

2026 Funding Opportunity for EDUC8

Part 1

Informational Video Guide

Discovery & Education Team

February 2, 2026



Panelists



Kelly Shepard
Director,
Discovery & Education



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Science Officer
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Grants Management Officer,
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Information for Applicants

- This video guide pertains to the
 - EDUC8 (Bridges/COMPASS) Awards due **April 1, 2026 at 2PM PST**
- EDUC8 FAQ is posted on our website. If you have questions related to your specific program or institution, please submit them or request a consultation at education@cirm.ca.gov

EDUC8 Agenda

1 Introduction to CIRM & Education Programs

2 EDUC8 Overview

3 Structure and Eligibility by Path:

a COMPASS

b Bridges

c Dual Path

d All Paths

4 Budget

5 Award Summary

6 Contact and Deadlines

Our Mission

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

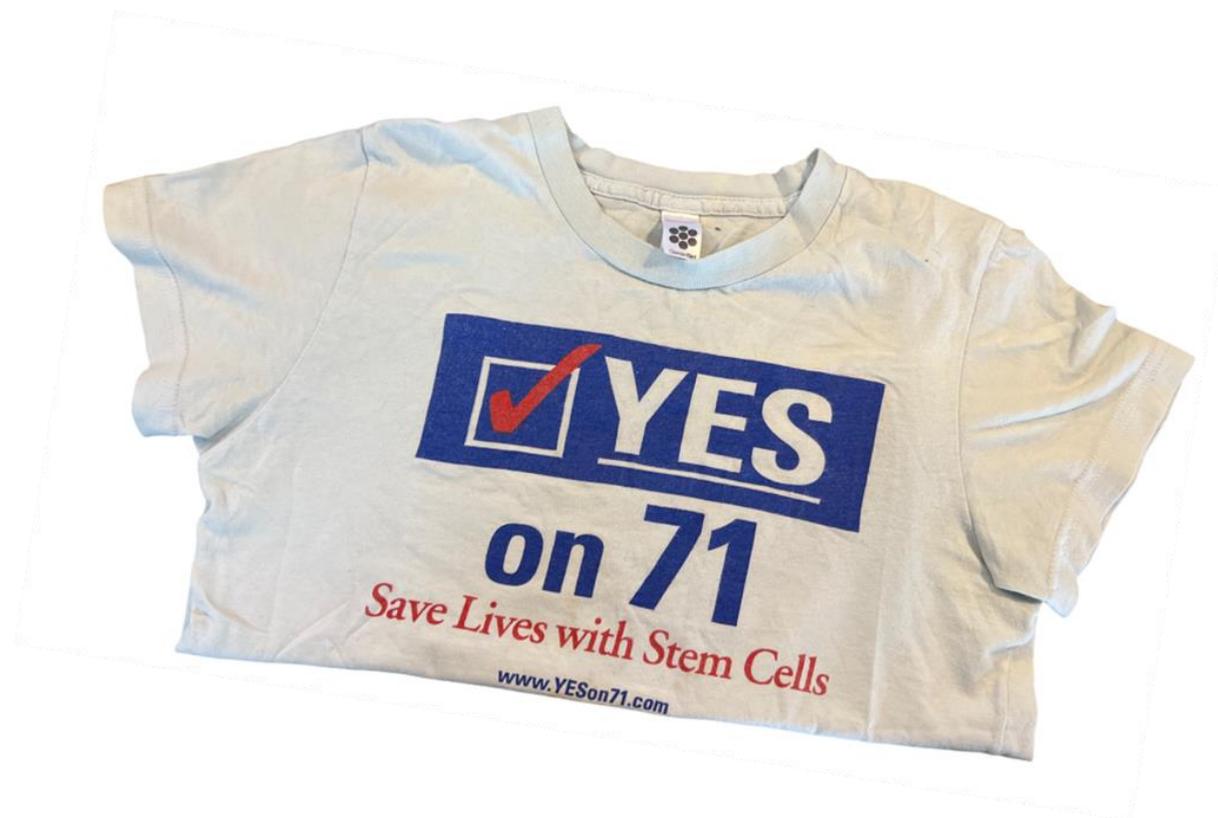


Created and Funded by the People of California

Proposition 71 in 2004 provided
\$3 billion in funding

Proposition 14 in 2020 provided
additional **\$5.5 billion** in funding

Proposition 14 dedicates \$1.5B of
this to R&D for diseases and
conditions of the brain and CNS



