DISC4: ReMIND-L FAQ

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PROJECT SCOPE & ELIGIBILITY

1. **What types of projects are eligible for funding under ReMIND-L?**

   To be eligible, the proposed project must:

   A. Define key knowledge gap(s) or research bottleneck(s) in the study of neuropsychiatric disorders AND propose research studies to address them.

   B. Include studies that employ stem cells or genetic research as part of the central approach or hypothesis to be tested by the multi-disciplinary team. Applicants should provide justification for project components that do not directly involve stem cells/genetic research and describe how they complement or promote the utility and/or validity of stem cell and/or genetic research in the study of neuropsychiatric disorders.

   C. Justify any proposed use of non-human models and include research to validate any discoveries made in non-human model systems with comparable studies using relevant tissues or models based on human cells.

2. **What stage of research will ReMIND-L support?**

   ReMIND-L supports foundational research focused on addressing knowledge gaps and research bottlenecks in the study of neuropsychiatric disorders. This award will also support identification and validation of novel targets, biomarkers, or therapeutic hypotheses.

   ReMIND-L will not support therapeutic or other commercial development activities including lead optimization, manufacturing, IND-enabling studies, and other activities targeted by CIRM's TRAN and CLIN programs (see RFA pages 7-8 – "What activities will CIRM fund").

3. **What disorders are included under neuropsychiatric disease for ReMIND-L? Are neurodevelopmental disorders eligible, or should we focus on later onset neuropsychiatric disorders?**

   The 2024 ReMIND-L awards will support the study of neuropsychiatric disorders, including schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, anxiety disorders, mood disorders, idiopathic developmental intellectual disability, autism spectrum disorders, and substance use disorders. This list is not exhaustive and includes neuropsychiatric disorders with neurodevelopmental origins.

4. **Is CIRM interested in grants specifically focused on one disorder or do we need to broaden the scope to study multiple neuropsychiatric diseases?**

   ReMIND-L awards are open to proposals that have a single disease focus as well as those that examine common mechanisms /phenotypes across classical disease classifications. CIRM considers them equally valid approaches whose merit will depend on the specific question and specific technologies and expertise brought to bear.

   In addition, the award supports "Studies that consider mental health disorders in the context of human neurobehavioral domains (e.g., NIMH Research Domain Criteria Initiative Framework) rather than within current diagnostic categories" (see RFA page 7).

5. **Are studies focused on other CNS indications eligible for ReMIND-L?**

   The primary emphasis of the ReMIND-L Awards is on advancing understanding of neuropsychiatric disease mechanisms. Studies focused on other CNS disease and conditions, including neurodegeneration, pain and brain cancers, are NOT within scope for this award.

   In extraordinary cases, applications that seek to examine neuropsychiatric disease mechanisms in the context of other CNS disorders may be eligible if the primary focus is on elucidating neuropsychiatric disease mechanisms. Applicants should contact CIRM staff to discuss eligibility of proposed research before applying.

6. **How does psychedelic research apply to ReMIND-L?**

   The ReMIND-L award supports a range of research activities including reverse translation studies related to approved or investigational therapies for neuropsychiatric disease (see RFA pages 7-8).

   Studies involving psychedelics as treatment for neuropsychiatric diseases may be eligible if other eligibility criteria (see above) are fulfilled. Applicants should reach out to discuss their proposals with CIRM staff.

7. **Does this RFA support projects that involve primary fetal-derived cells?**

   There are no restrictions on the use of primary fetal-derived cells and applicants are welcome to include them in the proposed research, assuming all necessary certification and approvals have been obtained.

   To align with CIRM's eligibility criteria, all ReMIND-L proposals must "include studies that employ stem cells or genetic research as part of the central approach or hypothesis to be tested by the multi-disciplinary team." Human stem cells and stem-cell dependent models derived from fetal tissue are also considered to fulfill this eligibility requirement.

8. **Is there a need/benefit for human samples as part of our proposal?**

   The ReMIND-L awards emphasizes human centered biology and encourages the use of human stem-cell models, genetic and medical data, patient-derived tissue, and other samples to enhance the scientific impact of the proposal.

   Applicants should ensure that all materials are appropriately consented for the proposed study and that data generated from such material are consented to be shared broadly (see RFA page 21 – "Donor Consent and Data Use Limitations").

