

Memorandum

To: Members of the ICOC
From: Kelly Shepard, Director of Discovery and Education
Re: Proposed Supplement to Support Continuity of Bridges Program
Date: December 12, 2024

On September 26th of 2024, CIRM's Governing Board approved key recommendations from CIRM's Strategic Allocation Framework (SAF), a structured and data-driven effort to prioritize resources and maximize the impact of CIRM's funding. One recommendation was to bolster CIRM's workforce development programs, in part by revising and updating CIRM's longstanding Bridges Program (EDUC2) to address gaps and meet evolving demands in regenerative medicine, specifically by diversifying internship possibilities and increasing integration with CIRM's R&D programs. Such updates require a concept revision and concomitant Request for Applications (RFA) to enable teams to compete for new funding.

CIRM currently supports 15 active Bridges Internship programs that were initially launched in 2009-2010 and have successfully competed for additional tranches of funding through updated RFAs, most recently in 2021. Half of these programs are already in their penultimate year of grant support and would need an infusion of funds by Q3 2025 to maintain necessary infrastructure and continuity for recruiting and preparing a new cohort of trainees, activities that typically take place 6 to 18 months ahead of trainee appointment to a grant-sponsored internship.

To incorporate SAF recommendations, CIRM intends to bring a revised Bridges concept for Board consideration by Q2 of 2025, which would provide an opportunity for the current Bridges programs to compete for new funding that could begin by Q3 of 2026. This timeline gives prospective applicants an ample window to modify or assemble high quality applications that meaningfully address SAF recommendations and importantly, will not disadvantage new applicants that do not currently have Bridges programs to build from. However, as noted above, this timeline presents a challenge to existing programs who would experience a gap in funding as they transition from their current award to a new one.

To address these challenges and optimize the outcomes of a new RFA, we are requesting a supplement to support a 12-month grant extension (Year 6) for current Bridges programs that are in good standing, enabling them to maintain their existing training infrastructure and avoid a loss of continuity during the temporal gap between their current and future awards. This request follows established precedents from 2014 and 2021 where transition supplements were authorized by the ICOC to enable Bridges programs to maintain continuity over an unavoidable gap in funding.

Proposed Timeline for Next Steps

- New EDUC2 Concept for Board Approval (Q2 2025)
- New Applications Accepted for EDUC2 programs (Q1-Q2 2026)
- Earliest Funding of new EDUC2 programs (Aug/Sept 2026)

Requested Action: CIRM requests a total allocation of \$10.03 M to support up to 15 supplements to extend Bridges programs by 12 months.

- The maximum amount for each supplement will be the same as a one-year budget period for the current award, which ranges from \$532K to \$721K across the different programs (see chart below).
- The supplement is conditioned on good standing, i.e., the demonstration of successful training outcomes, continuation of productive relationships with internship host institutions, and continued efforts to incorporate meaningful DEI improvements into operations.
- The CIRM Team will follow an internal process for reviewing and implementing supplements following historic precedent. Grantees will provide a detailed budget that adequately justifies their supplement request.

Grant	Institution	12 Month Budget
EDUC2-12607	Pasadena City College	\$610,201.60
EDUC2-12611	CSU San Marcos	\$721,300.00
EDUC2-12617	San Diego State	\$706,143.40
EDUC2-12620	Cal Poly Humboldt	\$707,830.40
EDUC2-12638	CSU Long Beach	\$651,549.80
EDUC2-12677	San Jose State	\$721,300.00
EDUC2-12691	CSU Sacramento	\$589,300.00
EDUC2-12693	San Francisco State	\$721,300.00
EDUC2-12695	CSU Channel Islands	\$711,738.40
EDUC2-12718	CSU Northridge	\$721,300.00
EDUC2-12720	CSU San Bernadino	\$721,300.00
EDUC2-12726	Cal Poly SLO	\$655,300.00
EDUC2-12730	City College SF	\$532,962.40
EDUC2-12734	CSU Fullerton	\$706,174.60
EDUC2-12738	Berkeley City College	\$551,384.40