

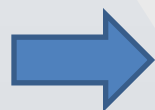
Graduate Professional Development: Lessons Learned from the BEST Programs

Trish Labosky, PhD
**Office of Strategic
Coordination**

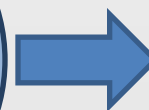
**Council of Graduate
Schools**
July 14, 2015

Broadening Experiences in Scientific Training (BEST)

Challenge: the academic career choice is becoming less attractive and/or less feasible for many PhDs

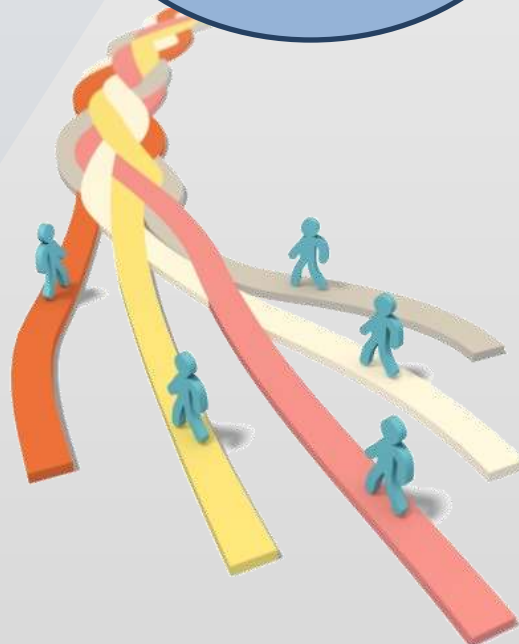


Opportunity: “Strengthening the Biomedical Research Workforce”



BEST awards

Goal: develop innovative approaches complementing traditional research training in biomedical sciences



What makes the BEST awards Common Fund'able?

NIH Common Fund - a dedicated source of funding to enable **goal-driven trans-NIH research**

■ **Transformative Workforce Development**

■ **New Tools, Technologies, Data, Approaches**

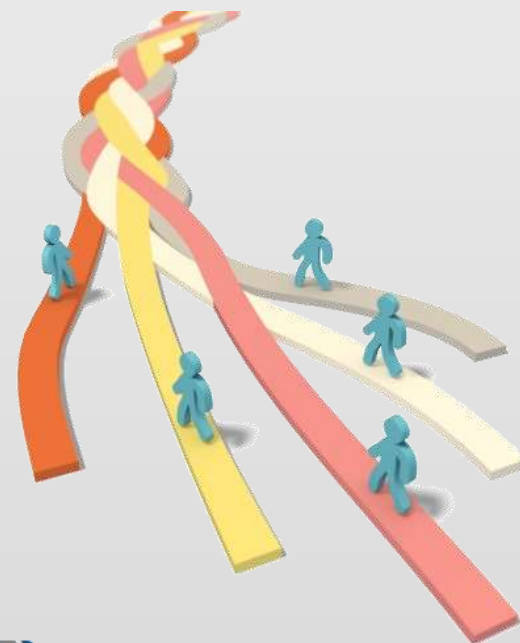
- Trying to affect a “sea change” with this program.
- Alter the training landscape to give pre-doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows direct exposure to a myriad of career options.
- Provide trainees with a working knowledge of the opportunities available to them AND the information to facilitate their path towards these options.
- Determine which approaches work and for whom
- Make tested approaches widely available.

■ **Enabling Infrastructure**

We hope to enable institutions to build infrastructure, novel courses, internships, training opportunities, etc.

“Strengthening the Biomedical Research Workforce” Program Launched 2013

- These DP7 awards are **research** awards, not training grants
- **5 years, non renewable**
- Do not support trainee stipends
- Must propose to establish and evaluate **novel training programs with the potential to transform** their training environment
- Must work with the NIH on a **Cross-site evaluation**
- Must **disseminate** the programs as they are developed
- Awardees **work together** as a consortium



