

Brain Canada Foundation Healthy Brains, Healthy Lives

The Amazing Brain

Request for Applications (RFA)

About Brain Canada Foundation

Brain Canada Foundation (Brain Canada) is a national registered charity that enables and supports excellent, innovative, paradigm-changing brain research in Canada. For more than two decades, Brain Canada has made the case for the brain as a single, complex system with commonalities across the range of neurological disorders, mental illnesses and addictions, and brain and spinal cord injuries. Looking at the brain as one system has underscored the need for increased collaboration across disciplines and institutions, and to ensure that Canada has a robust pipeline of talent to remain at the forefront in the field of brain research. Brain Canada's vision is to understand the brain in health and illness, to improve lives and achieve societal impact.

For more information about Brain Canada, please visit www.braincanada.ca

About Healthy Brains, Healthy Lives

Healthy Brains, Healthy Lives (HBHL) is an interdisciplinary program built on McGill University's global leadership in interdisciplinary neuroscience that uses big data analysis to reveal the fundamental mechanisms underlying normal brain function and brain disorders. HBHL accelerates translational discoveries and aims to create a global centre of excellence in neuroinformatics at McGill to improve brain health in Canada and around the world.

HBHL is made possible through support from the Canada First Research Excellence Fund (CFREF), Quebec's Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation (MEI), and the Fonds de recherche du Québec (FRQS, FRQSC and FRQNT).

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Scope

The Amazing Brain aims to engage and share information with the public on key findings from research and lived/living experience in brain health. This program encourages researchers to don their scientific communication hats and share scientific findings with the public from the exciting, innovative, and important brain research being conducted across Canada. This is a unique opportunity to deliver a 15-minute TED-style talk to a public audience onstage at a prominent venue in vibrant downtown Montreal. Content of the talk is open to the applicant's discretion but must be:

- On a topic related to their own brain-health-based research;
- Fit within one of the two session themes described below;
- Be consistent with what is described in the submitted Application Form and Video Submission;
- Should be of general interest to a public audience.

Event Details

The Amazing Brain will take place on Saturday, October 14, 2023, at the Tanna Schulich Hall in Montreal (555 Sherbrooke St W, Montreal, Quebec). There will be a mandatory event rehearsal onsite on Friday, October 13, 2023 (time to be announced at a later date). All participants are required to attend both the main event and the rehearsal. Talks will be a maximum of 15 minutes in duration and may be given in English or French (translation services will be provided for the audience). Visual aids (such as slides) are permitted but not required.

The Amazing Brain will consist of two sessions:

- (i) The Amazing Brain: Presentation topics that showcase the brain's incredible capacity for top performance in a range of activities. (Examples: Music and the brain, top-speed decision-making in sports, the powers of brain plasticity etc.)
- (ii) The Most for the Least: Bottom line recommendations about how to engage your brain strategically to improve health and wellness—key strategies where lower relative effort can give big results (Examples: Small changes that can improve brain health or safeguard it, improve mental health, safeguard child brain health over the life course, etc.)

Please note: The event will be recorded (audio and video) and made publicly available online.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Evidence clearly shows that increasing equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in research environments enhances excellence, innovation and creativity. Brain Canada and HBHL are committed to excellence through equity and encourage applicants of diverse backgrounds to apply to our funding opportunities, which will promote the expression of diverse perspectives, approaches, and experiences, including those of underrepresented groups.

Eligibility

- This opportunity is open to:
 - Brain Canada-funded researchers that have been awarded (past or current) an *Early-Career Capacity Building Grant* or *Future Leaders in Canadian Brain Research Grant*, or

- McGill University-affiliated early-career researchers in the field of neuroscience, within ten years of starting their first independent research position by the deadline to submit Video Submissions. Leaves of absence (e.g., maternity and parental leave, sick leave) will not be included in calculating the ten-year window.
- Applicants must be currently conducting research in their own independent research group at an eligible Canadian institution, at the time of application submission and at the time of the main event. Postdoctoral fellows or adjunct faculty are not eligible to apply.
- Applicants must submit an Application Form to be eligible for the Video Submission stage.
- Applicants must be able to attend the rehearsal and main event in person in Montreal.