CIRM Supports Five Pillars



Discovery
Research



Preclinical
Development



Clinical
Development



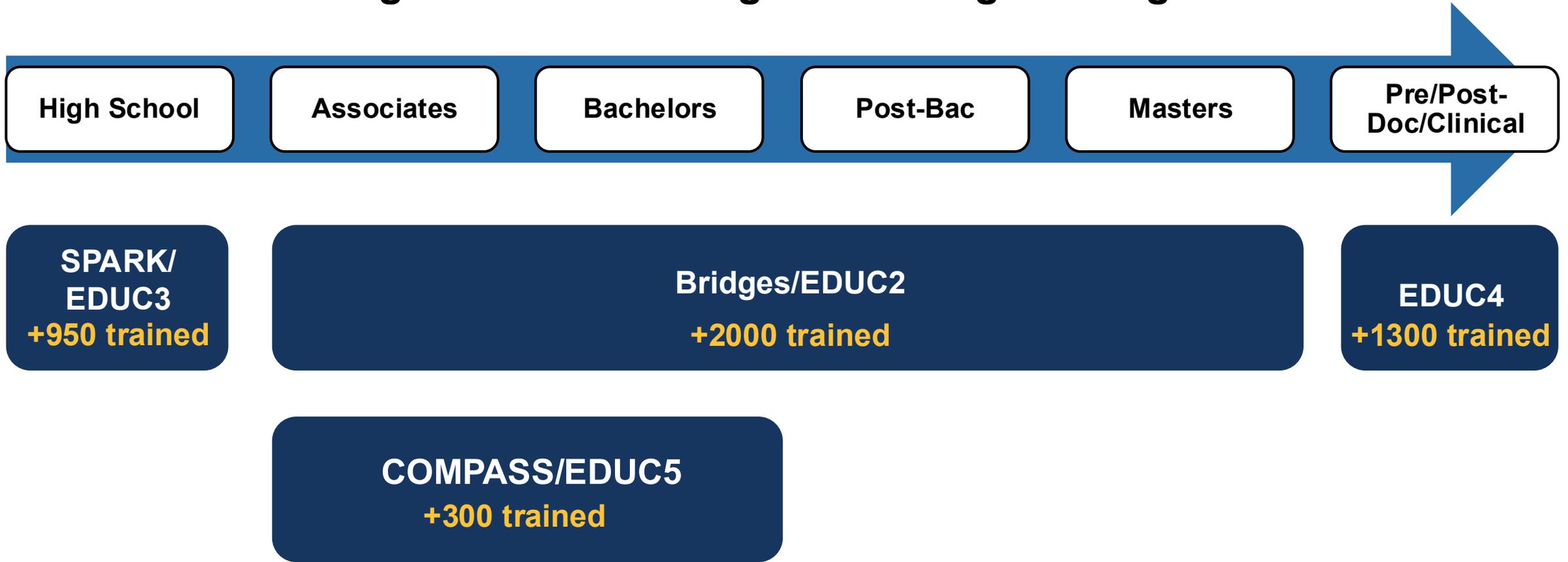
Infrastructure



Education & Workforce Development

Current CIRM EDUC Programs (2007 - Present)

EDUC Programs cover a range of training and degree levels



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EDUC8

Umbrella Mechanism for Bridges and COMPASS

Objective

Prepare undergraduate through master's level students for careers in regenerative medicine by identifying and supporting untapped talent and developing well-trained, adaptable, and committed professionals for the regenerative medicine workforce

Structure

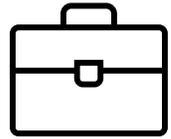
EDUC8 can support three different training approaches tailored to serve two distinct trainee populations. Programs are led by a qualified Program Director (and co-Director, if applicable) as well as other key personnel with expertise in recruitment and mentorship

What Does an EDUC8 Program Look Like?



