

EDUC3 (SPARK*) Concept Presentation

Daisy Xin, PhD
ICOC/ARS Meeting
December 11, 2025



*Summer Program to Accelerate Regenerative Medicine Knowledge

EDUC 3 | Concept Outline

1. Background
 - SAF Goal 6 Recommendation
 - SPARK Program Overview
2. Objectives
3. Scope and Structure
4. Eligibility
5. Award Budget
6. Timeline
7. Award Summary and Request for Motion

SAF Goal 6 | Recommendations

Goal 6 - Bolster CIRM's workforce development programs to address gaps and meet evolving demands in regenerative medicine



Develop programming to support outreach education efforts for K-12, teachers, & community members via collaboration with key stakeholders



Relaunch EDUC3 (SPARK) Program

EDUC3 (SPARK)

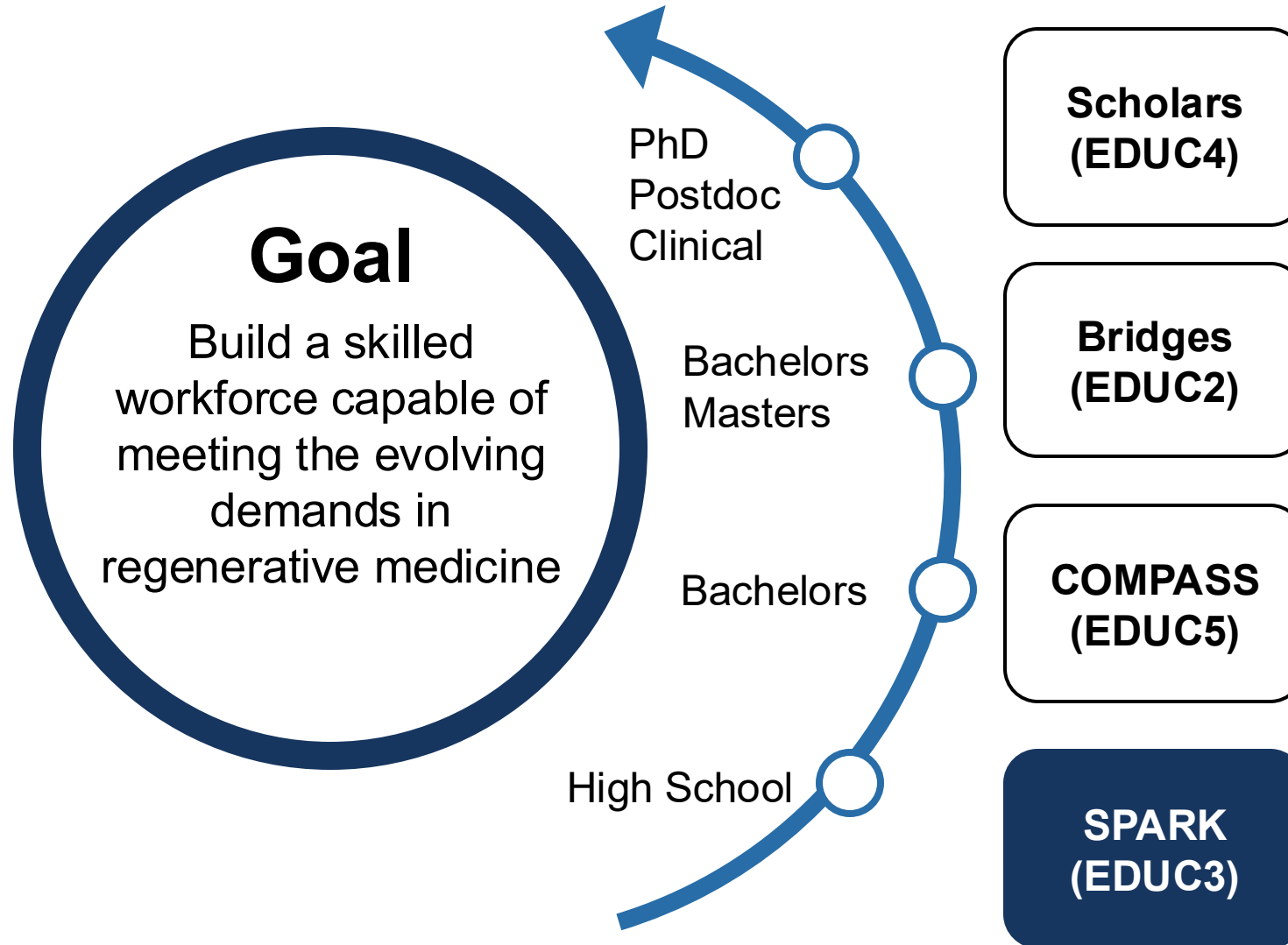
Current Program Overview – Expires 2026

EDUC3/SPARK integrates within existing summer high school programs at CA institutions and provides:

