UCSF Weill Institute for Neurosciences
Program in Neuroscience Innovation

Call for Proposals
The UCSF Weill Institute for Neurosciences, established by the extraordinary generosity of Joan and Sanford I. Weill, brings together world-class researchers with top-ranked physicians to solve some of the most complex challenges in the human brain.

The Institute’s Program in Neuroscience Innovation seeks to fuel innovation in neuroscience by fostering high risk, high impact, clinical/translational research through funding of highly meritorious research projects and supporting high-potential neuroscience researchers, both enabling investigators to pursue ideas that might not be easily fundable by other mechanisms.

The target for this program is clinical and translational research focused on a broad spectrum of neuroscience challenges, including therapeutics, diagnostics, imaging technology, biomarker discovery/validation, and computational methods. We seek to support creative research projects that are focused on improved patient outcomes, especially those that employ concepts of convergent neuroscience research, crossing levels of analysis from genomics and imaging to behavior and implementation, and considering the dimension of time.

The Program in Neuroscience Innovation invites applications for funding in two independent mechanisms:

**UCSF Weill Neurosciences Innovation Award**
- These awards enable significant trans-disciplinary neuroscience research projects that move the needle toward patient-relevant solutions;
- Up to 3 new awards will be awarded each year in 2016 and 2017, and thereafter dependent on funding;
- Up to $600,000 (total costs) for up to a 3-year project period.

**UCSF Weill Neurosciences Scholar Award**
- These awards support salary, or any other research need, of neuroscience-focused faculty to enable these research innovators to conduct innovative research of high patient impact;
- Up to 6 awards will be granted each year in 2016 and 2017, and thereafter dependent on funding;
- Up to $100,000 (total costs) for one year.

**Timeline**

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<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Program Announcement</td>
<td>May 25th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post Request For Proposal</td>
<td>June 1st</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notice of Intent Deadline</td>
<td>not required</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal Submission Deadline</td>
<td>July 15th</td>
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<td>Scientific Review Period and Finalist Selection</td>
<td>July 15th – August 10th</td>
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<td>Finalist PI Live presentations and Selection by Steering</td>
<td>August 24th (live presentations)</td>
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<td>Announcement of Award</td>
<td>September 1st</td>
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<td>Approximate Funding Start Date</td>
<td>October 14th</td>
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**Eligibility:**
Applicants must be researchers with a UCSF faculty appointment, as evidenced by a departmental chair signature on the cover sheet.
Although eligible researchers can apply to both funding mechanisms, award to the same researcher will be discouraged.

**Selection Process for Neurosciences Innovation Award:**
There will be a two-tier selection process.

- In Tier 1, the applications will be reviewed by the UCSF Weill Program Review Committee, comprising no fewer than seven researchers of appropriate expertise, and chaired by a member of the UCSF Weill Institute Steering Committee or a designee. Each proposal will be read by three reviewers and each reviewer will rank their top five projects in order (1 being best). The rankings for each proposal will be averaged to inform an overall ranked list to be used in an active discussion meeting of the Review Committee. During this meeting, the committee Chair will lead the discussion of the proposals, resulting in the selection of finalists for the awards.

- During the Tier 2 selection process, the finalists will have ten minutes in-person with the UCSF Weill Institute Steering Committee to present a quick research summary plus a Q&A session. Immediately following those presentations, the Steering Committee will meet privately to discuss and select the final awardees.

- The Steering Committee has ultimate authority and may address budget modifications, as they see fit.

Selection Criteria

1. Projects should address problems with high impact to human health;
2. Projects should employ an innovative neuroscience approach;
3. Projects should lead to and describe tangible benefit to patients, including the likelihood that the study will have an immediate impact;
4. Projects should employ convergent neuroscience concepts; bridging different disciplines of enquiry is encouraged;
5. Projects that address the challenges of interoperability, health disparities, privacy, participant engagement, consent, security, ethical and/or regulatory issues, are also encouraged;
6. Where applicable, projects should describe the potential downstream use of tools, measurements, approaches, and data, including open public accessibility of generated data and publications;
7. Projects that leverage the electronic health record data from across the UC Health centers are encouraged.

Proposal Instructions (Arial 11 font; 0.5 inch margins)

1. Cover Page (1 page limit): Cover page with name of award program, deadline, title of proposal, scientific disciplines represented in the collaboration (if applicable), amount of funding requested, Principal Investigator names, academic titles, departments, phone numbers, UCSF box numbers, and email addresses. Identify the contact PI and the UCSF department that will manage the award, the accounting manager/contact name, UCSF box number, email address, and phone number. Chairperson/Director statement signed by the contact PI’s department Chair or ORU Director.
   i. Chairperson/Director Statement: I am aware and supportive of this proposal submission. I affirm that the applicant has access to the research resources necessary to carry out this research and agree to provide fiscal management support for this project, if funded. Signed ___________________.