Degree Integration

Integrated into an institution's specific degree/certificate program



Structured Mentorship & Professional Development

Specific coursework, mentoring, and professional development guidance



Hands-on Experience

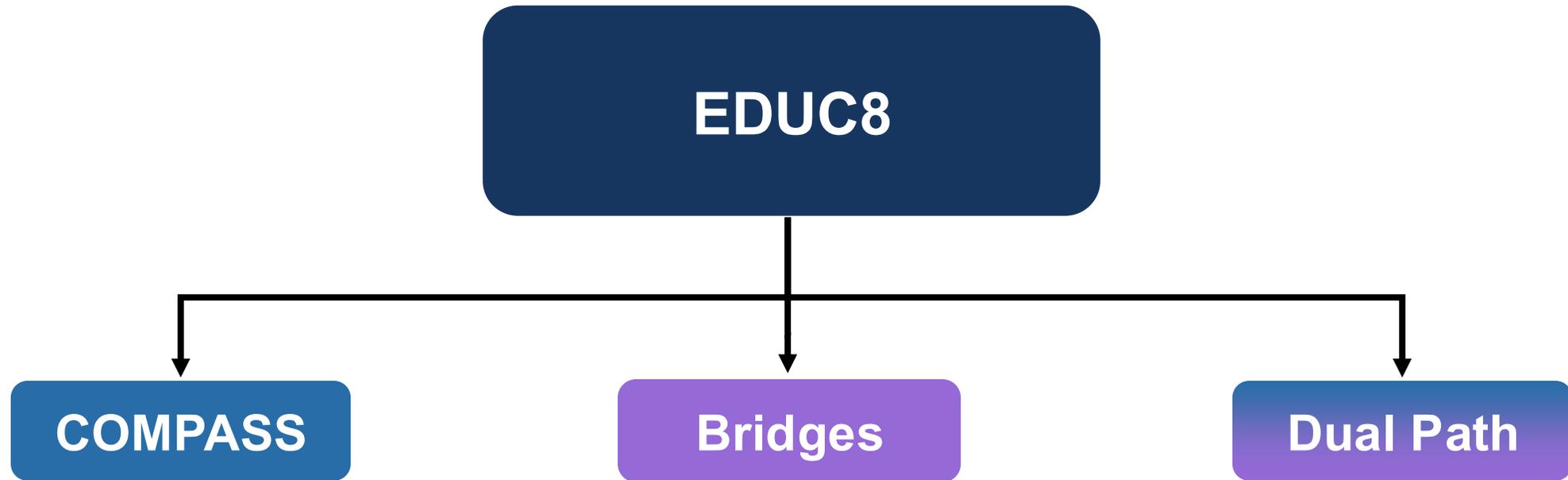
Paid internships, patient & community engagement, conference attendance



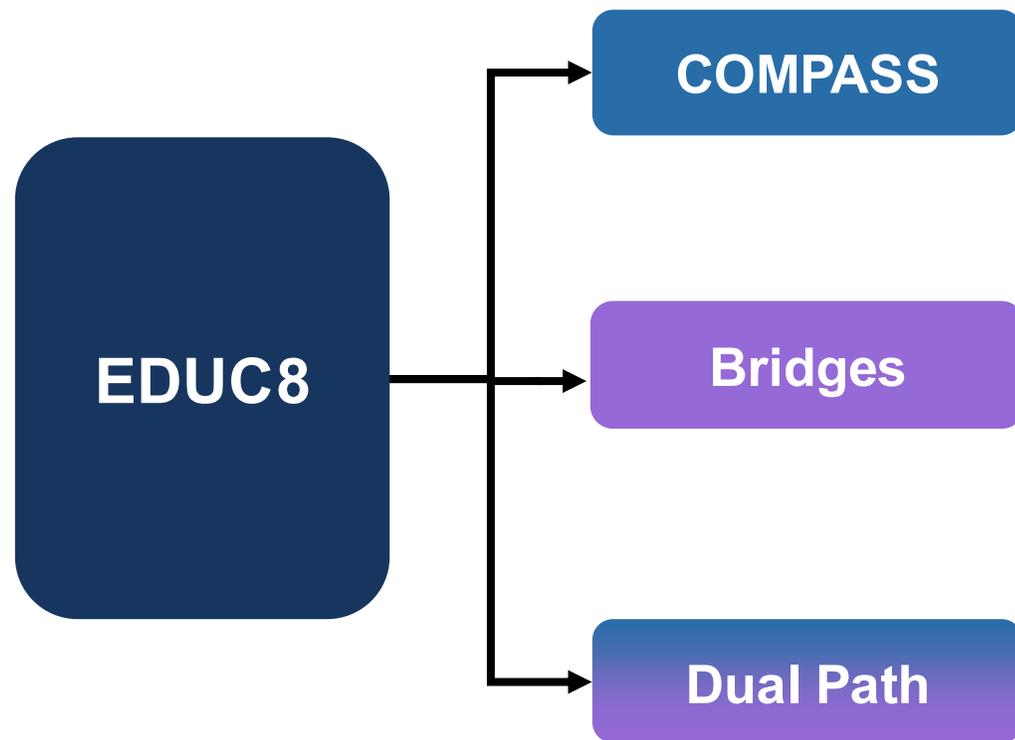
Expand access, promote exploration, and efficient transitions into regenerative medicine careers

