

MCKNIGHT BRAIN RESEARCH FOUNDATION (MBRF)

**Meeting of the Research Committee
of the Board of Trustees**

Thursday, April 25th, 2024

5:00pm pm ET – 6:00 pm ET

Members Attending: Dr. Madhav Thambisetty, Committee Chair; Dr. Mike Dockery, MBRF Chair;
Dr. Sue Pekarske, Trustee; Dr. Patricia Boyle, Trustee

Not Attending: Dr. Roy Hamilton, Trustee

Also Attending: Dr. Lee Dockery, Chair Emeritus; Ms. Melanie Cianciotto, Corporate Trustee; Dr.
Angelika Schlanger, Executive Director

AGENDA

5:00pm ET	1.	Call to Order/Roll Call	Dr. Madhav Thambisetty
ACTION	2.	Approval of Minutes, March 4 th , 2024	Dr. Madhav Thambisetty
	3.	Updated Activity Timeline	Dr. Madhav Thambisetty
5:10pm ACTION	4.	MBI Leadership Council's Proposal - McKnight Brain Aging Registry (MBAR)	Dr. Madhav Thambisetty
5:25pm ACTION	5.	Cognitive Aging and Memory Core (CAMI) - RFA	Dr. Madhav Thambisetty
5:40pm ACTION	6.	Current Grants/Programs a. MBRF Innovator Awards in Cognitive Aging and Memory Loss (AFAR) – RFA and Institutional Commitment Form	Dr. Angelika Schlanger
ACTION		b. MBRF Clinical Translational Research Scholarship in Cognitive Aging and Age-Related Memory Loss (ABF) – RFA	
5:50 pm	7.	MBI Annual Report Reviewer Template Updates	Dr. Angelika Schlanger
	8.	Other Business	Dr. Madhav Thambisetty
6:00pm ET ACTION	9.	Adjourn	Dr. Madhav Thambisetty

MINUTES
MCKNIGHT BRAIN RESEARCH FOUNDATION (MBRF)
RESEARCH COMMITTEE
CONFERENCE CALL
March 4, 2024

The Research Committee of the MBRF was called to order at 6:15 pm ET on March 4, 2024, by Dr. Madhav Thambisetty.

The following members were present:

Dr. Madhav Thambisetty, Chair of the Research Committee, Trustee
Dr. Mike Dockery, MBRF Chair
Dr. Patricia Boyle, Trustee
Dr. Sue Pekarske, Trustee

The following members were absent:

Dr. Roy Hamilton, Trustee

Others attending:

Dr. Lee Dockery, Chair Emeritus
Ms. Melanie Cianciotto, Corporate Trustee
Dr. Angelika Schlanger, Executive Director

1. Call to Order

Dr. Thambisetty welcomed the members of the committee to the call.

2. Minutes of the January 29, 2024 Meeting

The minutes of the January 29, 2024, Research Committee Meeting (Attachment 1) were approved as presented.

The changes were:

Action Item 1: The minutes of the January 29, 2024, Research Committee Meeting were approved as presented (Attachment 1).

3. Updated Activity Timeline

The committee reviewed the updated Activity Timeline (Attachment 2) for information. Dr. Thambisetty noted the items that have taken place recently include planning for the Cognitive Aging Summit IV, which is well underway, and the final report that was submitted for the Reserve and Resiliency Collaboratory, which the committee previously reviewed.

4. FNIH/NIA Annual Report on the Research Partnership in Cognitive Aging

The committee received the 2023 Research Partnership in Cognitive Aging report prepared by the FNIH/NIA (Attachment 3) for information. The report provides an update from the National Institute on Aging (NIA) on the Cognitive SuperAgers Networks, both supported through the Research Partnership in Cognitive Aging. The report also includes updates on the Mindfulness, EDucation, and EXercise for Age-Related Cognitive Decline (MEDEX) trial (now complete) continuation study, as well as two additional initiatives that stemmed from the Cognitive Aging Summit III, including the STARRS study, led by Dr. Peter Rapp of the NIA.

