University of Florida's TL1 training program implemented a "CTS Team" training model in which pairs of PhD and/or dual degree students embed authentic cross-disciplinary collaborative research experiences into their PhD dissertation research projects. UF TL1 teams are composed of two PhD and/or dual degree (e.g., MD-PhD) students who are pursuing their PhD studies in different disciplines, in different colleges, and with different mentors. Prospective CTS Teams propose cross-disciplinary collaborative research projects that are included into their individual dissertation research as "team specific aims". This is a novel training approach in clinical and translational science (CTS) that combines didactic and experiential training in team science and cross-disciplinary mentoring. To promote interdisciplinary engagement with the program, we facilitate hands-on strategic team science sessions for students interested in submitting applications. Thirty-one different faculty members served as co-mentors for 16 CTS Teams from 2016 to 2020, as two faculty members have mentored two CTS Team members since 2016 and one team member had two mentors participating in the CTS Team.

An additional feature of the UF CTSI TL1 training program is a focus on network development among trainees and among mentors. In late 2020, we conducted a study of co-mentor collaborative relationships. Seventy-one percent of the CTS Team co-mentors had not previously collaborated.
Furthermore, of the mentors we surveyed, 74% percent of the respondents planned to continue collaborating with their CTS Team co-mentor beyond the two-year TL1 funding period for their TL1 trainees, including submission of at least one new NIH grant proposal. Most (85%) used or planned to use collaboration tools such as those used by TL1 trainees presented in the Team Science course, e.g., written collaboration plans, authorship agreements. For more information about the UF CTS Team training model, please see: McCormack WT, Levites Strekalova YA. 2021. CTS Teams: A New Model for Translational Team Training and Team Science Intervention. Journal of Clinical & Translational Science https://doi.org/10.1017/cts.2021.854.

Whereas CTS training is the primary focus of TL1 training programs, they may have broader ripple effects expanding social and semantic networks of participating mentors and lead to tangible research outputs such as joint research protocols, publications, and grants. This approach is well suited for other graduate education programs designed to train future researchers who will need to use inter-professional and cross-disciplinary team approaches to solve increasingly complex health and societal problems. Given the value of the insights we gain from the information about trainee and mentor professional networks, we have incorporated social network analysis as part of our recruitment and evaluation protocols.