EDUC8 Supports Three Training Paths

EDUC8 programs may be structured as a COMPASS path, a Bridges path, or a Dual Path, depending on applicant eligibility and resources



What Distinguishes EDUC8 Paths?



Undergraduate students who may not have had prior experiences in life sciences and are exploring career opportunities

Certificate program, undergraduate, or Masters student committed to transitioning into regenerative medicine careers or relevant next steps

Combination of trainee types, with potential for trainees to transition from COMPASS to Bridges under one mechanism

What Distinguishes EDUC8 Paths?

| | COMPASS | Bridges | Dual Path |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|
| Trainee Level | Bachelors | Certificate, Associates, Bachelors, Masters | Certificate, Associates, Bachelors, Masters |
| Recruitment | Innovative, in lieu of traditional practices like SAT scores and grades | Appropriate trainees with defined goals and expected outcomes | Trainee-specific |
| Internship Duration | 2-3 months | 6-12 months | Trainee-specific |
| Eligible Institution | Institutions in CA | CSUs, CCs in CA | CSUs, CCs in CA |

EDUC8 Program Components

Components that Differ by Path

- Trainee recruitment and placement
- Specific coursework integrated within degree or certificate curriculum
- Hands-on, paid internships
- Mentoring and professional development

Components Shared by All Paths

- Patient and healthcare engagement activities
- Community outreach, education, and science communication to the public
- CIRM Trainee Conference attendance
- Alumni tracking and engagement
- Knowledge and resources sharing

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 - a. **COMPASS**
 - b. Bridges
 - c. Dual Path
 - d. All Paths
4. Budget
5. Award Summary
6. Contact and Deadlines

COMPASS

Target Trainee and Recruitment

COMPASS targets trainees who **may not have had prior experience or opportunities** in life sciences but are interested in exploring careers in regenerative medicine

| Adaptive Outreach and Recruitment | Relevant Coursework |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative outreach and recruitment to identify and foster untapped talent* • Selection done in lieu of traditional practices (e.g. SAT scores, grades, etc.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundational courses integrated within a Bachelors degree program • Additional coursework and content* that support career exploration and learning for COMPASS-level trainees |

* For additional details, please see Program Announcement

COMPASS

Internships

- Take place at the applicant or partnering institution/site
- Must focus on regenerative medicine-relevant opportunities*
- Internships equivalent to 2-3 months full time work
 - Can be over summer, another term, or distributed as part-time work (program-dependent)
 - Up to 1 internship per year of appointment allowed
- Capstone Project to highlight training outcomes (guided by mentor, can include publications)



* For additional details, please see Program Announcement

COMPASS

Mentorship

Goal: provide structured and culturally-aware mentorship for trainees to navigate their program and learn about career exploration and professional development

Mentorship Team

- Dedicated Key Person to lead small team, which may include external advisors
- Formal mentor training for advisors/supervisors including implicit bias training

Mentoring Program

- Individual development plans for trainees
- Activities for professional development
- Activities for personal development and soft skills
- Career counseling
- Sharing of best practices

COMPASS

Eligibility and Leadership Team Requirements



- CA academic institutions with accredited Bachelor's degree programs
- STEM disciplines relevant to regenerative medicine



- Regenerative medicine-relevant research infrastructure and mentorship
- Or partnership and access to above institutions/organizations



- Qualified Program Director with $\geq 5\%$ effort
- Mentorship and Outreach Expertise

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Bridges

Target Trainee and Recruitment

Bridges targets trainees who are interested in **practical internship experiences to launch their careers** in regenerative medicine or relevant next steps

