

Real Life™

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Grants Working Group DISC0 Recommendations

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CIRM
CALIFORNIA'S STEM CELL AGENCY

OUR MISSION

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



DISC0 Proposal Objective

Projects should culminate in a discovery or technology that would advance (1 or more):

1. Understanding of biology of stem cells that is relevant to human biology and disease,
2. Genetic research relevant to human biology or disease that pertains to stem cells or regenerative medicine,
3. The development of human stem cells as tools for biomedical innovation,
4. Greater applicability of regenerative medicine discoveries to communities representing the full spectrum of diversity.

DISC0 funds can support the following EXAMPLE activities

- Basic research into stem cell or genetic research mechanisms as they relate to human biology.
- Basic research to address bottlenecks - such as tissue targeting, immunogenicity or toxicity - in the development of stem cell-based therapies.
- Studies to better understand healthy and/or diseased human cells and tissues – such as omics profiling or human cell / tissue atlases.
- Mechanistic studies of disease to enable rational design of stem cell-based treatments.
- Investigation of stem cells or their derivatives as tools for therapeutic or other innovation, e.g., for modeling disease.
- Generation of omics data that will extend or validate the applicability of regenerative medicine discoveries to underserved racial or ethnic groups.

Program Features

- Applications must address a *knowledge gap* or a *bottleneck* in regenerative medicine research.
- Awards are for 3 years, up to \$1 million.
- Projects < 3 years that propose a budget > \$400,000 per year require a strong justification.

Available Budget

- 2023/24 Annual DISC0 Allocation: **\$22.5M**

Scientific GWG
Members



Positive selection
Scientific evaluation based on broad subject area or
methods expertise

Enter final scores for **every** application

GWG Board
Members



Positive selection
Patient perspective on significance and potential
impact, oversight on process

Specialists



Scientific evaluation based on specialized expertise

Provide recommended scores in the discussion

Positive Selection (Two-Stage) Review Process

- Performed when the total number of applications exceeds the capacity of the GWG to review in a single cycle.
- In the first stage, GWG members including patient advocates and nurse Board Members conduct a pre-review of applications and select which ones to advance to a full review.
- The CIRM President and CIRM will examine non-selected applications to determine if any merit a full review. The remainder are not considered further.
- A total of 158 applications were submitted and a total of 48 advanced to the full discussion stage by GWG.

1 to 100 Scoring

- Score of **85 to 100**: Application has exceptional merit and warrants funding.
- Score of **1 to 84**: Application is not recommended for funding.
 - Score of **80 to 84**: Application has merit but not ready to be funded at this time. If resubmitted in a future DISC0 competition, this can *bypass* positive selection and automatically undergo full scientific review.
- Applications receiving *any* score can revise and resubmit in future DISC0 competitions.

Scoring Criteria

1. Does the project hold the necessary significance and potential for impact? (i.e., what value does it offer; is it worth doing?)
2. Is the rationale sound? (i.e., does it make sense?)
3. Is the project well planned and designed?
4. Is the project feasible? (i.e., can they do it?)
5. Does the project uphold the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI)?

	Number of Apps	Total Applicant Request	Funds Available
Recommended for funding Score 85-100	11	\$16,793,346	\$22,500,000
Not recommended for funding Score 1-84	37		

For each award, the final award amount shall not exceed the amount approved by the ICOC Application Review Subcommittee and may be reduced contingent on CIRM's assessment of allowable costs and activities.

- Under Prop 14, any application that is not recommended for funding by the GWG, but which had 35% or more members score to fund the application must include a minority report.
- The minority report is included in the review summary and provides a brief synopsis of the opinion of reviewers that scored the application 85 or above.
- No applications qualified for a Minority Report in this cycle.