Expenses

Reasonable travel and accommodation expenses for selected speakers will be covered. Travel and accommodation bookings will be made by Healthy Brains, Healthy Lives, in discussion with the presenters.

Eligible Costs

- Transportation (*Economy* class or equivalent) to and from Montreal
- Hotel accommodations for up to three nights
- Transportation to and from the event venue
- Meals

Criteria for Assessment

The spirit of this event is to engage and inform the public on the amazing power of the brain and to provide a lay audience with useful advice on how to safeguard their brain/mental health based on the latest evidence. The presentation (and application) should be in plain (non-scientific) language and on a topic related to the applicant's expertise based on their research focus. The content of the talk, while remaining within the specific expertise of the applicant, is not restricted to the applicant's own research and can draw upon significant findings in the field with the emphasis being on what is of most interest to a public audience. The focus should be on findings, outcomes, and big picture impact and not the granularity of the research process. The talk should make obvious what is **unique** and **exciting** about the findings, what makes this information **interesting**, why the public should be paying attention, **how these findings affect real people**, and what kind of **lasting impact** they may have on the lives of people in Canada and beyond. Tell us why we should care, and how you can empower us with your learnings.

Timeline

Launch of Request for Applications	April 24, 2023
Deadline for Application Form	17:00 ET, May 15, 2023
Invitation to Video Submission	May 29-31, 2023
Deadline for Receipt of Video Submission	17:00 ET, June 27, 2023
Notification of Decision	July 2023
Rehearsal and Main Event	October 13-14, 2023

How to Apply

Please note that *The Amazing Brain* opportunity includes an Application Form and a Video Submission stage. Applicants must submit an Application Form to be eligible for the Video Submission stage. Following an administrative review by McGill's Healthy Brains, Healthy Lives and Brain Canada, top-ranked applications will be invited to proceed to the Video Submission stage.

Application Forms and Video Submissions must be submitted via email to programs@braincanada.ca with the Subject Line "The Amazing Brain Submission". **It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure their submission adheres to the requirements and is received by the deadlines outlined above. There will be no appeal to late submissions.** Brain Canada will acknowledge receipt of the Application Forms and Video Submissions via email within two business days.

Application Form

The Application Form can be downloaded **here**. Please save and submit the Application Form as a PDF document.

1. Applicant Information

- a. Name, Institutional Affiliation(s), Department(s)
- b. Declaration of Eligibility

2. Presentation Details

- a. Proposed Talk Title
- b. Session Selection
- c. General area(s) of research
- d. Proposed Talk Summary: A brief summary of the proposed talk content, in language appropriate for a lay/public audience (maximum 300 words). The summary should address the Criteria for Assessment, as above.

3. Signature of Applicant

Video Submission

Following review of the Application Forms, selected applicants will be invited to submit a short video 'teaser' of their presentation. This **3-minute video** should be an abbreviated version of what is planned for the full presentation, touching on all the key points. Note that this does not have to be a formal polished video; successful applicants after this stage who are selected to be speakers will receive coaching and presentation tips to produce a more polished full talk for the in-person event.

Review Process

Application Forms will be reviewed for eligibility and relevance according to the Criteria for Assessment by both scientific and non-scientific reviewers at Healthy Brains, Healthy Lives and Brain Canada, as well as select external stakeholders (which may include community members and/or members of the Board of either or both organizations). Healthy Brains, Healthy Lives and Brain Canada will take into account any conflicts of interest, expertise, and demographic considerations to ensure a balanced panel.

Video Submissions will be reviewed by members of Healthy Brains, Healthy Lives and Brain Canada, on the basis of the Criteria for Assessment as well as ensuring a diversity of topics and engaging agenda for the day, which will be of interest to the public audience for the event. Selected videos will have the most engaging and novel content—the kind you would feel compelled to share with friends or family.

Confidentiality and Ownership

Healthy Brains, Healthy Lives and Brain Canada Foundation will keep all materials submitted for this opportunity confidential and only share them with reviewers and observers who have signed confidentiality and non-disclosure agreements.

Contact Information

For more information, or if you have any questions regarding the application process, please contact Brain Canada at programs@braincanada.ca.