The committee felt the report was well put together. Dr. Thambisetty shared that these clinical trials of mindfulness, meditation and physical activity are important, but there has not been a clinical trial that has shown a real benefit of these types of interventions on cognition. Have we reached a threshold where the trials are not showing an actual clinical benefit - or are we going to keep tweaking the studies – until they do? If these interventions are repeatedly failing, at what point does the research community and the MBRF decide to focus on pursuing the study of other interventions?

5. American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR) Renewal Proposal for the Innovator Awards

The committee received the American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR) proposal (Attachment 4). The proposal is to renew the current Innovator Awards grant for another three years in the amount of \$4,626,500 for three additional cohorts of investigators (6 total). The proposed budget represents an increase of \$11,500 in administrative costs. The proposal includes survey results based on a questionnaire that AFAR fielded to identify the most commonly recognized forms of non-monetary institutional commitment.

The committee discussed the proposal and agreed that the program has identified and supported an outstanding group of six scientists. The committee reached consensus that the proposal is worthy of renewal. The committee discussed the existing match requirement and alternative non-monetary forms of institutional commitment that could be accepted instead. The committee agreed that revising the monetary match requirement should be pursued to make the program more inclusive and open the eligibility to more talented researchers. Additionally, the committee recommended that eligibility requirements be expanded to include researchers who have had extenuating circumstances that led to pauses in their career and may not meet the time-specific career requirements currently listed in the RFA. The committee asked about the process to revise the RFA. Dr. Schlanger will work with AFAR to revise the current RFA and Institutional Commitment form, taking into account the survey responses related to accepted forms of institutional commitment that are non-monetary in nature.

The committee recommended approval to continue with the Innovator Awards grant and to revise the RFA and Institutional Commitment form as appropriate.

Action Item 2: The committee recommended approval to continue with the Innovator Awards grant and to revise the RFA and Institutional Commitment form as appropriate.

6. Proposal for MBRF Research Award/Prize in Collaboration with the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health

Dr. Lee Dockery presented a proposal for a research award/prize in collaboration with the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health (FNIH) intended to advance the research mission of the MBRF and to recognize and celebrate the foundation's 25th anniversary (Attachment 5). This is intended to keep advancing the MBRF's focus on research in cognitive aging and age-related memory loss.

The committee discussed the proposal and approved the concept at an award level of \$25,000, recognizing that additional administration expenses will be added. The committee also empowered Dr. Lee Dockery to carry out any necessary negotiations with Mr. David Carmel, Chief Growth and Innovation Officer, FNIH related to the administrative fee, which is currently quite significant. Dr. Schlanger will invite Mr. Carmel to attend the March 19, 2024, Trustees' Meeting to make a formal presentation on the proposed research prize and related budget.

The committee proposed the research award/prize be named in honor of Dr. Lee Dockery. Dr. Dockery appreciated the gesture but feels the MBRF needs to be kept in the forefront.

Action Item 3: The committee approves the concept of creating a research award/prize in the amount of \$25,000 in collaboration with the FNIH to recognize and celebrate the foundation's 25th anniversary and empowers Dr. Lee Dockery to carry out any necessary negotiations with Mr. David Carmel, Chief Growth and Innovation Officer, FNIH.

Action Item 4: Dr. Schlanger will invite Mr. Carmel to attend the March 19, 2024, Trustees' Meeting to make a formal proposal.

7. American Brain Foundation 2025 RFP – Questions for Consideration

The committee reviewed the 2025 McKnight CTRS in Cognitive Aging and Age-Related Memory Loss Award RFP: Questions for Consideration (Attachment 6). The ABF will be producing the draft of the 2025 RFP in the coming weeks and had some recommendations for the Trustees to consider related to the eligibility requirements and the name of the award. The committee

discussed proposed revisions to the RFP which included removing “progress” and replacing it with “advance” in the last bullet of the evaluation criteria, and adding additional disciplines to the eligibility requirements, with suggested language, “MD, PhD, and other related degrees” to reflect that cognitive aging researchers can represent a broad range of disciplines. The Trustees recommended keeping the name of the award as is.

Action Item 5: Dr. Schlanger will share the proposed revisions to the RFA with the ABF team.

8. Adjourn

Dr. Thambisetty asked if there was any further discussion. Hearing none, he called for adjournment of the meeting at 7:30 p.m. ET.