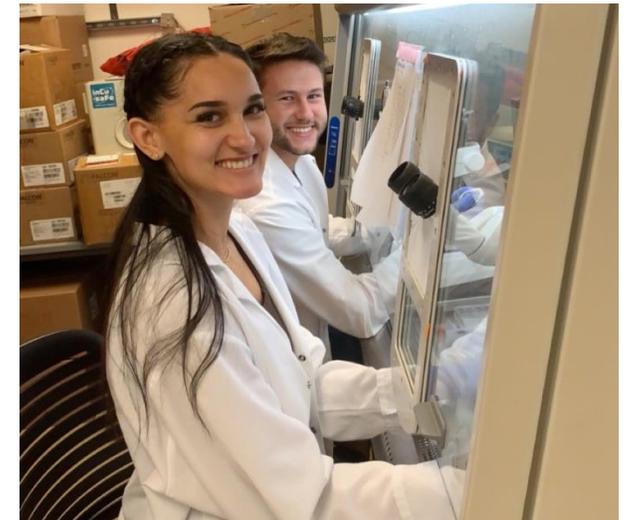
| Adaptive Outreach and Recruitment | Relevant Coursework |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy for recruiting appropriate students with defined goals and expected outcomes • Assess on regular basis for continual improvement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses integrated within a certificate, associate, or degree program (BS/MS) • Advanced techniques course (how to work with human stem cells or other relevant cells) • Additional coursework and content* |

* For additional details, please see Program Announcement

Bridges

Internships

- Take place at a host laboratory or site
- Must focus on regenerative medicine-relevant opportunities*
- Trainees are supported for 6 months to 1 year
- Full-time internship where trainees receive stipend and appropriate academic credit (institution-dependent)
- Bridges Path can have up to two tracks or types of internship (e.g. undergrad-level and master's-level)



* For additional details, please see Program Announcement

Bridges

Eligibility and Leadership Team Requirements



- WASC Accredited academic institutions in California (CSUs, CCs) with Certificates, Associates, Bachelors, or Masters degree programs
- STEM disciplines relevant to regenerative medicine



- Did not receive a CIRM Major Facility or Shared Research Laboratory Award under Proposition 71
- Partnering institutions to provide access to leading regenerative medicine faculty and science



- Qualified Program Director with $\geq 5\%$ effort
- Mentorship and Outreach Expertise

