



BRAIN CANADA AND PARTNERS JOINTLY SUPPORT FIVE NEW RESEARCH TEAMS

November 11, 2013

Brain Canada is pleased to announce the joint funding of five Multi-Investigator Research Initiative (MIRI) grants and associated funding partnerships.

The teams will each receive grants of \$1.5 million over three years to pursue novel, transformative research aimed at improving our understanding of nervous system function and dysfunction, and its impact on health. The total joint investment is \$7.5 million, shared equally between the partners and Brain Canada with matching funds provided from the Canada Brain Research Fund.

The teams were recommended for support following the 2012 MIRI competition, together with the five teams funded and announced earlier this year in collaboration with The W. Garfield Weston Foundation (with additional funding provided by The Krembil Foundation). The 10 teams represent the full number of applications that were recommended for funding by the international Selection Committee, thanks to the Canada Brain Research Fund and the contributing partners.

The five new MIRI grant projects include research into:

- *Investigating protein misfolding in amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS); team led by Dr. Neil Cashman*, University of British Columbia.
Team members: Jane Roskams (UBC); Jean Pierre Julien, Jasna Kriz (Université Laval)
Funding partners: University of British Columbia
Genome British Columbia
Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research
Institut universitaire en santé mentale de Québec
Le Fonds de recherche du Québec - Santé (FRQS)
- *Developing a non-invasive treatment of paediatric neurological disorders using MR-guided focused ultrasound; team led by Dr. James Drake*, The Hospital for Sick Children.
Team Members: Emily Tam, Adam Waspe, Gabrielle deVeber, Elizabeth Donner, Thomas Looi; Samuel Pichardo (Thunder Bay Regional Research Institute); Mojgan Hodaie (Toronto Western Hospital/UHN)
Funding partners: The Hospital for Sick Children Foundation
The Hospital for Sick Children
Toronto General and Western Hospital Foundation
- *Exploring the importance of neurotransmission in addiction and movement disorders such as Parkinson's disease; team led by Dr. Salah El Mestikawy*, McGill University.
Team members: Vania Ferreira Prado, Marco Prado (Western University).
Funding partners: McGill University
Western University
Le Fonds de recherche du Québec - Santé (FRQS)

- *Developing a safe and non-invasive approach to deliver drugs across the blood-brain-barrier to treat neurological diseases; team led by Dr. Roman Melnyk, The Hospital for Sick Children.*
Team members: Sheena Josselyn, James Ellis, Eyal Grunebaum, Berge Minassian
Funding partner: The Hospital for Sick Children (in partnership with Retrophin, Inc.)
- *Investigating the concept of neuronal hyper-excitability as an underlying mechanism common to many brain disorders including epilepsy, migraine and autism; team led by Dr. Terrance Snutch, University of British Columbia.*
Team members: Brian MacVicar, Yu-Tian Wang, Pieter Cullis (University of BC); John Howland (University of Saskatchewan).
Funding partners: Koerner Foundation
University of British Columbia
Genome British Columbia
Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research
University of Saskatchewan

About Brain Canada

Brain Canada is a national, charitable organization with the vision to understand the brain, in health and illness, to improve lives and achieve societal impact. Brain Canada is achieving its vision by:

- Increasing the scale and scope of funding to accelerate the pace of Canadian brain research;
- Creating a collective commitment to brain research across the public, private and voluntary sectors;
- Delivering transformative, original and outstanding research programs.

About the Canada Brain Research Fund

The Canada Brain Research Fund is a public-private partnership designed to encourage Canadians to increase their support of brain research, and maximize the impact and efficiency of those investments. Brain Canada has committed to raising \$100 million from private and non-governmental sources, which will be matched by Government on a 1:1 basis. The Fund was announced in federal budget 2011, which proposed to “allocate up to \$100 million to establish the Canada Brain Research Fund, which will support the very best Canadian neuroscience, fostering collaborative research and accelerating the pace of discovery, in order to improve the health and quality of life of Canadians who suffer from brain disorders.”

For more information about Brain Canada and the Canada Brain Research Fund: www.braincanada.ca

For more information or to request an interview, please contact Haifa Staiti, Manager Research Programs, at haifas@braincanada.ca or at 647-428-5279.