Summary of Action Items:

Respectfully Submitted,

Melanie A. Cianciotto
Corporate Trustee

Research Committee Activity Timeline
2022-2024
Updated April 15, 2024

Duty (from Committee Charter)	Activity/Action	Outcome	Date	Comments
<i>"Encourage and assess research at the McKnight Brain Institutes (MBIs)"</i>	Review of the Annual Reports of the MBIs	Information for scientific review includes: scientific achievements, publications, presentations, collaborations	Annual Reports were reviewed by the Trustees on Feb. 20, 2024	Reviewers presented at Feb. 2024 Trustees Meeting. Follow up letters were written and sent to each of the MBIs. All Requests of MBIs are being addressed by MBIs.
	Review of all New Funding Requests from MBIs. Most Funding Requests should be reviewed by the Interventional Core Committee of the MBIs first.	<p>The Leadership Council, by way of the CAMI-Core Chair, Dr. Sara Burke, submitted a proposal to relaunch the Pilot Grant Program.</p> <p>UM submitted a request for \$250,000 to co-fund a fellowship over 5 years – The Evelyn F. McKnight Neurocognitive Clinical Scholar in Brain Health and Aging"</p>	<p>The board approved the proposal to re-launch the CAMI Core Pilot Grant Program at \$75,000 per year for each award at its February 20, 2024 meeting.</p> <p>A memorandum notifying UM of the approval for funding the Evelyn F. McKnight Neurocognitive Clinical Scholar in Brain Health and Aging for a total of \$250,000 (\$50,000 over 5 years) to be matched by UM was signed on Nov 10, 2021.</p>	<p>Research Committee and Board will review the 2024 RFA that will be launched at the 2024 IIM.</p> <p>As of March 2024, there was a balance of \$150,000 on this grant commitment.</p>

	Review of Travel Award Fund: Originally established to fund research scholars and faculty to visit other McKnight institutions.	Few applications for travel. The funds allocated for travel have been used to fund the activities of focus groups: Epigenetics, MRI standardization and cognitive test battery working group	Reviewed as needed	Current travel funds have been approved to fund travel and lodging for Innovator Award winner(s) to attend the 2024 IIM meeting at UF.
	Inter-institutional Block Grants	Cognitive Assessment and McKnight Brain Aging Registry (MBAR) Core	The Leadership Council, by way of Dr. Kristina Visscher, is working on a draft proposal to support MBAR with remaining dollars. The proposal will be presented to the research committee on April 25, 2024	
	Inter-institutional Block Grants	Cognitive Aging Core Working Groups	No Updates	5 Areas: Brain and Cognitive Health Cognitive Aging & Memory Cognitive Testing Battery Epigenetics MRI standardization
	Inter-institutional Block Grants	Bio-Informatics Core (Epigenetics)	No Updates	
	Inter-institutional Block Grants	Neuroimaging Core	No Updates	

<p><i>"Identify opportunities...to foster greater interest in cognitive aging and age-related memory loss (in the scientific community)"</i></p>	<p>Research Partnership with the Foundation for NIH and the NIA.</p>	<p>1st cycle-2009, 2nd cycle-2014, 3rd cycle-2019</p> <p>Cognitive Aging Summit (CAS) IV</p>	<p>2023 annual progress report was submitted in January and reviewed by the board on March 19, 2024</p> <p>CAS IV, with a theme of "Precision Aging and Brain Health" took place on March 20-21, 2024. There were 170 in-person attendees and up to 449 virtual attendees. Session Chairs, NIA leaders, FNIH and the MBRF met for an Executive Session following the summit.</p>	<p>History: Established 2009 \$5 M over 5 years from MBRF; match from NIA and partners was \$23 M for total of \$28 M (17 five-year grants funded). The 2014 Partnership renewal funded one 5-year project for \$15 million with \$5 M from MBRF and \$10 M from NIA</p> <p>Current Cycle: NIA committed to provide \$15M to be pooled with MBRF's \$5M. Two grants were provided from the Research Partnership, led by to Dr. Thomas Perls and Dr. Emily Rogalski.</p> <p>The FNIH/NIA is working on the meeting summaries and recordings have been posted online (here). Follow-up reflections and takeaways from the Summit and the Executive Session will be shared by NIA, by way of Milly Wagster and Jonathan King, later this year.</p>
	<p>MBRF Innovators Awards in Cognitive Aging and Memory Loss</p>			

