Emory NeuroNetworks Initiative: Request for Applications

Goal
The Emory **NeuroNetworks Initiative** (**NNI**) will provide seed funding to increase the number of extramurally funded cross-disciplinary neuroscience-related grants to Emory investigators. This funding will stimulate transformative translational research in the neurosciences. These funds will support grant planning and collection of key preliminary data and are intentionally focused on supporting cross-departmental, translational, multi-scale, multi-PI research.

A standard R01 is not the goal of these applications. Rather more programmatic grants such as MPI R01s, P, and U grants. Although a main target will be NIH funding, other initiatives that target DOD, ARPA-H or equivalent (e.g., >$750K total funds/yr.) are responsive.

Oversight
Multiple entities at Emory have committed to supporting the NNI. Dr. Todd Golde, working closely with Dr. Guido Silvestri, will oversee the competition, award, and distribution of these funds. An oversight committee composed of individuals from each of the entities who financially supported this initiative will work with Drs. Golde and Silvestri to award and steward these funds.

Awards
- **Following a brief LOI - up to $125,000** in seed funds is designed to enable the generation of key data, reagents, and other resources that will then catalyze the submission of programmatic grants to extramural agencies.

Responsive applications to this internal funding mechanism will meet the following criteria:
- Have at least 3 PIs from at least 2 Departments. We encourage the team to be composed of investigators that include a mix of career stages. However, as this initiative is designed to support programmatic activities, there needs to be evidence that one of the PIs can serve as a programmatic grant leader.
- Outline transformative high-impact, long-term, objectives.
- Clearly delineate milestones for an initial planning phase and then a strategy for seeking extramural funding in phase 2.
- Outline a timeline for all activities.

We encourage Investigators to **consider the following** when competing for these funds:
- How do the proposed studies bridge departments especially basic and clinical?
- Do they leverage unique core infrastructure at Emory (e.g., Primate Facility, Various Omic Cores, Imaging, Cyclotron, Therapeutic Discovery Initiatives, Pediatrics Cores)?
- How is the research proposed transformative?

Timeline
1) Submission of LOIs: August 16, 2024, 5pm EST, email to Tammy L Jones (tammy.jones@emory.edu)
2) In-person "pitch" to the stakeholders: late August - early September 2024.
3) NIH abbreviated R21 formatted proposal: October 15, 2024. Details on the proposal format will be provided to those groups selected for submission of the full proposal.
4) Award: December 1, 2024.

NOTE: We anticipate this to be an iterative process. All groups will receive feedback for how their potential concepts can evolve to be more competitive in the future. Indeed, we hope that we will make these awards on annual or semi-annual basis.

LOI format for Phase 1
<u>**2 pages maximum**</u>. **11-point Font, Narrow margins.**

I. Title

II. PI team (list all PIs, identify contact PI, along with departmental and school affiliations)
- <u>Provide NIH biosketches for all. PIs as a separate single pdf attachment</u>.
- All PIs must hold a faculty position at Emory.
- Investigators serving on the oversight committee are not eligible to seek funds through this mechanism.

III. Transformative Science Statement (do not exceed 300 words)
- What is the objective of the study? What critical gap in knowledge will this study try to address? Why is the team uniquely positioned to carry out these studies at Emory? <u>An additional graphical abstract is welcome (and will not count against the page limit)</u>.

IV. Draft Aims (please Provide an Aim for the Planning Phase and Draft Aims for the Pilot Phase - do not exceed 250 words).

V. How do the proposed studies build connections across units at Emory? Do they utilize unique resources at Emory (cores, data, etc)? (do not exceed 300 words)

VI. How will the $25K Planning Phase funds be used (do not exceed 200 words)?

VII. Provide Milestones <u>with timelines</u> for Planning Phase activities and Draft Milestones for Pilot Phase Activities. Include in these milestones the target funding agency and if available or known a specific funding opportunity RFA or PAR**.** For grants that require permission to submit (e.g., many PO1s)**,** a milestone outlining the timing for discussion/communication with program officer(s) at a funding agency is strongly encouraged.

VI. Financial Contact Name and Department. Our intent is to create a single speed type for fund distribution, but we will need a primary departmental administrative point of contact.