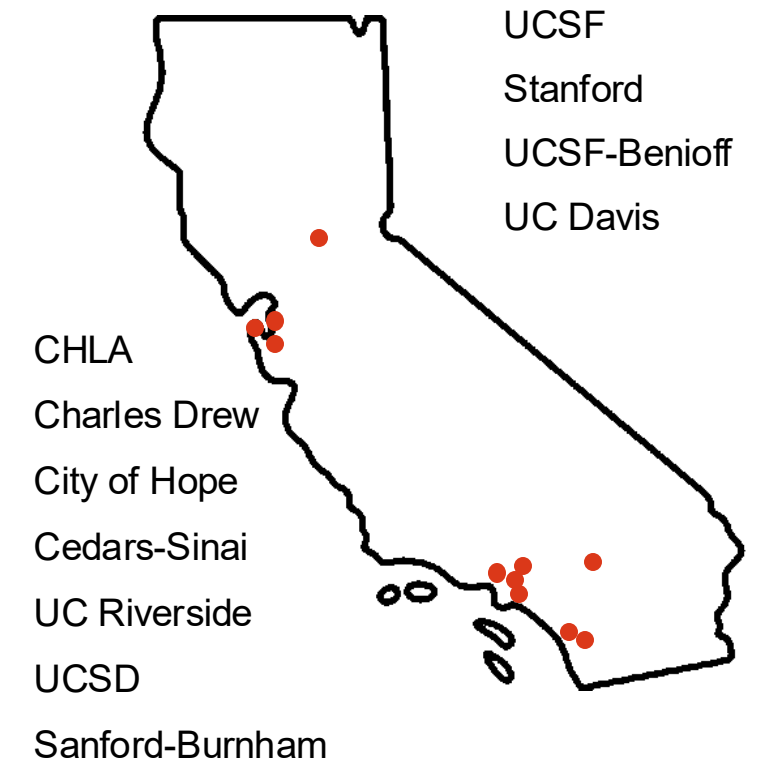
- Paid summer internships in stem cell/gene therapy research
- Prep courses and workshops
- Patient engagement and community outreach activities
- Annual conference



SPARK Trains High School Students



Current Awards



SPARK Students

11 Active SPARK Programs



**Saranya
Anandakumar**

- Internship at Sanford Burnham
- Motivated by family health challenges
- Entered with uncertainty but now pursuing immunology and neuroscience

High-Level Impact

950+ SPARK
students have been
trained by CIRM

*Of those tracked,
93% reported
pursuing STEM paths

EDUC3 | Objectives

- To inspire, educate, and motivate high school students to become involved in CIRM's mission to accelerate world-class science and deliver transformative regenerative medicine treatments in an equitable manner to a diverse California and world
- To provide summer training opportunities and broaden participation in stem cell, gene therapy, and related research to high school students including those who might not otherwise have opportunities for summer research internships due to social, geographic, or other constraints

EDUC3 | Scope and Structure

Each SPARK program is led by a qualified Program Director who is responsible for management and coordination of all activities supported by the program

Program Components – What We Are Keeping

- Summer internships, in which in which trainees participate in hands-on, regenerative medicine-related research in host laboratories and the applicant institution or a partnering organization
- Auxiliary Educational Activities
- Patient and Healthcare Engagement Activities
- Community Outreach and Education Activities
- Alumni Tracking Plan
- CIRM-related conference

EDUC3 | Scope and Structure

Program Improvements – What We Are Enhancing

- Expanded scope of internship possibilities, e.g. manufacturing, quality, clinical research, data science/bioinformatics, and other disciplines relevant to innovating and advancing cell and gene therapies
- Leverage/partnerships with CIRM INFR programs, such as Alpha Clinics, CCCEs, SRLs
- Resource and Knowledge Sharing

