Brain Research Foundation Fay/Frank Seed Grant Program

Brain Research Foundation has invited eligible US institutions to nominate one (1) faculty member to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) for the Fay/Frank Seed Grant Program.

Brain Research Foundation’s Annual Seed Grant Program was initiated in 1981. The purpose of our program is to provide start-up monies for new research projects in the field of neuroscience that will likely lead to extramural funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) or other outside funding sources.

Brain Research Foundation’s Scientific Review Committee will review the seed grant proposals and make recommendations for funding to the Foundation. The Committee consists of senior scientists broadly representing the various neuroscience-related programs. Two or more representatives of the Brain Research Foundation are also present when the Committee meets.

Objectives:
The objective of the BRF Seed Grant Program is to support new and innovative projects, especially those of junior faculty, who are working in new research directions. BRF Seed Grant awards are not intended to supplement existing grants.

Funding and award period: Based on the quality of applications, the Brain Research Foundation anticipates the Seed Grant Program will fund a total of $800,000 in grants. Each total award is limited to $80,000 (direct costs) for a two year grant period. The first grant payment of $40,000 will be made upon completion of the Seed Grant Acceptance Form (June 2016). The final payment of $40,000 will be made contingent upon receipt of a Preliminary Progress and Financial Report (June 2017).

Funds must be utilized within the grant period. Final financial and progress reports, including a lay summary, will be required within 30 days from the end date of the grant period.

Funding Preferences:

1.) Funding is to be directed at pilot research projects that are both innovative and will likely lead to successful grant applications to NIH and other public and private funding entities.

2.) Assistant Professor – Junior faculty with a new research project that will generate pilot data that will lead to RO1 funding or a comparable outside grant will be first priority.

3.) Associate Professor – Faculty who are pursuing new research directions. Must explain how the project is a new research direction. Must provide abstract for current grant(s). (Note: A new technique is not considered a new direction unless it pertains to a different area of study.)

4.) Seed Grants are NOT to be used for bridge funding between grants.
Allowable costs under this award:
100% of these Seed Grant 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
- Tuition reimbursement
- Indirect costs, including university fees associated with salary, equipment, etc.

Publications resulting in projects funded in whole or part by the BRF Seed Grant will acknowledge the Brain Research Foundation as a funding source.

I. Guidelines

Eligibility
To be eligible, PI must be a full-time Assistant or Associate Professor at an invited institution, working in the area of studies of brain function. 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.

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 a Full Professor.
3.) PI is ineligible to submit more than one BRF Seed Grant proposal in a funding period.
4.) PI is ineligible if they have BRF funding that will overlap this grant period.
5.) 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.
6.) PI is ineligible if they are a member of the BRF Scientific Review Committee.
7.) 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. Application Procedures
Applications must be submitted electronically via the BRF grants website (http://research.theBRF.org) as a single, combined electronic document (PDF) using the BRF LOI and Application forms (provided on the website upon registration). Documents may be combined into a single document using Adobe Acrobat. A version of this program is downloadable on the BRF website.

The application process will be conducted in two phases:

PHASE I: Letter of Intent (LOI)
The first step in applying for a BRF Seed Grant 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 Seed Grant 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. The LOI should be submitted by the PI online at http://research.theBRF.org. A lay summary and keywords will be requested upon registration.

The LOI submission includes:
- BRF LOI 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
  - PI Signature
  - Signature of institutional representative (Office of Research, Office of Sponsored Programs, etc.)
- Brief summary of program project (2 page maximum, 10 pt. font minimum)
- Biographical sketch (using current NIH format) with other support page (4 page maximum)

Submit completed LOI electronically via http://research.theBRF.org. Faxed, emailed, or mailed applications will NOT be accepted. Consideration will be given only to those Letters of Intent completed according to instructions and with no missing information.

**An automatic email is generated upon submission of the electronic application. If PI does not receive a confirmation, please contact info@theBRF.org.**

Deadline for the LOI is January 7, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. CST. LOIs 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.
PHASE II: Application
If the LOI receives a favorable review, the PI will be invited to submit a grant application. (Note: Approximately 50% of invited applications will be awarded funding.) Submit completed application electronically via http://research.theBRF.org. The 5 page grant proposal deadline is April 1, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. CST. Applications will NOT be accepted after the deadline. No exceptions will be made.

III. Review Procedures
LOI submissions are reviewed and rated by the 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 senior scientists from the 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 your specific project. The certifications are not required for the LOI, but are required when submitting a completed grant application.

V. Contact Information
BRF Seed Grant program announcement and guidelines can be found on the website of the Brain Research Foundation at http://www.theBRF.org. For additional information, you may contact the BRF at seedgrants@theBRF.org or call (312) 759-5150.