



CALIFORNIA'S  
STEM CELL  
AGENCY

**For immediate release:**

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# Stem Cell Agency Board Approves Almost \$30 Million to Overcome Research Barriers

**January 29, 2015**

**San Francisco, CA** – It's an old maxim that to get a job done right you need the right tools, that's why CIRM, California's stem cell agency, today approved \$29.75 million in funding for new approaches to overcome obstacles and advance stem cell research.

The Tools and Technologies Awards are intended to create and test novel tools and technologies, to improve existing ones, and to help resolve problems that are holding back the field.

Altogether 20 projects were approved for funding including:

- Work at the Scripps Research Institute on a new method for detecting DNA damage in stem cells to ensure that only the highest quality cells are used in transplantation or therapy
- Researchers at the University of Southern California are creating a device that acts as a form of dialysis for the liver, removing toxins from the bloodstream and enabling the liver to regenerate, sparing the patient from the need for a transplant.
- Researchers at the University of California, San Francisco hope to develop a method of expanding the number of stem cells that can be obtained from umbilical cord blood, making life-saving bone marrow transplants more readily available to thousands of people who currently lack a matched donor.

- Stanford researchers are developing an injectable “scaffold” that will increase the ability of stem cells transplanted into the body to survive, grow and create new, healthy tissue.

“Sometimes even the most promising therapy can be derailed by a tiny problem,” says Jonathan Thomas, J.D., Ph.D., Chair of the CIRM Board. “These awards are designed to help find ways to overcome those problems, to bridge the gaps in our knowledge and ensure that the best research is able to keep progressing and move out of the lab and into clinical trials in patients.”

Two of the Tools and Technology Awards involve co-funding partnerships between US and overseas institutions, pairing Germany’s Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) with the Scripps Research Institute in San Diego, and the University of Southern California.

### **About CIRM**

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At CIRM, we never forget that we were created by the people of California to accelerate stem cell treatments to patients with unmet medical needs, and act with a sense of urgency to succeed in that mission.

To meet this challenge, our team of highly trained and experienced professionals actively partners with both academia and industry in a hands-on, entrepreneurial environment to fast track the development of today’s most promising stem cell technologies.

With \$3 billion in funding and approximately 300 active stem cell programs in our portfolio, CIRM is the world’s largest institution dedicated to helping people by bringing the future of cellular medicine closer to reality.