

## EDUC 4: Funding Opportunity for "CIRM Scholar" Research Training Program Awards Guide for Program Directors

### Resources

- The RFA “Funding Opportunity for "CIRM Scholar" Research Training Program Awards:  
[https://www.cirm.ca.gov/sites/default/files/files/about\\_cirm/EDUC4\\_ResearchTraining\\_040121.pdf](https://www.cirm.ca.gov/sites/default/files/files/about_cirm/EDUC4_ResearchTraining_040121.pdf)
- CIRM Grants Administration Policy for Discovery, Translation, and Education Projects:  
[https://www.cirm.ca.gov/sites/default/files/files/funding\\_page/Grants\\_Administration\\_Policy\\_for\\_Discovery\\_Translation\\_and\\_Education\\_Projects.pdf](https://www.cirm.ca.gov/sites/default/files/files/funding_page/Grants_Administration_Policy_for_Discovery_Translation_and_Education_Projects.pdf)

### Award Administration

#### Funding

Each Award has a total project period of 5 years and supports comprehensive training for individuals in Predoctoral, Postdoctoral or Clinical Fellow programs. To reiterate from the Request for Applications, programs must follow these limitations on each budget category:

- Stipends  
Stipends levels are annual amounts based on the level of training:
  - i. Predoctoral – Up to \$36,000
  - ii. Postdoctoral - \$51,000 to \$74,000 depending on years of experience
  - iii. Clinical - \$74,000 to \$94,000 depending on years of experience.

Foreign trainees can be paid an equivalent salary rather than a stipend if that payment mechanism is required due to their status. However, awardees may not seek funds, or charge training grant Awards, for costs that normally would be associated with employee benefits (e.g., FICA, workman’s compensation, and unemployment insurance). Visa expenses are an unallowable cost on any CIRM award. All trainees are to be 100% devoted to their training activities and are not required to provide any other service as a condition of this payment. CIRM will only support the trainee health insurance that is provided to those in a similar capacity and up to the amounts provided by the award. All other fringe benefits expenses must be supported by other, non-CIRM funding sources.

A trainee may not be concurrently supported with another fellowship or similar Award that provides an overlapping Stipend or otherwise duplicates provisions of the training grant Award; however, CIRM trainees may accept supplemental funding from other sources to increase funds available to the individual trainee. CIRM encourages the Grantee to supplement trainee Stipends when necessary to meet institutional requirements and maintain equity among trainees, provided that the supplementation is without obligation to the trainee.

CIRM trainees must devote full-time to training activities, which, in addition to their research, may include relevant coursework, workshops, and scientific conferences. Clinical trainees should confine clinical duties to those that are an integral part of their training experience. Clinical trainees may not expend more than 25 percent of their appointment time on clinical duties that are unrelated to or independent of the CIRM training program.

- **Tuition and Fees**

For Predoctoral trainees, Tuition and Fees for 100% of the 1st \$4,500 and 60% of everything over \$4,500 up to \$16,000 for each trainee during the training period are allowable. NOTE: This differs from the tuition calculation specified in the CIRM Grants Administration Policy for Discovery, Translation, and Education Projects.

- **Research and Travel-related funds**

Research and Travel-related funds up to \$6,000 (or \$12,000 if postdoctoral or clinical level) for annual research supplies, travel, books. NOTE: Professional journal subscriptions are unallowable costs. Travel funds may not be expended to cover the costs of travel between the trainee's place of residence and the training institution or to the training institution for the purpose of recruitment.

- **Health Insurance**

If the postdoctoral or clinical trainee's health insurance is not otherwise covered by the Grantee institution, the Grantee may request up to 100 percent of basic health insurance costs for the trainee and immediate family (if applicable). Health insurance may include coverage for costs such as vision and/or dental care if consistent with organizational policy. Health insurance for predoctoral trainees is not covered by CIRM funding.

- **Program Administration**

Applicants may request up to \$69,000 per year to develop and administer the required training activities. Funds may be used for administrative support salaries, planning, and implementing activities focused on patient and healthcare engagement, community outreach, administrative support salaries, course operations and delivery, or seminars. Applicants may request up to \$17,250 for salary support for the Program Director. Other program administration costs should benefit all trainees in the cohort and not be used for individual trainee experiences. The cost of food and meals served at a seminar or meeting is not an allowable cost.

- **Overhead**

CIRM will fund 10% Indirect Costs on eligible costs (excludes tuition and fees) and will not fund any Facilities Costs.

## Program Director

A Program Director (PD) must be a full-time faculty member at the awardee institution and commit a minimum of 1% effort to the Program throughout the project period

## Trainee Slots

- Predoctoral graduate students: Trainees in this category should be supported for a minimum period of 3 years and a maximum of 5 years.
- Postdoctoral trainees: Trainees in this category should be supported for a minimum period of 2 years and a maximum of 3 years.
- Clinical trainees: Trainees in this category should be supported for a minimum period of 2 years and a maximum of 3 years.

