



## Next Generation Networks In Neuroscience- NeuroNex 2019 MRC UK GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS (Outline Stage).

This guidance document is for UK applicants wishing to apply to the ‘NeuroNex 2019’ research call. This guidance supplements the [NSF Solicitation Text](#).

This call-specific guidance document provides additional information specific to this call. Due to the international application process of this initiative, much of the standard [MRC Guidance for Applicants](#) will differ from the [NSF Solicitation Text](#). Where this is the case, you should follow the guidance in this document and the [NSF Solicitation Text](#).

It is important that applicants read the call-specific documents. These include important additional information that is not covered in the [UK Call Text](#).

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## **1. Important Application Information**

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 Quebec, 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).

### **1.1 Aim**

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.



## 1.2 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, DFG, and MRC) 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.

## 1.3 Start Date and Duration

On the UK side, projects must start by 30 April 2020. Projects must be no more than three years in duration and have completed by 30 April 2023.

International partner start dates and duration rules may differ due to their individual funding pathways, but all UK based proposals must adhere to the above dates.

If an IRG or a component of an international IRG is awarded by MRC, the applicant will be required to submit the 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.

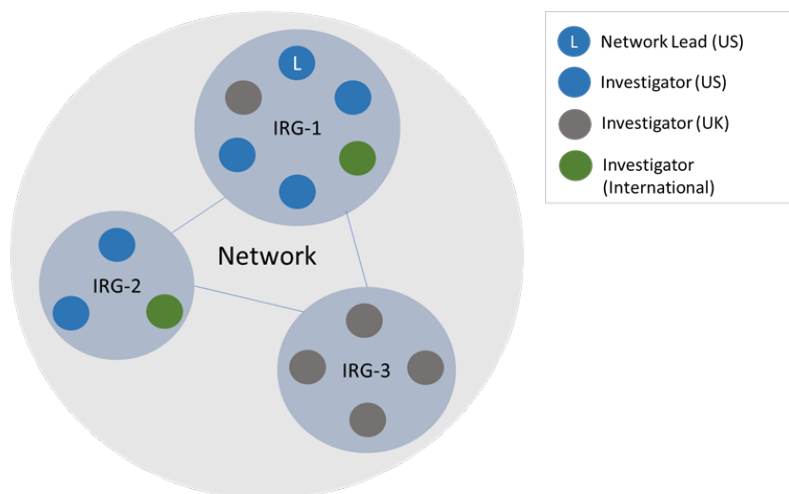
## 2. Networks and IRGs

This initiative welcomes proposals addressing fundamental questions in neuroscience of a scope and complexity that would not be feasible under traditional funding of individual research grants. Through this call, the NSF and partner agencies seek to support groups of investigators across a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds to work together across their disciplines to tackle some of the grand challenges in neuroscience.

## 2.1 Structure and Formation

A Network must be composed of 2 to 4 Interdisciplinary Research Groups (IRGs), each containing between 3 to 6 investigators. Each network is expected to involve between 15 and 20 investigators across the whole Network.

- Networks must:
  - Tackle a central fundamental question in neuroscience
  - Be led by a US-based PI
  - Be comprised of between 2 to 4 IRGs
- Interdisciplinary Research Groups (IRGs) must:
  - Address different but complementary aspects of the central question tackled by the Network
  - Contain between 3 to 6 investigators, each funded by a partner organisation



Successful proposals will clearly articulate the value added through the formation of a Network, justifying the team composition within each IRG to advance neuroscience beyond what is possible by small groups of investigators alone.



## 3. Application Process

### 3.1 Outline Proposals

The first step in the application process is the submission of outline proposals. A single outline application should be made by the US PI heading the Network, but networks should work together to produce the documents required for the proposal.

This should be submitted through the US-based FastLane system. UK-based investigators do not need to access this system to apply.

Full details of what should be included in the Network outline proposal can be found in the [NSF Solicitation Text](#).

### Letters of Support

Please note UK investigators included in the outline proposals must include signed and dated letters of support on letter-headed paper from an authorised UK institutional representative with the following text: "I confirm on behalf of [*insert name of institution*] that the Network between [List PIs and institutions of all IRG PIs] is endorsed and has been submitted by [*name of Research Office*]."

### Costs

Outline proposals should not contain any budget information at the outline stage, further guidance on this will be given after invitations for full submissions have been made.

### Assessment Criteria

Criteria used to assess the outline proposals can be found in full in the [NSF Solicitation Text](#).

### 3.2 Important Dates

Call opens: **6 March 2019**

Outline submission deadline to the US FastLane system: **14 June 2019 17:00 GMT+1**

Outline decisions and invitations for full submissions: **September 2019**



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

Funding decisions to be made **March 2020** and awarded proposals must begin their UK components by **April 30 2020** at the latest.

### 3.3 Remit and Policy

Any UK IRGs or UK components of international IRGs must fit within MRC remit and adhere to all MRC standards. UK investigators must contact the relevant MRC contact to confirm that the UK component fits MRC requirements.

UK investigators must meet standard MRC eligibility requirements to apply for funding and must apply through an institution eligible to receive MRC funding. MRC funding rules can be found in the standard [MRC Guidance for Applicants](#).

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

#### **Government support**

This award is dependent on continuing government commitment for this initiative and continuing match from the partner funder. In the event that this support is withdrawn, the Medical Research Council reserve the right to terminate the award.

#### **Requests for extensions to awards**

Due to financial restraints of the Fund for International Collaboration, grant extensions will only be considered under exceptional circumstances (in line with the Equality Act 2010) and will require the Medical Research Councils' agreement on a case-by-case basis. The Research Organisation remains responsible for compliance with the terms of the Equality Act 2010 including any subsequent amendments introduced while work is in progress; and for ensuring that the expectations set out in the Medical Research Councils' statement of expectations for equality and diversity are met.



## 4. Contacts and Guidance

Please read the:

- [UK Call Text](#)
- The [NSF Solicitation Document](#), the main guidance for this call
- The scheme specific UK Guidance for Applicants (this document)
- The Standard [MRC Guidance for Applicants](#)

For further information, UK applicants should contact:

Charlotte Inchley, Programme Manager, Neurosciences and Mental Health Board

Email: [charlotte.inchley@mrc.ukri.org](mailto:charlotte.inchley@mrc.ukri.org)

US call page and contacts can be found at the [NSF website](#) and <https://neuronex.org/>