AAI), and in 2022 was named Distinguished Fellow of the AAI. He has also received numerous research awards including the Canadian Society for Immunology's Investigator Award. Dr. Zúñiga-Pflücker has over 200 peer-reviewed publications, including research published in *Nature*, *Nature Immunology*, *Blood*, and *Journal of Immunology*, serves on numerous professional societies and NIH study sections, and is the recipient of various grants from the NIH and Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

Dr. Zuniga-Pflucker has served as a GWG member for almost 8 years. He reviewed for the Discovery stage program, Tools and Technologies awards, and COVID-19 programs.

Shoukhrat Mitalipov, PhD

Dr. Shoukhrat Mitalipov is the Director and Professor of the Center for Embryonic Cell and Gene Therapy at Oregon Health & Science University. His research is focused on investigating and developing novel cell and gene therapy approaches in reproductive medicine. His laboratory pioneered the concept of mitochondrial/cytoplasmic replacement therapy, and they are exploring applications of direct reprogramming somatic cells to haploid oocytes as a future infertility therapy to restore reproductive potential of patients. He is also investigating novel gene editing strategies that would allow repairing gene defects in gametes or early preimplantation embryos in order to prevent transmission of heritable genetic disorders.

Dr. Mitalipov earned his MS in Animal Science from Timiriasev Academy and PhD in Stem Cell and Developmental Biology Research Center for Medical Genetics in Moscow. He completed his postdoctoral fellowship at Utah State University. Among his many commitments, he serves on NIH study sections (DEV2) and currently is a member of the Board of Directors for the Academy of Sciences of Kazakhstan. Among his many honors, he has received the American Society for Reproductive Medicine Distinguished Researcher Award (awarded for outstanding contributions to clinical or basic research in reproduction) and was identified by Time magazine as one of the 50 most influential people in health care in 2018.

Dr. Mitalipov has served as a GWG member for 12 years. He reviewed for the Discovery stage program, Basic Biology awards, and Tools and Technologies awards.