

ICOC Agenda Item #8: Consideration of funding for approved CIRM Research Training Program II awards

In March 2009, the ICOC approved the funding of 15 applications for the CIRM Research Training Program II, but also decided to defer funding for 12 months. The decision to delay funding reflected concerns that the State's financial problems would delay CIRM's access to the funding authorized by Proposition 71. As announced at the May meeting of the ICOC, CIRM has been successful in acquiring additional funding through the sale of bonds, which allows CIRM to resume funding grant programs as it originally proposed.

The CIRM Research Training Program II represents the continuation of a very successful program that has fueled the growth of a stem cell community in California and facilitated the recruitment and retention of talented researchers. Maintaining continuity of funding is critical in preserving the benefit of these programs to California and critical to the mission of CIRM.

After three years, the CIRM Research Training Program has achieved various criteria of success, some that were perhaps not predicted. The program funded 16 institutions that supported about 279 CIRM Scholars at predoctoral, postdoctoral, and clinical trainee levels. CIRM Scholars conducted stem cell research in 219 distinct laboratories and produced 221 publications, many in high impact journals.

Upon completing training, individual CIRM Scholars have moved on to faculty positions at top universities, to scientific positions in biotechnology/pharmaceutical companies, or to further training at laboratories of leading stem cell scientists. Many physician CIRM Scholars are now also practicing medicine with a strong knowledge base of stem cell science. Outstanding examples of CIRM Scholar achievements include: research leading to the founding of a biotechnology company and the research leading to a Phase 1 clinical trial.

In addition to trainee success, the program has served as a focal point for stem cell research at each of the training institutions and produced an attractive stem cell research environment that has contributed to the recruitment of new faculty as well as top trainees. The research conducted by trainees has spanned the spectrum from basic to preclinical research and, importantly, has accelerated research through synergy with other CIRM funded projects.

The CIRM President, CSO and Science Officers have all had requests from the Program Directors and the Institution Stem Cell Program Leadership, to unanimously support the immediate funding of Training Program II. Indeed they have serious problems of support of many key research projects in the absence of the trainees.

We expect that by immediately resuming funding of the CIRM Research Training Program II we will build on the momentum of the first three years and preserve a necessary and critical foundation for stem cell research in California.

CIRM Management requests that the ICOC seriously consider the resumption of funding of approved applications for the CIRM Research Training Program II at the earliest possible date.

Agenda Item # 8  
6/17-18/09 ICOC Meeting

CIRM RESEARCH TRAINING PROGRAM II APPROVED APPLICATIONS							
Type	Program Director	Training Institution	Trainee Type			Total Trainees	Budget Requested
			Predoc	Postdoc	Clinical		
1	Longaker, Michael	Stanford University	6	5	5	16	\$3,930,000
1	Robey, Ellen A.	University of California, Berkeley	5	8	3	16	\$3,371,686
1	Meyers, Frederick J.	University of California, Davis	6	6	4	16	\$3,623,004
1	Donovan, Peter J.	University of California, Irvine	8	4	4	16	\$3,339,332
1	Witte, Owen N.	University of California, Los Angeles	5	6	5	16	\$3,930,000
1	Goldstein, Lawrence	University of California, San Diego	6	5	5	16	\$3,886,191
1	Fisher, Susan J.	University of California, San Francisco	6	6	4	16	\$3,899,912
2	Warburton, David	Children's Hospital of Los Angeles	0	7	3	10	\$2,518,227
2	Mueller, Ulrich	Scripps Research Institute	5	5	0	10	\$1,997,328
2	Mahley, Robert W	The J. David Gladstone Institutes	0	7	3	10	\$2,517,888
2	Hausler, David H	University of California, Santa Cruz	4	6	0	10	\$2,257,012
3	Barish, Michael E.	Beckman Research Institute of City of Hope	2	4	0	6	\$1,212,732
3	Mercola, Mark	Burnham Institute for Medical Research	0	6	0	6	\$1,390,599
3	Izpisua Belmonte, Juan	The Salk Institute for Biological Studies	0	6	0	6	\$1,507,613
3	Clegg, Dennis O.	University of California, Santa Barbara	3	3	0	6	\$1,202,913
TOTAL APPROVED:			56	84	36	176	\$40,584,437