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Seventeen projects have been approved for funding for a total of \$6.7 million over two years. The Tri-Institutional Stem Cell Initiative specifically sought grant applications for support of highly collaborative new research projects in the stem cell arena, and all of the projects involve collaborations among research scientists from at least two of the three institutions. They will explore the basic biology or therapeutic potential of stem cells derived from humans or model organisms.

The goal of the Tri-Institutional Stem Cell Initiative is to support stem cell research broadly, including studies of human embryonic stem cells (both those registered by the federal government and those that are not) as well as adult, fetal, and cancer stem cells, as well as stem cells from experimental animals.

Earlier this year, the Initiative awarded funds to each of the three institutions for development and expansion of core research facilities to derive, maintain, and characterize human embryonic stem cells.

“We are very pleased with the breadth and quality of these projects,” said Kathleen Pickering, Executive Director, Tri-Institutional Stem Cell Initiative. “The collaborative nature of these grants provides new opportunities for faculty to work together across the three institutions on diverse stem cell projects, ranging

from basic research to those that lay the groundwork for therapeutic approaches,” she said.

The review and selection process for the projects included researchers from each of the Tri-Institutional partners, four external reviewers with background and expertise in various aspects of stem cell sciences, and the Executive Committee of the Tri-Institutional Stem Cell Initiative.

In accordance with the Guidelines for Stem Cell Research issued by the National Academy of Sciences, a number of the projects selected for funding under the Tri-Institutional Stem Cell Initiative will be reviewed by an Embryonic Stem Cell Research Oversight Committee (ESCRO) because they entail use of human embryonic stem cells.

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