9. **Do projects need to include a genetic engineering component?**

   No. Proposals do not need to include a genetic engineering component as long as the following eligibility requirement is met:

   Eligible proposals must "include studies that employ stem cells OR genetic research as part of the central approach or hypothesis to be tested by the multi-disciplinary team" (see RFA page 9 "Eligibility").

10. **Is it ok to validate findings in in vivo mouse models or is it strongly preferred to stick to stem cell-derived systems?**

    CIRM encourages the use of human models where feasible, but we acknowledge the continued importance of mouse models in particular use cases (e.g., behavioral assessment, native tissue organization).

    In the eligibility section of the online application, applicants will need to identify and justify the use of any non-human models and proposed studies to validate findings based on these models.

    As part of the review process, GWG members may consider the merit of animal models to assess if there is relevance to human biology and if non-human model use is well justified (see RFA pages 13-14).

11. **Is technological development that can lead to new and optimized methods that can indirectly lead to understanding of neuropsychiatric mechanisms a valid goal for these proposals?**

    Yes, ReMIND-L applications should have an ambitious scope in line with the award size and are expected to include multiple subprojects. Technology & tool development could be included as a subgoal of a ReMIND-L application, especially if there are synergies with other components of the application.

    Purely technology-development focused applications are unlikely to be competitive and are more suited for our DISC0 pillar program (see www.cirm.ca.gov/about-cirm/funding-opportunities-discovery-stage-research/ for details) or for the upcoming ReMIND-X opportunity.

12. **What are the preliminary data requirements?**

    Applicants should include preliminary data to support the rationale and/or establish the feasibility of a given proposal. The amount of data required will be project-specific and may depend on many factors. In general, applicants may include preliminary data to support the rationale for the proposed research plan, and the feasibility of executing the Research Plan including the feasibility of employing key technologies.

13. **What are the requirements for the clinical and computational components of this application?**

    The clinical and computational requirements apply to the applicant team (see Team Eligibility section below) and not the project scope.

TEAM ELIGIBILITY

14. **Who can apply?**

    ReMIND-L is open to both non-profit and for-profit California-based organizations. A California organization is a non-profit or for-profit organization that employs and pays more than 50% of its employees in California and directs and controls the award activities from California.

15. **What are the requirements of applicant teams?**

    The Core team must include at least 5 independent investigators: 1 Principal Investigator (PI) and at least 4 co-Investigators (co-Is). The broader team may include any number of additional Key Personnel, including collaborators, consultants, subcontractors, etc.

    All PIs and co-Is of the core team must be employed by California-based organizations or accountable for the conduct of the proposed project to the applicant organization through a formal contract. In addition, PIs and co-Is must commit at least 15% (PI) or 10% (co-I) effort to work on this project (see RFA page 11 for PI and co-I requirements).

    The broader team must include at least one data project manager, at least one member with relevant clinical expertise in neuropsychiatric disorders, and at least one member with relevant computational biology or bioinformatic expertise.

16. **What counts as relevant clinical expertise? What do you foresee as the contribution(s) of this team member?**

    ReMIND-L teams must include at least one member with relevant clinical expertise. This requirement can be fulfilled by any Key Personnel, and they do not need to be a member of the core team (Principal Investigator and co-Investigators). Applicants will have the chance to highlight the experiences of this team member in the proposal and biosketch uploads.

    In general, this member should be a trained clinician with relevant experience in the area of study. This member should be able to provide important clinical perspective including existing unmet needs, current and investigational treatments, and practical knowledge of clinical and translational bottlenecks. They would help the team assess potential translatability of the project findings and outcomes and facilitate the team's engagement with patients and patient-centered organizations.

17. **Do the 5 PIs need to be from different institutions?**

    No, the core team members (1 Principal Investigator and at least 4 co-Investigators) may be based at the same institution or be based at different CA institutions.

18. **Can I include out-of-state and/or international partners in my ReMIND-L application? Can the award be used to support research conducted outside the state of California?**

    Yes, non-California-based (non-CA) collaborators or commercial entities may be funded through this award as Subcontracts. However, CIRM requires that the California based applicant team exercises direction and control over the subcontracted activities. Furthermore, the out-of-state organization CANNOT retain the intellectual property or independent publication rights of any intellectual property (e.g., invention, technology, data) arising out of the CIRM-funded project.

