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Next Generation Networks In Neuroscience- NeuroNex 2019

MRC UK CALL TEXT

The Medical Research Council in collaboration with the National Science Foundation of the United States; Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) of Canada; Fonds de Recherche du Québec (FRQ) of Québec; and Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) of Germany are pleased to invite proposals for the NeuroNex Phase II call 2019.

This initiative will provide funding for high quality UK-based research projects focussed on addressing grand challenges in neuroscience as part of larger networks with international groups.

For the UK component of these networks, £6 million will be made available for awards of up to 36 months. The UK funding is through the UK Fund for International Collaboration (FIC). FIC aims to enhance the UK's excellence in research and innovation through global engagement. It focuses on bilateral and multilateral partnerships with global research and development (R&D) leaders and is administered by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

Background and Aims

Understanding how behaviour emerges from the dynamic patterns of electrical and chemical activity of brain circuits is universally recognised as one of the great, unsolved mysteries of science. Achieving an understanding of brain structure and function that spans levels of organization, spatial and temporal scales requires an international, transdisciplinary collaborative effort to not only integrate discipline-specific ideas and approaches but also extend them to stimulate new discoveries, and innovative concepts, theories, and methodologies.

The aim of Neuronex is to support collaborative networks comprised of international multidisciplinary teams working on a common fundamental question in neuroscience. The potential transformative advances in neuroscience stemming from this activity will have profound scientific and societal impacts.

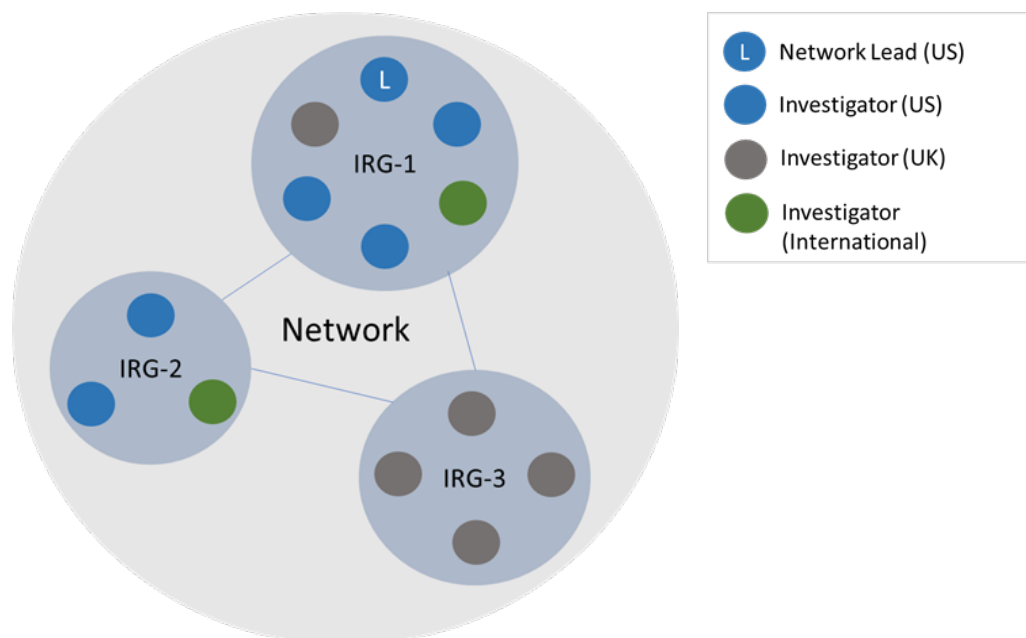


It is anticipated that these networks will enable experimentation, analysis, and discovery in neuroscience at scales much larger than currently possible.

International Networks and Scope

This call welcomes proposals addressing fundamental questions in neuroscience of a scope and complexity that would not be feasible under traditional funding of individual research projects and that by their nature require the convergence of multiple disciplines to answer. Through this program, the NSF and international partner agencies (CIHR, FRQ and DFG) seek to support groups of investigators with a wide variety of disciplinary backgrounds to work together at the nexus of their respective fields to accelerate our understanding of brain function.

