The McKnight Endowment Fund for Neuroscience

About the Endowment Fund

The McKnight Endowment Fund for Neuroscience supports innovative research designed to bring science closer to the day when diseases of the brain and behavior can be accurately diagnosed, prevented, and treated. The Endowment Fund fulfills its mission by supporting research in neuroscience through three competitive annual awards.

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About the Awards

Memory and Cognitive Disorders Awards. For scientists pursuing innovative efforts to solve the problems of neurological and psychiatric diseases, especially those related to memory and cognition.

Scholar Awards. For scientists in the early stages of setting up their independent laboratories to focus on disorders of learning and memory.

Technological Innovations in Neuroscience Awards. For scientists developing new technologies or using technology in new ways to expand neuroscience research.

The McKnight Endowment Fund for Neuroscience is an independent charitable organization established by The McKnight Foundation to carry out the intention of its founder, William L. McKnight (1887-1979). Mr. McKnight, who led the 3M company for three decades, had a personal interest in memory and its diseases and set aside part of his legacy to bring hope to those suffering from brain injury or disease and cognitive impairment.

The Endowment Fund fulfills this mission by supporting innovative research in neuroscience through three competitive annual awards. The awards complement each other to support both young and established neuroscientists and to encourage interdisciplinary collaboration. Each in a different way, the three programs seek out investigators whose research shows promise in bringing society closer to preventions, treatments, and cures for many devastating diseases.

Research supported by the Endowment Fund has furthered understanding of Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, spinal cord injuries, and many other cognitive impairments.

The Endowment Fund is led by a board of eminent neuroscientists, with administrative support from The McKnight Foundation. Each award has its own selection committee, also made up of prominent scientists. The commitee recommends awardees, and the board makes the final decision.

Scholar Awards

The McKnight Scholar Awards encourage neuroscientists in the early stages of their careers to focus on disorders of learning and memory. These awards support young scientists who hold the M.D. and/or Ph.D. degree, who have completed formal postdoctoral training, and who demonstrate a commitment to neuroscience. The Endowment Fund especially seeks applicants working on problems that, if solved at the basic level, would have immediate and significant impact on clinically relevant issues.

The Scholar Awards have been given annually since 1977. Each year up to six Scholars are selected to receive three years' support at $75,000 per year. Funds may be used in any way that will facilitate development of the Scholar's research program, but not for indirect costs. Scholars must be U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents and must be working at not-for-profit institutions within the United States. Employees of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute or scientists within the intramural program of the National Institutes of Health are not eligible.

Application materials are available in September each year, and completed applications must arrive no later than the first working day in January of the following year. Awards are announced in May and begin on July 1.

Technological Innovations in Neuroscience Awards

These awards support scientists working on new and unusual approaches to understanding brain function. The program seeks to advance and enlarge the range of technologies available to the neurosciences and does not support research based primarily on existing techniques. The Fund is especially interested in how technology may be used or adapted to monitor, manipulate, analyze, or model brain function at any level, from the molecular to the entire organism. For descriptions of previous awards, see www.mcknight.org/neuroscience.

For More Information

Please visit our website at www.mcknight.org/neuroscience for detailed information about past award recipients, selection committee members, publications, and other news related to the McKnight Endowment Fund for Neuroscience.

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Contact

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The first step is to submit a two-page letter of intent describing the project and how the technology involved will enrich the neurosciences and become accessible to other research in the field. Investigators must be working at not-for-profit institutions within the United States and hold tenured positions at their sponsoring institution. Collaborative and cross-disciplinary applications are invited.

The selection committee will invite a few applicants to send detailed proposals, from which up to four awards will be made. Each award provides $100,000 annually for two years. Letters of intent are due in early December. Awards are announced in late June and begin on August 1.

Neuroscience of Brain Disorders Awards

These awards support neuroscientists who are working to apply recent discoveries about the brain and nervous system to solving the problems of neurological and psychiatric diseases. They are designed to stimulate innovative approaches that might lead to therapies and cures. Collaborative projects between basic and clinical neuroscientists are welcomed, as are proposals that help link basic with clinical neuroscience. For descriptions of previous awards, see www.mcknight.org/neuroscience.

The first step is to submit a two-page letter of intent describing the project and how the basic research will be applied to improving the understanding of a brain disorder or disease. The letter should clearly describe how the proposed research will uncover mechanisms of brain injury or disease and how it will translate to diagnosis, prevention, treatment, or cure.

Funds may be used toward a variety of research activities but not the recipient's salary. Investigators must be working at not-for-profit institutions within the United States. Employees of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute or scientists within the intramural program of the National Institutes of Health are not eligible.

The selection committee will invite a few applicants to submit complete proposals, from which up to six awards will be selected. Each award provides $100,000 annually for three years. Letters of intent are due in April. Awards are announced in December and begin February 1.

Questions?

Please visit www.mcknight.org or call us at 612-333-4220.