



## **Brain Research Foundation Scientific Innovations Award**

Brain Research Foundation is inviting eligible **US academic institutions to nominate one senior faculty member (Associate and Full Professor)** to submit a Letter of Intent for the Scientific Innovations Award (SIA). Brain Research Foundation's Scientific Innovations Award Program provides funding for innovative science in both basic and clinical neuroscience. This funding mechanism is designed to support creative, exploratory, cutting edge research in well-established research laboratories, under the direction of established investigators.

Brain Research Foundation's Scientific Review Committee will review the SIA proposals and make recommendations for funding to the Foundation. The Committee consists of senior scientists broadly representing the various neuroscience-related programs. A representative of Brain Research Foundation is also present when the Committee meets.

### **Objectives:**

The objective of the SIA is to support projects that may be too innovative and speculative for traditional funding sources but still have a high likelihood of producing important findings. It is expected that investigations supported by these grants will yield high impact findings and result in major grant applications and significant publications in high impact journals.

### **Funding and Award Period:**

Each total award is limited to \$150,000 (direct costs) for a two year grant period. Exact dates will be provided by the BRF upon application approval. The first grant payment of \$75,000 will be made upon completion of the SIA Acceptance Form. The final payment of \$75,000 will be made contingent upon receipt of a Preliminary Progress and Financial Report. **Funds must be utilized within the grant period.**

**Final financial and progress reports**, including a lay summary, will be required **within 60 days of the end date of the grant period.**

### **Funding Preferences:**

- Funding is to be directed at projects that may be too innovative and speculative for traditional funding sources but still have a high likelihood of producing important findings. This should be a unique project for senior investigators who are encouraged to stretch their imagination into areas that can substantially change an area of research.
- Funding of research projects that will likely lead to successful grant applications with NIH and other public and private funding entities.



**Allowable costs under this award:**

100% of these SIA funds must be utilized for direct costs.

**These costs may include:**

- Purchase and care of laboratory animals
- Small pieces of laboratory equipment, totaling \$5,000 or less
- Laboratory supplies
- Salary for scientific (including postdoctoral fellows) and technical staff (including laboratory technicians)

**Costs not permitted:**

- Facilities and administrative costs
- Salary recovery for the PI
- Domestic and foreign travel
- Conference or seminar fees
- Personal computers, computer hardware or software
- Large laboratory equipment (anything over \$5,000)
- Tuition reimbursement
- Graduate student stipends or salaries
- Publication costs
- Indirect costs including the related costs of using the university's facilities and administrative support, and fees associated with equipment, etc.
- Charges or other costs that support the infrastructure an institution provides researchers
- No fringe benefits including insurance, retirement plans, paid time off, additional compensation, etc.

Publications resulting in projects funded in whole or part by **Brain Research Foundation** SIA will acknowledge **Brain Research Foundation** as a funding source.

## **I. Guidelines**

### **Eligibility**

The nominated candidate must be a **full-time associate professor or full professor at a US academic institution that was invited directly by BRF via email**, working in the area of studies of brain function in health and disease. **Current major NIH or other peer-reviewed funding is preferred but evidence of such funding in the past three years is essential.** Studies should be related to either normal human brain development or specifically identified disease states. This includes molecular and clinical neuroscience as well as studies of neural, sensory, motor, cognitive, behavioral and emotional functioning in health and disease. The grant proposal must detail a new research project that is not funded by other sources. This grant is **not** to be used as bridge funding.

Investigators at institutions that are affiliated with a medical school or university are eligible to apply **only through the institution where they hold a full-time faculty position.**

Scientists that have previously received a BRF Scientific Innovations Award **may not receive the award for a second time until five years** has elapsed since the beginning date of the prior award. Grant requirements from all previous awards must be met. Only one PI may apply per application. *(Applicant may include the name of a Co-PI within or from another institution, but no additional supporting materials for the Co-PI are required, including biosketch, current grants, abstracts, etc.)*



### **Ineligibility**

- 1.) PI is ineligible if they are **not a full-time faculty member at the institution in which they are applying under.**
- 2.) PI is ineligible if they are an **assistant professor** or **professor emeritus.**
- 3.) PI is ineligible if they are a **research associate professor.**
- 4.) **PI is ineligible to submit more than one BRF SIA proposal in a funding period.**
- 5.) PI is ineligible if they have BRF funding that will **overlap this grant period.**
- 6.) PI is ineligible if they have been awarded prior BRF funding, but have **failed to submit scientific and financial reports** at the end of their grant period.
- 7.) PI is ineligible if they are a **member of the BRF Scientific Review Committee.**
- 8.) PI is ineligible if they are a **relative of BRF a representative**, including the SRC, as defined by the Foundation.

### **Nondiscrimination statement**

Brain Research Foundation does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, color, ethnic origin and age.

## **II. The grant application process will be conducted in two phases:**

### **PHASE I: Letter of Intent (LOI)**

The first step in applying for a BRF SIA is to submit a Letter of Intent. The purpose of the LOI is to determine worthy projects that will be asked to submit a complete SIA application for further review. The LOI and invited application must be submitted by a single investigator.

**LOI submission must include an institutional signature to verify nomination.** LOI's submitted without an institutional signature will not be accepted.

- BRF LOI online form, including the following information:
  - Name and academic title of PI
  - Contact information, including mailing address, telephone number, fax number, and email address
  - Title of program project
  - Brief summary of program project
    - Include closing paragraph that explains how this research will develop (next steps)
  - References may be included on an additional page(s)
  - PI Signature
  - Institutional representative signature (verifies nomination by institution)
  - List of current grants (include abstracts, specific aims, and indicate if there is any overlap)
- NIH Style Biographical sketch - the old format or the SciENCv is acceptable.



**Deadline for the LOI is Tuesday, June 2, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. CT. LOI's will not be accepted after the deadline. No exceptions will be made. Submitted LOI's that have not been nominated by their institution will not be considered. You will be notified via email in mid-August to with the decision on your LOI.**

### **PHASE II: Application**

If the LOI receives a favorable review, the PI will be invited to submit a grant application. The application **deadline is Tuesday, September 22, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. CT. Applications will not be accepted after the deadline. No exceptions will be made. You will be notified via email in early December with the decision on your application.**

#### **Application submission includes:**

- BRF application form, including the following information:
  - Name and academic title of PI
  - Contact information, including mailing address, telephone number, and email address
  - Title of program project
  - PI Signature
- Research Plan (3500 word maximum)
  - Include closing paragraph that explains how this research will develop (next steps)
  - References may be included on an additional page(s)
- Biographical sketch (using current NIH format)

### **III. Review Procedures**

LOI submissions are reviewed and rated by BRF Scientific Review Committee. So there is not a conflict of interest, the proposals will not be reviewed by committee members from the same institution as the applicant. (Note: Review procedures and guidelines will be followed according to NIH Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality and Non Disclosure Rules.) If the LOI receives a favorable review, the PI will be invited to submit a grant application.

Grant applications are subject to a two-stage peer-review process. In the first stage, proposals are reviewed and rated by BRF Scientific Review Committee. The second stage includes further review and discussion of the scores and comments resulting from the initial review process. This process is also carried out by the BRF Scientific Review Committee.

**In order to keep administrative costs of review minimal for the Foundation, no feedback can be provided to applicants.**

### **IV. Animal and Human Subject Assurances**

Brain Research Foundation requires animal welfare and human subject certifications that apply to the specific project. The certifications are not required for the LOI or application (if you are invited to submit) but are required if you are an SIA recipient.

### **V. Contact Information**

For additional information, you may contact the BRF at [info@theBRF.org](mailto:info@theBRF.org).