	<p>The McKnight Brain Research Foundation committed \$4.5 million over the next five years to support outstanding mid-career scientists committed to researching the basic biological mechanisms underlying cognitive aging and memory loss.</p> <p>AFAR was invited to submit a renewal proposal for three additional years with updated program guidelines to broaden the applicant pool and able greater access to applicants from institutions with fewer resources</p>	<p>All award cycles under the current grant were implemented (2021, 2022, 2023)</p> <p>AFAR presented a renewal proposal to provide two 3-year awards each year for the next three years. It was approved by the MBRF board on March 19, 2024. The MBRF committed to \$4,626,500 over the next 5 years. A draft contract is forthcoming for review.</p>	<p>The research committee will review the draft RFA and Institutional Commitment Guidelines at its meeting on April 25, 2024.</p> <p>The Research Committee will review the draft RFA for 2024 at the April 25, 2024 meeting.</p>	<p>AFAR Review Committee: Chair: Dr. Anna Maria Cuervo Members: Dr. Rafa de Cabo Dr. Thambisetty Dr. Boyle and Dr. Roz Anderson Dr. Hamilton (joined in 2023)</p> <p><u>2023-24: Seventh Scholarships</u></p> <p>Two applications were submitted to the MBRF Award mechanism, and one was awarded to Haopei Yang, PhD. The Trustees determined that the other project did not align with the</p>
<p><i>"Encourage young investigators in this area of research"</i></p>	<p>McKnight Brain Research Foundation Clinical Translational Research Scholarship with American Academy of Neurology (AAN) and American Brain Foundation (ABF)</p>	<p>Seven award cycles have been completed. Two awardees have received the CTRS every year since 2018, with the exception of 2023, when one award was made.</p>		

		Members of the 2022-23 Review Committee include Dr. Madhav Thambisetty and Dr. Patricia Boyle. Dr Hamilton joined in 2023-24.		scope or spirit of the award guidelines.
	Poster Reception at Society for Neuroscience annual meeting	Poster sessions were held in 2008, 2019 and 2023.		Vicky Hixon submitted a proposal to organize the poster session to take place on October 6, 2024 in Chicago. The trustees approved the proposal at their March 19, 2024 meeting.

**The MBRF Cognitive Aging and Memory Intervention Core
Inter-institutional Pilot Program
REQUEST FOR LOI and PROPOSALS**

APPLICATION RECEIPT DATE:

LOI Deadline: **July 1, 2024**

Full Application Deadline: **November 1, 2024**
(if invited to submit by the CAMI Core)

PURPOSE: The McKnight Research Foundation (MBRF) Cognitive Aging and Memory Intervention (CAMI) Core invites Inter-Institutional MBI applications for pilot studies related to interventions that aim to reduce age-related memory loss and cognitive decline. The specific goal of these projects will be to facilitate and nurture new Inter-Institute collaborations that will establish nationally renowned and impactful research programs for improving memory and cognition in older adults.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES: The MBRF Cognitive Aging and Memory Intervention Core was established to facilitate multi-site McKnight Brain Institute cognitive aging and memory interventions, as well as collect and disseminate information important for cross-site study collaborations. The Cognitive Aging and Memory Intervention Core will work with invited applicants to facilitate access to necessary resources for multi-site collaboration.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS: *Please read carefully.*

Applications are solicited from investigators from the four MBI sites.

- Applications must include principal investigators from at least 2 different MBI sites.
- Applications must propose preliminary or pilot interventions with promise for ameliorating negative cognitive outcomes associated with normative aging (that is, non-pathological aging), including memory decline.
- LOI submitted by the Deadline of July 1, 2024 following the format below.
- Only applications that have not been submitted for review to another extramural funding mechanisms and remain unfunded by any source will be considered.
- Awardees may be asked to serve as a reviewer for 1-2 cycles (2025 & 2026)
- Young investigators are encouraged to apply and it is strongly suggested that they identify a more senior collaborator/mentor at a different MBI site.
- Both pre-clinical/translational and clinical interventions are eligible for consideration.
- A clear role for principal investigators at both MBI sites must be described in the LOI. This could include data collection at multiple sites, imaging or unique microscopy resources, neurophysiology equipment, data analysis resources, as well as tissue or blood samples.
- Proposals that will leverage resources provided by the McKnight Brain Aging Registry are encouraged.