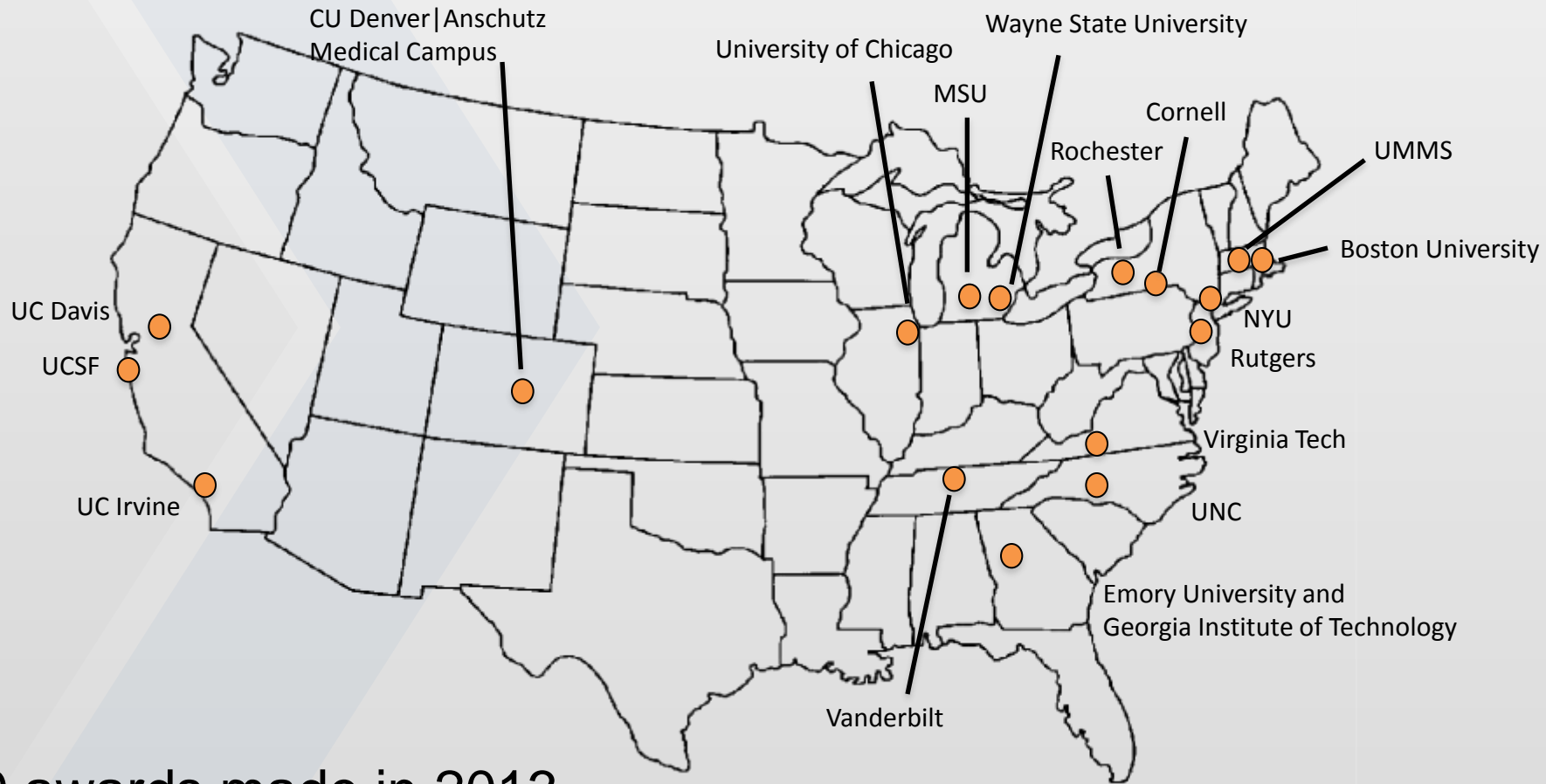
NIH Cross Site Evaluation

NIH Desired Impacts

Desired Impacts	Concepts to Measure	Source of Data
1. Enhance student's & postdoctoral scientist's agency to make career decisions.	a. Understanding of career opportunities	Graduate Students' Survey Post-doctoral Scientists' Survey Data Form
	b. Confidence to make career decisions	
	c. Attitudes towards career opportunities	
2. Reduced time to desired, non-training, non-terminal career opportunities and reduced time in postdoctoral positions.	a. Time to desired career	Post-exit Surveys Data Form
	b. Time in postdoctoral positions	
3. Creation/further development of institutional infrastructure to continue BEST-like activities.	a. Actions which will lead to sustainability of BEST programs	PI Phone Interviews
	b. Extension of BEST activities within and across multiple graduate programs	

17 Institutions awarded NIH BEST Grants

BEST: Broadening Experiences in Scientific Training.



