

HARVARD  *Brain Science Initiative*

October 23, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

We are pleased to announce the Harvard Brain Science Initiative (HBI) Young Scientist Transitions Award Program. This special program, made possible with funding from the Office of the Provost, is designed to provide relief funding to neuroscience postdocs at Harvard University whose career progress has been significantly delayed by institutional shutdowns, slowdowns and delays in job search processes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please see the attached RFA for eligibility details and information on how to apply. Letters of intent are due December 2nd. Questions may be sent to us, as well as Parizad Bilimoria, Assistant Director for HBI, at Parizad_Bilimoria@hms.harvard.edu.

We hope you are staying safe and healthy!

Best wishes,



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The HBI Young Scientist Transitions Award Program

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented many challenges to biomedical researchers, including extended project timelines for trainees whose career progress has been significantly delayed by institutional shutdowns, slowdowns and delays in job search processes. The HBI Young Scientist Transitions Award Program will provide support to extend the period of stay in labs for senior postdoctoral fellows in our community who are facing such challenges.

These relief funds are meant to fill short term funding gaps for labs lacking alternate funding sources to allocate for this purpose. Postdoctoral fellows are asked to apply in partnership with their PIs—as grant decisions will be based on assessing both postdoc and lab circumstances.

We anticipate providing up to five awards of up to \$25,000 each, to be used within one year of the award date.

Eligibility:

- Senior postdoctoral fellows (including those whose titles are research fellow, research associate or instructor) conducting neuroscience research in a Harvard University laboratory (FAS or HMS Quad basic science departments) are eligible
- A senior postdoctoral fellow is defined as someone who is planning to complete their current lab work and move on to a different position within the next two years
- Please note, this funding source is not currently available to clinical fellows, or to postdoctoral fellows in affiliated hospital or HSPH labs
- **Only one postdoc may apply from each lab in each cycle** (we hope to issue a second RFA within the next semester, as funding allows)

Application Dates:

- LOIs due by Dec 2, 2020
- Full applications due by Jan 8, 2021
- Decisions will likely be made in February
- Award funds will likely be available by March 1st

Funding Notes:

- This funding source can provide temporary salary support to extend the period of stay in a lab. This means confirmation of support at the existing salary level -- not supplemental salary
- Please note, no F&A costs can be provided by this mechanism

Additional Considerations:

- Personal circumstances of the trainee will be considered in addition to scientific merit – giving priority to those excellent scientists who are at a particularly vulnerable time in their career and dealing with significant challenges brought on by the pandemic
- If we have a high volume of applications, when all other things are equal, preference may be given to applications from the labs of junior faculty (assistant and associate professors)

HOW TO APPLY:

Letter of Intent (LOI) Due Dec 2nd

Please complete the application cover page and send it along with a short email to HBI_Grants@harvard.edu. This can be one short, informal paragraph, telling us in a couple sentences why you wish to apply to this program and confirming that you have discussed the idea with your PI.

We will use this email to confirm your eligibility and develop an appropriate review committee. If you do not receive confirmation of eligibility within a few days, please reach out again to ensure that we have received your email.

Applications Due Jan 8th

Please assemble a PDF with the following materials:

- **Cover Page** (using template provided, same as for LOI)
- **Applicant Research Description**, one page or less, briefly introducing the neuroscience research project of the postdoc and its big picture significance

- **Applicant Letter**, one page, describing how the timeline of postdoctoral training has been extended
 - Explain circumstances that have led to the delays in career progress, feeling free to share any lab and/or personal circumstances that may be relevant
 - Share career goals and any delays or challenges encountered in the job search process, if relevant. (This may include discussion of industry or biotech jobs, science communications, education, or policy positions in addition to traditional academic career paths)
- **Timeline**, one paragraph or short list of bullet points
 - List any fellowships or grants currently supporting the postdoc position in part or full, and when they are expected to end
 - Outline the expected period of support from HBI Transitions Award (roughly how many months and when)
- **Advisor Statement of Support**, less than one page, briefly describing the merits of the postdoctoral fellow's research and value it brings to the lab, as well as providing PI perspective on the expanded training timeline and need for transitional funding support
- **Advisor's NIH Other Support Page**

Note that we may reach out to request additional application materials, based on the volume of requests received and questions that arise. We may also adjust grant amounts based on the application pool and funding needs encountered.