MECHANISMS OF SUPPORT: Grants will be funded for up to a total of \$75,000 per year for 2 years. Year 2 funding is contingent on submission of a progress report that includes specific plans and a timeline for the submission of a multi-investigator application for extramural funding.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES:

1) Pre-proposal Letter of Interest (LOI): A 2-page LOI and biosketches for multi-Principal Investigators are required for consideration (***DUE July 1, 2024***). The LOI should use 11 pt arial font with 0.5 inch margins and contain the following information:

- Significance and Innovation
- Brief description of hypothesis for the proposed intervention
- List of specific aims
- Description of the structure and need for multi-site collaboration
- NIH-biosketches for m-PIs (not included in page limit):
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>

The LOI must be sent by July 1, 2024 to Sara Burke (burkes@ufl.edu) and Matthew Grilli (mdgrilli@arizona.edu) via email attachment. LOIs will be reviewed by the MBRF Cognitive Aging and Memory Intervention Core Committee and selected investigators will be notified by August 15, 2024 whether they are invited to submit a full application.

2) Full Application: The full applications must be submitted by the deadline of Nov 1, 2024. The proposal should be sent to Sara Burke (burkes@ufl.edu) and Mathew Grilli (mdgrilli@arizona.edu) via email attachment in a single file in the PDF format.

Applications must include:

- A cover letter with the names and contact information and 3 potential qualified reviewers
- Face Page: Project Title, Senior/Key Personnel, Project/Performance Sites, Contact PI (and Contact PI information), along with the Project Summary (30 lines max).
- Research Plan - limited to 5 pages (not including References, 11 point Arial font, 0.5" margins) and should include:
 - a. Specific Aims
 - b. Research Strategy (Significance, Innovation, Approach)
 - c. Description of Multi-site MBI Collaboration
 - d. Timeline and Plans for extramural funding applications
 - e. References
- Preliminary data are welcome but not required
- Multi-PI plan and structure of collaboration (1 page maximum)
- For new investigators (at rank of Assistant Professor with no prior R01 or equivalent funding), a 1-page mentoring plan and timeline is also required
- Detailed Budget (Budget limited to \$75,000 per year in total costs) and Budget Justification.
Indirect costs are not allowable
- Please no appendices
- NIH Biographical Sketches for Key Personnel: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>

APPLICATION REVIEW CRITERIA: Applications will be reviewed for scientific merit by 2-3 expert reviewers and evaluated by a scientific review panel consisting of CAMI-Core Committee Members and External Scientists. Applications will be rated based on 1) significance, 2) quality, innovation and feasibility, 3) collaboration across the MBI sites, and 4) likelihood of leading to a successful larger grant application. For new investigators, the mentoring plan will also be evaluated.

The final selection of projects for funding will be made by the MBRF by ranking and recommendations provided by the Cognitive Aging and Memory Intervention Core. Awardees will be contacted by email.

The anticipated funding start date of successful applications is May 1, 2025.

INQUIRIES: Inquiries regarding application and review procedures can be directed to the MBRF Inter-Institutional Cognitive Aging and Memory Intervention Core members:

Sara Burke, Chair burkes@ufl.edu (UF)
 Ihtsham ul Haq ihaq@med.miami.edu (UMiami)
 Matthew Grilli mdgrilli@arizona.edu (UA)
 Keith McGregor kmmcgreg@uab.edu (UAB)

2024 McKnight Brain Research Foundation Innovator Awards in Cognitive Aging and Memory Loss

- [The Program](#)
- [Eligibility](#)
- [Selection Criteria](#)
- [Application Procedures](#)
- [Reporting Requirements](#)
- [Annual Meeting](#)

The McKnight Brain Research Foundation (MBRF) and the American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR) will provide up to two 3-year awards of \$750,000 (USD) each to advanced Assistant Professors and recently appointed Associate Professors (MDs and PhDs.) One award will be made to support studies focusing on clinical translational research and another award toward understanding basic biological mechanisms underlying cognitive aging and age-related memory loss.