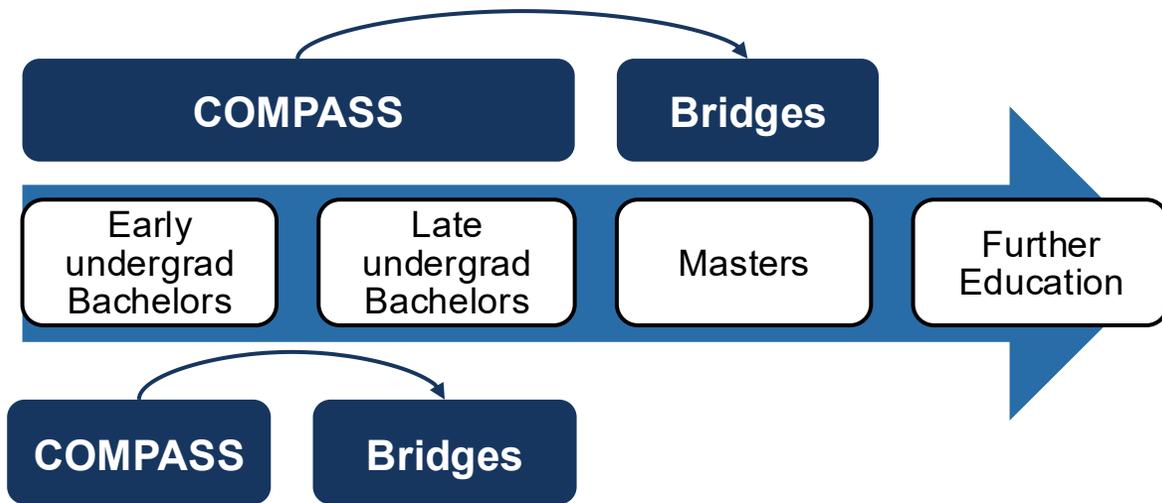
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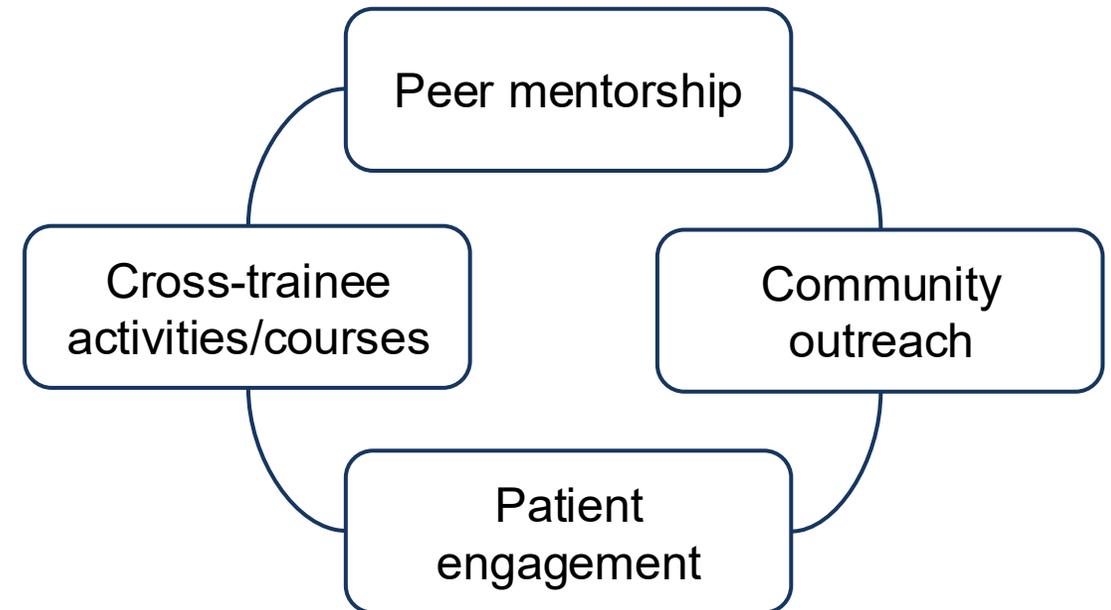
Dual Path Programs Support Both COMPASS and Bridges

Dual Path programs must maintain trainee-specific requirements while fostering collaboration and cross-trainee interactions

Examples of Dual Path Pipelines



Example Areas of Collaboration



Dual Path

Eligibility and Leadership Team Requirements



- WASC Accredited academic institutions in California (CSUs, CCs) with Certificates, Associates, Bachelors, or Masters degree programs
- STEM disciplines relevant to regenerative medicine



- Did not receive a CIRM Major Facility or Shared Research Laboratory Award under Proposition 71
- Partner with host institutions to provide access to leading regenerative medicine faculty and science



- Qualified Program Director and Co-Director, each with $\geq 5\%$ effort
- Mentorship and Outreach Expertise

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Patient Engagement & Community Outreach Activities

The goal of patient engagement and community outreach activities are for trainees to:

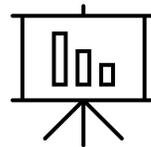
- Gain an understanding of patient perspective and patient advocacy
- Gain awareness of issues around health care and access that differentially impact California communities, such as those disadvantaged by socio-economic status and/or other factors
- Educate California communities about stem cells, gene therapy and regenerative medicine



Courses
Projects



Health fairs
Community events



Presentations



Social media
Blogging



Patient perspective
Medical clinics

Mentorship

Goal: provide tailored mentorship and career guidance for trainees that correspond to their training level and needs

Mentorship Team

- Dedicated Key Person to lead small team, which may include external advisors
- Formal mentor training for advisors/supervisors including implicit bias training

Mentoring Program

- Individual development plans
- Activities and resources that support personal and professional growth

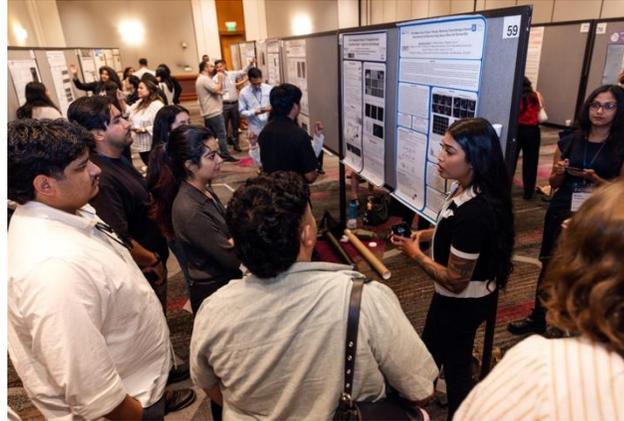
Additional requirements tailored to specific paths; refer to EDUC8 PA for more details.