10 awards made in 2013

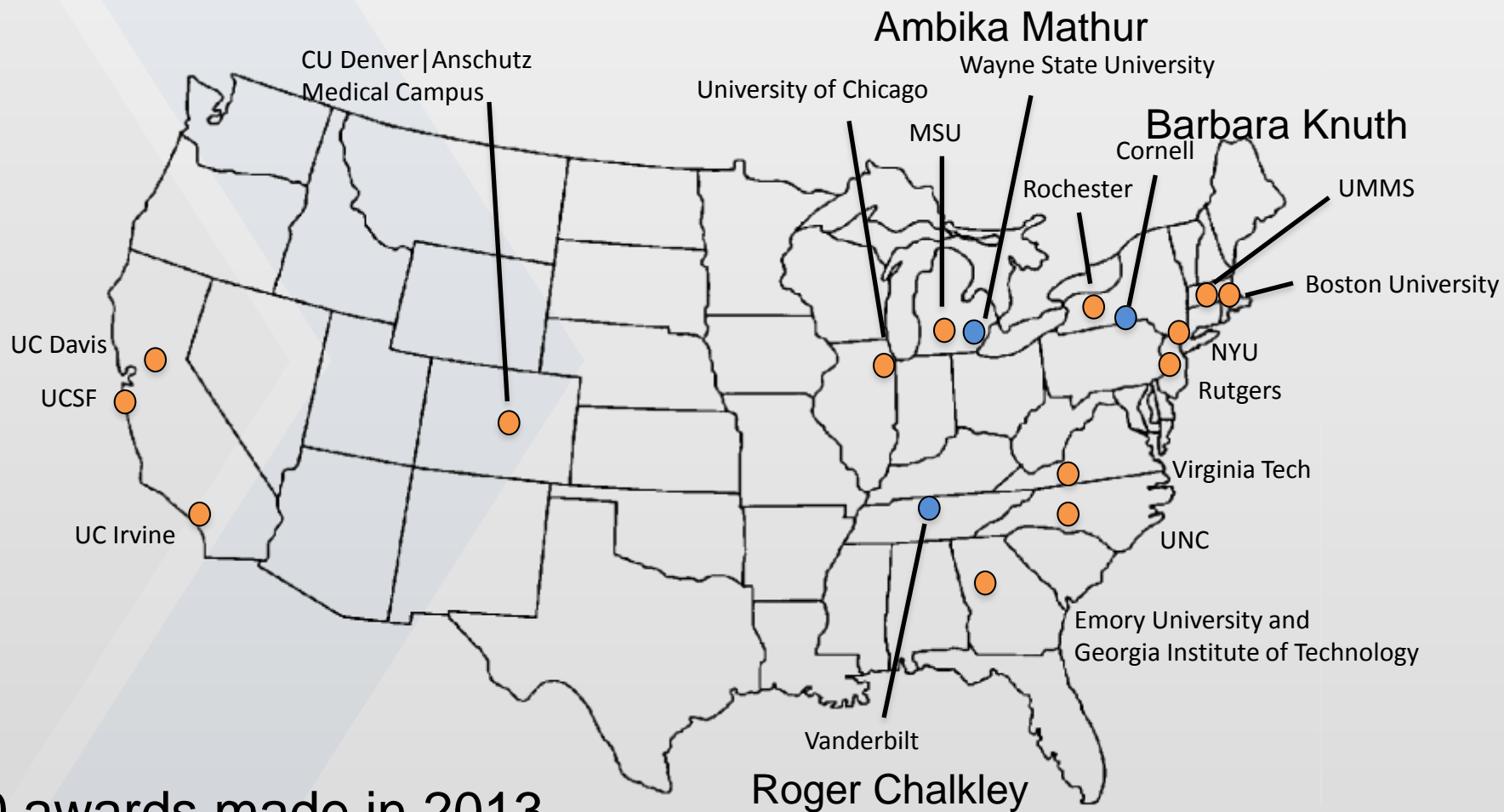
7 more in 2014

Underlying Philosophies from the Awardees

- Multiple research and research-related careers are available to early career scientists, and **should be treated as equal and legitimate** in contributing to the biomedical workforce.
- Teach a **strategic, skilled approach to career planning** to enable informed decision-making.
- **Complement and support individual mentoring and training already provided by faculty.**
- Training should take place **simultaneously with and concurrent to trainees' research in a manner that is intended to benefit trainees' research as well as their career development.**
- Encourage active, time-efficient career development, while **maintaining high standards for research and not increasing time to degree.**
- Empower trainees in their own career development to **reduce stress, which could then lead to increased productivity.**

17 Institutions awarded NIH BEST Grants

BEST: Broadening Experiences in Scientific Training.



10 awards made in 2013

7 more in 2014