The application deadline is July 31, 2024~~3~~.

The Program

The major goal of the program is to identify emerging scientific leaders by building a cadre of outstanding research scientists across the United States to lead transformative research in the field of cognitive aging.

The program targets full-time independent investigators at the rank of Assistant Professor or Associate Professor (or equivalent) with established independent research programs who have already demonstrated a firm commitment to cognitive aging research. It will add substantial start-up support for a period of three years to help these investigators develop and/or expand an outstanding research program in cognitive aging and memory loss.

One award will be made to support innovative studies focusing on **clinical translational research** and another will support innovative studies of **basic biological mechanisms** underlying cognitive aging and age-related memory loss. It is expected that the proposed research will yield transformative discoveries and thus proposals are invited that are high risk/high gain in nature and that would be less suitable for conventional sources of funding. For example, this support could be deployed towards conducting a pilot clinical trial, developing proof-of concept interventions to ameliorate age associated cognitive impairment, gather preclinical data to accelerate testing of potential interventions, and further study the mechanistic basis of age-associated cognitive impairment in relevant experimental models with a view to identifying novel treatment targets. Scientists proposing to pursue basic research should clearly articulate the potential of their findings to be translated into clinically relevant strategies, and/or treatments. Research studies at the intersection of age-associated cognitive changes and disease-related cognitive impairment may be considered if a strong case can be made for their relevance to cognitive aging and age-related memory loss. However, research that is primarily focused on neurodegenerative diseases (e.g., Alzheimer's disease) will not be supported.

Two 3-year awards of \$750,000 (USD) each will be made in 202~~43~~⁴, of which a maximum of 10% may be used for indirect expenses or institutional overhead. ~~To demonstrate a commitment to the investigator, the institution is asked to support the investigator's project through matching funds. The investigator needs to identify 50% in matching funds, which can only be from non-federal funds, and cannot be used by more than one project. This could be cash and/or in-kind matching, and can include faculty effort, and goods and services paid from departmental funds. For an in-kind match, the selection committee will determine whether this is equivalent to a monetary match.~~

Eligibility

To be eligible, the applicant must:

- Have completed research training prior to the beginning of this award (October 1, 2023):
 - o PhD candidates: no more than 7 years from the completion of formal post-doctoral research training post-PhD,
 - o MD or combined degree candidates: no more than 12 years from the date when finished residency.
- Exceptions to the 7 and 12 year limits may be considered for certain life events (e.g. familial, personal commitments or other exceptional circumstances). An exception request can be submitted by emailing an NIH-style biosketch to AFAR at grants@afar.org at least one week prior to the deadline date.
- Be an independent investigator at the rank of Assistant Professor or Associate Professor ([promoted to the rank of Associate Professor](#) ~~appointed~~ no earlier than October 1, 202~~10~~¹⁹), who has received R01 funding (or equivalent funding such as an NIH DP5, R35 or NSF Research awards.)
- Be tenure-track faculty or equivalent in an academic or non-profit institution with evidence of long-term institutional support as indicated by commitment of resources including independent laboratory space, start-up research funds and personnel. Candidates not in a tenure-track position are also eligible and should demonstrate similar evidence of long-term institutional support and not be in a time-limited appointment.
- Have a proven track record of research accomplishments in cognitive aging as indicated by their publications in high-impact journals, awards, and other metrics of peer recognition.
- Provide evidence of institutional ~~matching funds~~ commitment as described in a [form completed by the Dean or Department Chair](#).
- Be in full time employment at an academic or non-profit research institution in the United States.

The program **does not** provide support for:

- Senior faculty, i.e., at the rank of Associate Professor or higher who have held this position before October 1, 202~~10~~¹⁹.
- Assistant Professors who have not yet received R01 or equivalent extramural independent funding.

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- Investigators who are conducting research at a federal government or for-profit institution.
- See comment above about disease specific research.

Questions about eligibility and suitability of research project can be addressed to grants@afar.org.