2. Project Description (2 page limit): Rationale/background; proposed research; innovation; impact. Preliminary data not required. Figures must be included within these 2 pages.

3. Citations (not part of page limitations)

4. Budget and Budget Justification (1 page limit): Funds may be used for faculty salary.

5. Biosketch (not part of page limitations): for each PI, new NIH format.

6. Current & Pending Support (not part of page limitations): All current and pending intramural and extramural research support information for each PI, following the NIH format.

Submission
Submit as a single PDF, via email to Gretchen Kiser at ucsfweillawards@ucsf.edu no later than 5:00 pm PST, July 15, 2016.

Progress Reporting
Written Progress Reports: A brief annual progress report is required for the duration of the project. Reports will be collected as part of an annual overall program report.
Selection Process for Neurosciences Scholar Award:

There will be a two-tier selection process for the Scholar Awards as well.

- In Tier 1, the applications will be reviewed by the UCSF Weill Program Review Committee, described above. Each application will also be read by three reviewers and each reviewer will rank their top five potential recipients in order (1 being best). The rankings for each applicant will be averaged to inform an overall ranked list to be used in a live meeting of the Review Committee. During this meeting, the committee Chair will lead the discussion of the applications, resulting in the selection of finalists for Scholar Awards.
- During the Tier 2 selection process, the UCSF Weill Institute Steering Committee will discuss the rankings and merits of each Scholar applicant, and select the final awardees.
- The Steering Committee has ultimate authority and may address budget modifications, as they see fit.

Selection Criteria:

1. The Scholar should have a demonstrable record of substantive contributions to neuroscience research;
2. The Scholar should have a strong potential to contribute significantly to innovative neuroscience clinical/translational research in future;
3. The Scholar’s current research efforts should address neuroscience challenges of critical need;
4. The Scholar’s current research efforts should have the potential for tangible benefit to patients, including the likelihood that the researcher will have an immediate impact;
5. It is encouraged that the Scholar has the potential to actively bridge different disciplines of enquiry.

Proposal Instructions (Arial 11 font; 0.5 inch margins)

1. Cover Page (1 page limit): Cover page with name of award program, deadline, title of proposal, scientific disciplines represented in the collaboration, amount of funding requested, Principal Investigator names, academic titles, departments, phone numbers, UCSF box numbers, and email addresses. Identify the contact PI and the UCSF department that will manage the award, the accounting manager/contact name, UCSF box number, email address, and phone number.
2. Description of Past Research Highlights and Current Research Plans (2 page limit):
   a. A summary of investigator’s most significant research findings to-date;
   b. Current Project(s): Rationale/background; proposed research; innovation; impact; current stage of research project and current funding, if any. Preliminary data not required.
   c. Figures must be included within these 2 pages.
3. Letters of Support from 2-3 different referees:
   a. Department Chair, Dean, or ORU Director: letter to include a confirmation that the applicant has access to the research resources necessary to carry out the research and agree to provide fiscal management support for the project, if funded (no page limit)
   b. One to two additional letters of support, one of which needs to come from outside of UCSF
3. Citations (not part of page limitations)
4. Biosketch (not part of page limitations): for each PI, new NIH format.
5. Current & Pending Support (not part of page limitations): All current and pending intramural and extramural research support information for each PI, following the NIH format.
(No need for a budget.)

Submission
Submit as a single PDF, via email to Gretchen Kiser at ucsfweillawards@ucsf.edu no later than 5:00 pm PST, July 15, 2016.

Progress Reporting
Written Progress Reports: One year after funding, the Scholar will submit a brief progress report; reports will be collected as part of an annual overall program report.
The UCSF Weill Institute leverages UCSF’s unrivaled bench-to-bedside excellence in the neurosciences. It unites three UCSF departments - Neurology, Psychiatry and Neurological Surgery - that are highly esteemed for both patient care and research as well as the Neuroscience Graduate Program, a cross-disciplinary alliance of nearly 100 UCSF faculty members from 15 basic-science departments, which awards doctoral degrees in a variety of research areas. Also included is the UCSF Institute for Neurodegenerative Diseases, a multidisciplinary research center focused on finding effective treatments for Alzheimer’s disease, frontotemporal dementia, Parkinson’s disease, and other neurodegenerative disorders. By integrating these areas, UCSF strengthens an already stellar record across the neurosciences.