EDUC3 | Team & Institution Eligibility

EDUC3 (SPARK)	
Applicant Institution	• California public university or college, or private, non-profit academic institution in California that is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and College • Other California institutions with a documented track record of successfully delivering laboratory-based research training to high school students • Must have an existing high school internship program, or have had one within the past two years at the time of application
Program Director	Must have relevant experience
Collaborating Institutions	Must have a California site or location with appropriate personnel and facilities to accommodate high school students
Number of Applications	An applicant may submit a single EDUC3 application

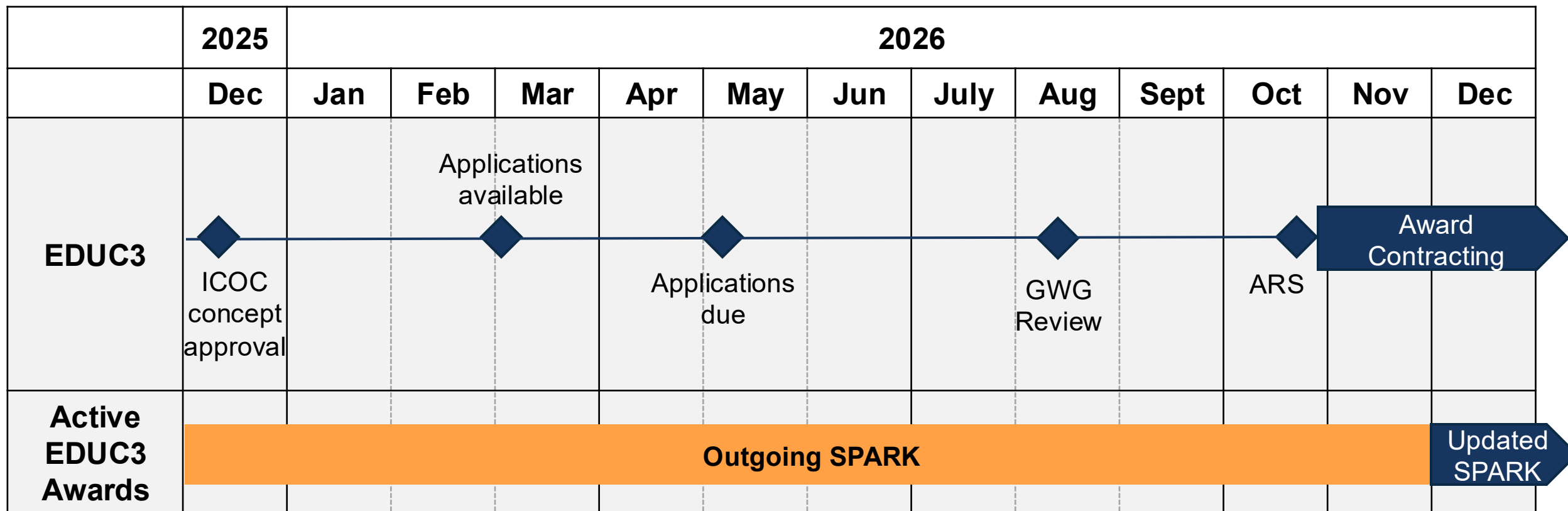
EDUC3 | Award Budgets

	EDUC3 (SPARK) Costs
Trainee Stipends	\$5,500
Travel to annual conference	\$1,000
Direct Costs to Trainee	\$6,500
Program Administration	\$4,167*
Indirect Costs	\$1,067 (10%)*
Total Cost per Trainee	\$11,733
Total Award Amount	\$704,000

Award caps adjustment based on analysis of categorical expenditure growth and cumulative CPI% increase.
2026 Awards will support up to 60 trainees each.

*Rounded to the nearest dollar

EDUC3 | Timeline



EDUC3 | Program Summary

	EDUC3 (SPARK)
Recurrence	1 cycle (2026)
Max Award Duration	5 years
Applicant Institution	California based institutions
Max Award Cost (total)	\$704,000
Number of Awards	12
Students Trained	720
Max Projection	\$8.5M

EDUC3 | Request for Motion

CIRM requests ICOC approval of the proposed SPARK Training Program, with an allocation of \$8.5M to support:

- Up to 12 SPARK Awards, each with a 5-year duration
- 720 trainees
- \$704K per award