Program Directors of CIRM training grants are encouraged to appoint trainees who are committed to a career in research, particularly stem cell or gene therapy research and related areas, and plan to remain in the CIRM training program for a minimum of 2 years. The CIRM training grant is not intended to provide opportunities to participate in short-term research assignments during the summer or other “off-quarter” periods. If the recommended minimum appointment period is impossible due to limited trainee funds or program length, the training period for any individual trainee should not be less than 12 consecutive months (clinical trainees may request prior approval for a shorter training period, but only with written justification). Programs may adjust the number and type of trainee slots as needed from year to year according to available funds, appointment durations and trainee candidates.

## Carryforward

Awardees will be responsible for tracking trainee and program administration carryforward funds separately.

- CIRM allows carry-forward of any obligated trainee funds from one grant year to the next.
- CIRM will allow carry-forward of unobligated program administration funds from one grant year to the next without prior approval to use those funds in a way that best serves the trainees.
- All unobligated trainee funds at the end of each year must be returned to CIRM and cannot be used to fund additional appointments unless specifically approved in advance by CIRM.

## No-cost Extensions

No-cost extensions (NCEs) are only permitted where an extension would facilitate the completion of a trainee’s normal training term. NCEs require specific approval by CIRM.

## Rebudgeting

Prior Approval may be needed to rebudget funds from one budget category to another. Please see page 43-44 of the [CIRM Grants Administration Policy for Discovery, Translation, and Education Projects](#) for more information. Generally speaking, rebudgeting into or within Trainee-related funds is allowable, while rebudgeting from Trainee-related funds to Program administration is unallowable. Rebudgeting cannot be used to exceed the per-trainee budget category maximums.

## Reporting Requirements

Grantees are required to submit Annual Progress and Financial Reports. Progress Reports will be due on the anniversary of each budget period and Financial Reports will be due 60 days after each budget period.

In addition, Trainee Appointment forms will be required at the beginning of each appointment period which will describe the planned laboratory placement, mentor, and research activities/project for each trainee prior to start of the training. Appointment forms should be submitted to CIRM within 30 days of the appointment start date. Completion forms will also be required and due within 60 days of the end of each appointment period which will describe progress made during the training period. CIRM will withhold subsequent payments until Appointment and Completion forms are submitted.

All reporting is done through our online Grants Management System (GMS). To access the reporting requirements, the PD or their delegate first logs into GMS at <https://grants.cirm.ca.gov>. In the “Action Items Needing Your Attention” section (found on both the home screen and the “Your Awards” screen), current or overdue reporting requirements are shown. The requirement can be accessed with the “edit” action to the right of the report listing.

To view more information about the award, including upcoming reporting requirements, Trainee Appointment forms, a link to the executed Notice of Award and contact information for the CIRM Science Officer and Grants Manager, use the “Your Awards” link near the top of the webpage and scroll down to the current award.

Submission of the Annual Progress Reports and Prior Approval Requests require a secondary submission by the Authorized Organizational Official (AOO) assigned to the award. An email is automatically generated to the AOO after submission by the PD. Financial reports are submitted solely by the Financial Authorized Organizational Official (FAOO) assigned to the award. More information on the AOO and FAOO roles can be found at <https://www.cirm.ca.gov/researchers/managing-your-grant#Guides>. Appointment forms are completed solely by the PD. Once a full cohort is appointed, the submitted appointment forms are locked. Please contact CIRM if any corrections or additions need to be made.

To submit a Prior Approval Request (PAR), the PD or their delegate logs into CIRM’s Grants Management System (<https://grants.cirm.ca.gov>), navigates to “Your Awards”, and then starts a Prior Approval Request under the unscheduled reports section of the appropriate grant listing. After completing the PAR according to the instructions and submitting, the AOO will be asked to provide a secondary submission for institutional concurrence. If approved, an amendment to the Notice of Award will be generated and sent for execution via DocuSign.

## Other Reports

Grantees are also required to report to CIRM publications, inventions, patent applications, licensing and invention utilization activities that result from CIRM-funded Activities. Specific

reporting requirements may be found in regulations adopted by the ICOC governing intellectual property.

### Policy for Trainee Mentorship under the Research Training Program

Trainees appointed under a CIRM Training Program must be supervised by a faculty mentor or faculty level scientist who is accountable for the conduct of the research and operations of the laboratory or facility where the trainee research is performed. To ensure appropriate supervision and commitment to each trainee, a mentor may not be appointed to supervise more than two concurrent trainees from any CIRM training program at any one time. Prior to making a trainee appointment, PDs should consider the availability of the mentor to supervise a new trainee, including any possible overlaps with existing trainees that might result in exceeding this mentorship limit. The goal is to have greater engagement by mentors with each trainee and encourage a broader participation of mentors in the Research Training program.