A Network must be composed of international teams that include members from multiple disciplines working to obtain mechanistic insights into fundamental questions in neuroscience. Each network proposal is strongly encouraged to have strong international and US participation.



Networks must include one or more investigators eligible for funding through one or more of the international partner agencies and are expected to involve between 15 to 20 investigators across a breadth of disciplines, distributed among 2 to 4 interdisciplinary research groups (IRGs). The composition of each IRG may cut across organisations and countries as



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appropriate (see image for an example of a Network structure). The IRGs in a Network, each involving between 3 to 6 investigators, are expected to address different but complementary aspects of the central question tackled by the Network. The Network as a whole is expected to be more than the sum of its IRGs, with the synergy arising from a team science approach to address a common fundamental question.

Successful proposals will clearly articulate the synergy and added value of the combination of IRGs within a network and the team composition within each IRG to advance neuroscience beyond what is possible by small groups of investigators while fostering a vibrant and international environment for training, outreach, and public engagement.

Duration

UK components of IRGs are eligible for support for 3-year funding awards from MRC.

Projects must start in the UK on or before April 30 2020

Application Process

Proposals are assessed in a two-stage process.

The first step involves peer review of an outline proposal, see guidance for the outline proposal in the [US solicitation document](#) and [guidance for UK applicants](#). Successful outline applicants will be invited to submit a full application.

If MRC selects an IRG or a component of an international IRG for funding, the applicant will be required to submit their proposal plus costs for the UK elements of the proposal via the Je-S application submission system before final sign-off. UK collaborators should therefore ensure they are registered Je-S users before the proposal is submitted. Subsequent grant administration procedures will be in accordance with MRC policy, please see [award holders' guidance](#) for more information. [MRC terms and conditions](#) will apply to all MRC awards.

How To Apply

UK applicants must apply as part of a Network proposal led by a US PI through the US application system FastLane.



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Guidance specific to this call can be found in the [UK specific Guidance](#) and the [NSF Solicitation Document](#) with more detail regarding the application process.

Funding Available

In total, up to £6 million is available for UK components of Networks. UK applicants can only apply for 3 year funding.

MRC will provide funding under standard UKRI conditions and at 80% of the full Economic Cost (fEC).

UK studentships are not eligible for funding through this call and must not be included. However, UK IRGs or UK components of international IRGs can request travel funds for existing students to travel to international labs within the Network for training opportunities.

Spending Obligations

Due to the tight time scales of this call, successful UK research organisations will need to adhere to strict spending requirements. For this call, the end date of the proposed research should be no later than April 30 2023.

Eligibility

Any UK IRGs or UK components of international IRGs must fit within MRC remit and adhere to MRC standard terms and conditions

UK investigators must meet UKRI-MRC eligibility requirements and must apply through an institution eligible to receive MRC funding. Please see MRC funding rules:

<https://mrc.ukri.org/funding/guidance-for-applicants> and [MRC remit](#).

Assessment Criteria

To be funded, proposals must be internationally competitive and at a standard equivalent to that normally expected to be funded by MRC.

Outline proposals will be assessed by a panel and those successful invited to submit a full application to the call.



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NeuroNex proposals have additional review criteria which can be found in the [NSF Solicitation Document](#) regarding both the Networks as a whole and individual IRGs.

Key Dates

Call opens: **6 March 2019**

Closing for proposals: **14 June 2019 17:00 GMT+1**

Outline decisions: **September 2019**

Full proposal deadline: **13 December 2019 17:00 GMT**

Funding decisions: **March 2020**

UK projects start by: **30 April 2020**

Contacts and Guidance

Please read the [US Solicitation text](#), the [UK specific guidance for applicants](#), and the standard [MRC guidance for applicants](#) before applying.

For further information, UK applicants should contact:

charlotte.inchley@mrc.ukri.org