Other Allowable Activities

- Collaborating with CIRM INFR sites for tours, workshops, courses, certifications, community engagement, etc.
- Developing/implementing a general education course or workshop about regenerative medicine that includes discussion of population impact
- Assembling advisory panels to inform trainee outreach, recruitment, and appointment
- Hosting K-12 students, families, or community members for tours and/or scientific/regenerative medicine themed educational events

Video Guide: Walkthrough of application, review processes, & CIRM resources
See link in description after Feb 10, 2026

Trainee Networking Conference



- EDUC8 Trainees invited to participate in a culminating Conference
- Annual Event (July/August)
- 3-Day program including poster sessions, scientific talks, professional development workshops, and career panels

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Budget Overview

Trainee Stipends

| Bridges Path | COMPASS Path | Dual Path |
|---|---|--|
| Trainee Stipends | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to \$3,600/month (limit 1 year) during full time research internship 10 trainees per yearly cohort max* | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research Internship: Up to \$10,800 (not to exceed \$3,600/month) Academic Year: Up to \$10,800 per year per student (not to exceed \$1,200/month) 10 trainees per yearly cohort max* | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equivalent to that of either the COMPASS or Bridges path 20 trainees per yearly cohort max* |

* Allowed for budgeting purposes; actual trainee numbers per program may vary

Budget

Trainee Administrative Support Fund (TASF)

Flexible spending fund which may support trainee administrative costs

| Bridges Path | COMPASS Path | Dual Path |
|--|---|--|
| TASF | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuition and fees • Research related expenses • Advanced technique course fees • Program related trainee travel • Assistance Funds <p>Up to \$23,100 per trainee</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuition and fees • Research related expenses • Program related trainee travel • Assistance Funds <p>Up to \$18,300/year per trainee</p> | <p>Equivalent to trainee path (COMPASS or Bridges)</p> |

Budget Overview

Assistance Funds

May be requested to support specific, documented needs and/or unique hardships impacting a trainee’s ability to join or remain in the program

| Bridges Path | COMPASS Path | Dual Path |
|---|--|--|
| Assistance Fund | | |
| Up to \$5,000/trainee Up to \$50,000/cohort/year | Up to \$3,000/trainee, Up to \$30,000/cohort/year | Equivalent to trainee path (COMPASS or Bridges) |

Use of Assistance funds must be reported in **annual progress** and **financial reporting**, and it is **subject to review** by CIRM.

Budget Overview

Program Administration

| Bridges Path | COMPASS Path | Dual Path |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Program Administration | | |
| Up to \$180,000 per year | Up to \$200,000 per year | Up to \$215,000 per year |

No more than 50% of the Program Admin funds may be requested for salaries of Program Leadership Team and administrative personnel

EDUC8 Award Summary

| | EDUC8 |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Paths | COMPASS-type, Bridges-type, or dual path training programs |
| Recurrence | Annual for 2 cycles (2026, 2027) |
| Max Award Duration | 5 years |
| Applicant | California undergraduate/masters institutions |
| Leadership and Expertise | Program Director, Mentorship/Outreach Facilitators; Co-Director for dual path programs only |
| Max Budget (Total Cost) | Bridges Only: Up to \$4.58M; COMPASS Only: Up to \$3.23M Dual Path: Up to \$6.91M |

Contacts and Deadlines

Applications due by April 1, 2026, 2pm PST

Programmatic Questions
education@circm.ca.gov

Review Questions
review@circm.ca.gov

Budget and Grants Admin Questions
grantsmanagement@circm.ca.gov

Next: Walkthrough of application, review processes, & CIRM resources
See link in description after Feb 10, 2026



Education

www.cirm.ca.gov/educ8/

**Please reference documents
on our website for guidance**