Selection Criteria

Five criteria are used to determine the merit of an application:

- Qualifications of the applicant;
- Quality and promise of the proposed research and its relevance to cognitive aging/age-related memory loss;
- Novelty/impact of the proposed research and potential to have transformative clinical impact;
- Excellence of the research environment;
- ~~The commitment by the institution to provide matching funds. The commitment by the institution to the applicant as described in the institutional commitment form.~~

Application Procedures and Timeline

Please refer to the [application instructions](#). Incomplete applications cannot be considered. All applications must be submitted via email to afarapplication@afar.org.

The applications will be reviewed by a committee whose recommendations will be presented to MBRF and AFAR for final funding decisions.

Please review [this link](#) which includes suggestions for submitting an LOI or application to AFAR. Click [here](#) for our Frequently Asked Questions page. If you are using animals in your research, please review [Principles of Animal Use for Gerontological Research](#) or this recent webinar recording from the Nathan Shock Centers of Excellence: <https://nathanshockcenters.org...>

MBRF and AFAR will not provide reviewer critiques to any applicants at any review level.

Timeline:

Application deadline: July 31, 2024⁴³

Anticipated Award Announcement: September 15, 2024⁴³

Award Start Date: October 1, 2024⁴³

Reporting Requirements

Investigators will be required to submit a brief [narrative report](#) annually on the progress of their research. Final narrative and financial reports are required within three months following the end date of the award.

Annual Meeting

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Recipients of this award are expected to attend the AFAR Grantee Conference. The purpose of the meeting is to promote scientific and personal exchanges among recent AFAR grantees and experts in aging research. Grantees are also expected to attend the annual inter-institutional meeting of the MBRF.

Funder



Founded in 1999 by Evelyn McKnight, the Foundation's specific goal is to better understand and alleviate age-related cognitive decline and memory loss. Cognitive changes due to the normal aging process may affect up to 87 percent of people age 65 and older, impacting abilities like processing speed and decision-making and contributing to some types of memory loss. The [McKnight Brain Research Foundation](#) works to champion research to better understand age-related cognitive decline and memory loss and educate the public on the steps that can be taken to maintain cognitive and brain health and age successfully.

In its first 20 years, the Foundation established Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institutes at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, the University of Arizona, and the University of Miami, and the Evelyn F. and William L. McKnight Brain Institute at the University of Florida.

By partnering with the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health, and with the support of three Cognitive Aging Summits and the National Academy of Medicine Cognitive Aging Report, we have made great progress to better understand the effects of age-related cognitive decline and memory loss over the last two decades.

The McKnight Brain Research Foundation and the McKnight Brain Institutes are leaders in cognitive aging research. By providing research funding to promising investigators as they continue to embark upon independent careers, the MBRF proposes to build a core group of outstanding research scientists across the United States to lead transformative research in the field of cognitive aging.



american federation
for aging research



McKNIGHT BRAIN
RESEARCH FOUNDATION
Preserving memory, enhancing life

McKnight Brain Research Foundation Innovator Awards in Cognitive Aging and Memory Loss

Institutional Commitment Form

Candidates for the [McKnight Brain Research Foundation Innovator Awards in Cognitive Aging and Memory Loss](#) must be independent investigators with independent research space. The committee will evaluate the institutional commitment for each applicant, commensurate with the type of research and resources available at the institution. To complete the application, this form must be completed by the Dean or the Department Chair. The form is NOT to be included in the application, but must be submitted directly to AFAR by the person completing the form (NOT the applicant), to afarapplication@afar.org as a Word or PDF file.

Name, title, and address of official completing this form:

E-mail:

Phone:

Signature of Official: _____

First and Last name of Applicant: _____

1. Does the candidate have independent investigator status at his/her institution?

☐ YES

☐ NO

2. Has the candidate's institution provided space and equipment specifically dedicated to his/her research program?

☐ YES

Please Describe:

☐ NO

Please describe whose resources the candidate will use to execute the proposed project:

3. Did the candidate receive intramural start-up funds when offered his/her current position? (AFAR does not consider extramural funds from an outside organization/institution as 'start-up funds'.)

☐ YES

Please provide \$ amount and details of start-up funds:

☐ NO

4. Does the candidate have designated administrative support (e.g. someone who helps with editing and submitting grants, tracks budgets, etc.)