    An alternative option exists for non-CA investigators and organizations who elect to contribute research activities to the overall project at no cost to the team (in-kind contribution). In this case, while non-CA investigators and organizations will not receive CIRM funds in this arrangement, the contributed research may qualify as matching funds, which would allow the applicant team to request additional CIRM funding. Applicants should refer to the "What are Matching Funds?" section of the RFA (see RFA page 18) or contact CIRM staff to learn more.

19. **Is there a limit for budget % for the non-CA subcontract?**

    There are no restrictions on the proportion of award funds used to fund subcontracts outside of CA. However, applicants should exercise good judgement in the allocation of funds as applicants are required to justify their budgets including subcontracts, which will be assessed by reviewers.

20. **Can an investigator be included in more than one ReMIND-L application?**

    Yes, an investigator may be included in the core team of up to two applications. For instance, a researcher may be listed as co-Investigator on two applications OR as a Principal Investigator on one application and as a co-Investigator on a second application. An investigator cannot be listed as a Principal Investigator on more than one application.

    An investigator may be listed as Key Personnel on any number of applications (see RFA page 17 – "Who are Key Personnel?").

21. **Are for-profit organizations eligible for this award? How suitable is a therapeutic-focused academic/biotech research collaboration for this opportunity?**

    For-profit California-based companies are eligible to apply for ReMIND-L as the main applicant organization. For-profit organizations must complete a financial feasibility assessment and financial solvency worksheet, available in the uploads section of the online application. In addition, eligible co-Investigators may be employed by or under contract with for-profit CA organizations.

    Academic-industry collaborations are allowable, as long as all eligibility requirements are fulfilled.

AWARD AMOUNT, DURATION AND NUMBER

22. What is the award amount and duration?

The maximum duration of ReMIND-L awards is four years. Each ReMIND-L award will support direct project costs of up to $8 million in total. Additional funding of up to $500,000 per year (maximum of $2 million over four years) may be requested IF matching funds of equivalent or greater value are provided.

23. What is considered matching funds for ReMIND-L?

Matching funds may take the form of cash funds or in-kind contributions and can come from any California-based or non-California-based non-CIRM funding source arranged by the applicant.

Only certain expenses can be paid for using matching funds, including salary for full-time personnel, research supplies and resources uniquely dedicated to this project, facilities with existing recharge rates and third-party subcontracts. Sources of funds and specific expenses covered by matching funds must be described in the research proposal and detailed in the application budget.

24. How many awards are anticipated?

CIRM has a target to fund 6 ReMIND-L awards in 2024.

25. Will this opportunity recur?

At the moment only a single cycle of ReMIND-L awards has been approved by CIRM's Governing Board.

In addition, the board approved one cycle of ReMIND-X awards which will support exploratory, high-risk, high-impact research in the area of neuropsychiatric diseases. The RFA for ReMIND-X is expected to be posted by late 2024.

APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

26. What is the application process?

Please visit www.cirm.ca.gov/remind/ for links and basic navigation of the online application portal (www.grants.cirm.ca.gov). All upload templates will be available within the online application portal. The ReMIND webpage will also contain links to the ReMIND Webinar (video recording and slide deck) with further guidance for specific application elements.

27. What is the review process and review criteria?

For information about the review process and criteria, please see the Application Review Information section of the RFA (pages 11-14).

28. Do we use the CIRM Category A & B in-directs for each subaward (at different California-based institutions) in the budget worksheet template?

Yes, co-Investigators at different California-based institutions from the main applicant organization (PI institution) are treated as subawards. Each PI and co-investigator should complete their own tab in the "Budget Worksheet" template where they will enter the federally negotiated rates for their own institutions.

CONTACT AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

29. When is the ReMIND-X RFA expected to be announced?

The ReMIND-X RFA is expected to be posted in the second half of 2024.

30. **What are CIRM's other discovery-stage funding opportunities?**

    CIRM offers 2 recurring discovery stage funding opportunities: DISC0 Foundation and DISC2 Quest. For details and deadlines, please visit our website at www.cirm.ca.gov/about-cirm/funding-opportunities-discovery-stage-research/.

31. **My question wasn't answered in this FAQ or in the RFA. Who can I contact with any questions about ReMIND-L?**

    Questions regarding this award should be emailed to Dr. Chan Lek Tan ctan@cirm.ca.gov or discovery@cirm.ca.gov with the subject line "ReMIND."