UF Evelyn F. & William L. McKnight Brain Institute
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS:
McKnight Brain Institute Accelerator Program

Timeline

Submission Site Opens: Oct. 1, 2024
Application Deadline: Nov. 1, 2024
Anticipated Notice of Awards: Dec. 20, 2024
Award Funding Period (up to 1 year): Jan. 31, 2025 – Jan. 30, 2026

Purpose and Areas of Interest

The McKnight Brain Institute (MBI) is pleased to announce its new annual Accelerator Program, offering seed funding to support **novel and impactful research projects** that align with our mission to **enhance lives through neuroscience and neuromedicine research**. Specifically, we seek innovative proposals with strong potential for scientific impact and future extramural funding. We also welcome submissions aimed at addressing reviewer comments from previously unfunded applications (e.g., R01) that require additional experiments for resubmission. Proposals that foster collaborative research across laboratories, departments, and colleges are highly encouraged.

Total Available Funding and Award Amounts

The MBI will fund **up to 6** meritorious applications. Awards may vary in size **up to $50,000 each** with a maximum 1-year duration.

Eligibility

Proposals must meet the following criteria:

- PI is a UF faculty member eligible to submit an R01-equivalent external application to a major government granting agency (e.g., NIH, NSF).
- PI is a member of the MBI. Click here to become a member.
- Proposal aligns with the MBI's mission.

Review Process and Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated by a **Scientific Review Committee** composed of faculty members with diverse expertise from across the MBI community. The primary criteria for evaluation will be the quality of the scientific idea and the potential for the award to catalyze impactful new research. Applications will be assessed using standard NIH criteria, emphasizing the investigator, significance, innovation, and approach. Successful proposals should demonstrate strong potential for securing long-term extramural funding. ***Note:*** *Awardees should be prepared to submit an extramural application within 18 months of funding.*

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Budgeting and Spending Requirements

- Funds may only be used for direct costs.
- Unallowable costs include PI salary, travel, alcohol, and food (unless clearly research related).

Application Instructions

All applications must be submitted as a **single PDF** by 11:59 p.m. on **Nov. 1, 2024** at bit.ly/MBI-Accelerate. Applications should follow **NIH formatting guidelines** (Arial 11-point font, single-spaced, with 0.5-inch margins) and include the following:

- **Cover Page:** Include name, rank, and department of the PI and MPI (if applicable), PI contact information, project title, and total amount requested.
- **Research Plan (2 pages total):**
  - ***Specific Aims:*** Provide a clear and concise summary of the scientific objectives of the proposed research project.
  - ***Approach:*** Provide a brief overview of the scientific approach and expected outcomes. Preliminary data may be included.
  - ***Significance and Future Directions:*** Indicate the significance of the research question and how the proposed work will contribute to impactful outcomes. Provide a clear plan for the pursuit of extramural funding.
  - ***References Cited*** (not included in page limit)
  - ***Summary Statement:*** If applicable, include for previously submitted extramural funding application (not included in page limit).
  - ***Optional Additional Materials:*** These may include letters of support and information regarding match-funding (not included in page limit).
- **Budget Justification (1 page):** Provide a detailed explanation of how the requested funds (up to $50,000) will be used and the expected impact on the research project.
- **NIH Biosketch:** Include standard NIH biosketches (up to 5 pages each) for the PI, MPI, and co-investigators.

Contact for Questions

For any inquiries, please reach out to:

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