☐ YES

☐ NO

5. What was the start date of the candidate's current position?

Month/Day/Year:

6. Does your institution offer tenure:

☐ YES

☐ NO

a. If yes, is the candidate's current position a tenure track position?

☐ YES

☐ NO

b. If your institution does **not** offer tenure, please provide evidence of long-term institutional support

7. Indicate percentage of the applicant's professional time (FTE) allocated to:

Research: %

Teaching: %

Clinical: %

Other: % Specify: Does the candidate have teaching and/or clinical responsibilities in the current position?

☐ YES

☐ NO

If yes, indicate percentage of time:

8. a. Describe overall annual research funding for your institution in 2023.

b. Describe the overall annual research funding for the department the investigator is primarily affiliated with.

9. To demonstrate a commitment to the investigator, the institution is asked to support the investigator's project through matching funds. Please provide a statement below stating that 50%

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~~(\$375,000) in cash or in-kind matching funds will be committed to the project and investigator if an award is made.~~ Provide details and amounts for the matching funds. Matching funds can only be non-federal and cannot be used by more than one project. This could be cash and/or in-kind matching, and can include faculty effort, and goods and services paid from departmental funds. For an in-kind match, the selection committee will determine whether this is equivalent to a monetary match.

Check any boxes that apply,"

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☐ Is your institution is an undergraduate or graduate degree granting institution, with at least 35% of undergraduate students supported by Pell grants, and has had less than six million dollars in NIH research project grant (RPG) support per year in three of the last five years.

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☐ Does your institution grant doctoral degrees and has had less than 25 million dollars in NIH RPG support in three of the last five years.

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☐ Is your institution's historical and current mission to educate students from historically underrepresented populations in biomedical research.

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☐ Other category: Please describe:

☐ None of these categories apply.

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9. If there is anything else that may demonstrate the institution's commitment to the candidate, please describe here:

Commented [OvdW1]: Do we want to give examples or leave generic? Other suggestions for institutional commitment include mentor support, support for grant writing, career development support, support for travel/sabbaticals, release from teaching.

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****NOTE:** Changes to the template include: the quantitative scales were removed and question 7a was added, based on the feedback shared by the Trustees at the February board meeting.

MBRF Trustee Review Form

MBI Annual Reports

Reviewer Name: _____

Year: _____

MBI: _____

1. Major scientific achievements since last year.

In a few sentences or more, please summarize strengths and weaknesses in this area, and why you chose the above rating. Please consider quantity, quality, and potential to advance understanding of age-related cognitive decline and memory loss. (Please use as much space as needed, below.)

2. Major programmatic and outreach achievements since last year, including clinical, translational, and educational programs.

In a few sentences or more, please summarize strengths and weaknesses in this area, and why you chose the above rating. Please consider quantity, quality, and potential to advance research and/or to educate the public. (Please use as much space as needed, below.)

3. Major training achievements since last year.

In a few sentences or more, please summarize strengths and weaknesses in this area, and why you chose the above rating. Please consider quantity, quality and potential to advance the careers of early investigators. (Please use as much space as needed, below.)

4. Collaborative Programs with McKnight Institutes and non-McKnight Institutes

In a few sentences or more, please summarize strengths and weaknesses in this area, and why you chose the above rating. Please consider quantity, quality, and potential to advance the field and/or to educate the public. (Please use as much space as needed, below.)

5. Honors, Awards, and New Grants

In a few sentences or more, please summarize strengths and weaknesses in this area, and why you chose the above rating. Please consider quantity, source(s) of funding, and potential to impact the programmatic and scientific achievements and career trajectories of the recipients. (Please use as much space as needed, below.)

6. Publications, abstracts, and/or presentations

In a few sentences or more, please summarize strengths and weaknesses in this area, and why you chose the above rating. Please consider quantity, quality, and potential to advance understanding of age-related cognitive decline and memory loss. (Please use as much space as needed, below.)

7. Overall Report

- a. As a whole, to what extent do the MBI's research programs/studies, grants, and awards **align with** and have an **impact on** the MBRF's mission to better understand and alleviate the effects of age-related cognitive decline and memory loss.

b. *In a few sentences, summarize overall strengths:*

c. *In a few sentences, summarize overall weaknesses:*

d. *Please list any follow-up questions or feedback to share with the MBI:*