BWH Program for Interdisciplinary Neuroscience

2025 Research Pilot Award Program

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

The BWH Program for Interdisciplinary Neuroscience is pleased to invite proposals for our 2025 Pilot Funding program. The application deadline is **Friday October 10, 2025**.

This program is targeted to junior investigators at BWH, including postdoctoral research fellows, clinical fellows, instructors, and assistant professors within three years of appointment (as of the submission deadline).

Applicants may request up to $50,000 direct costs plus indirect costs up to 20%, for a 1-year funding period. We intend to make two pilot funding awards in the current cycle. In accordance with our donors' wishes, one of these awards will be specifically in the field of brain tumors. Preference will be given to proposals that address fundamental mechanisms and/or new approaches to treatment.

The other award may be in any area of basic, translational or clinical neuroscience. Researchers in any department or discipline are welcome to apply, provided their proposal has direct relevance to neuroscience. Preference will be given to proposals that represent new research directions rather than a continuation of existing projects. For applicants below the rank of Assistant Professor and who do not have an independent lab, preference will be given to proposals that demonstrate the applicant's ability to develop novel directions that are distinct from the ongoing projects in the lab of their PI.

Applications will be reviewed by an expert panel of faculty members at BWH.

Timetable

RFP Announced:	August 2025
Proposals Due:	Friday October 10, 2025
Recipients Announced:	Mid-November 2025
Funding begins:	Shortly following announcement

Funds and purpose

Each award will be for $50,000 (direct costs) over a one-year period. The budget may also include up to 20% indirect costs (IDC), but the total budget inclusive of IDC should not exceed $60,000.

Funds can be used for stipend support, research costs, travel expenses associated with external collaborations, and/or travel to scientific meetings during the project period (subject to BWH policy on such expenses). The funds should be fully expended by the end of this period. Requests for no-cost extensions will need to be justified and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Eligibility

You are invited to apply if you meet the following criteria:

- You have a doctoral degree (e.g., MD, PhD, DVM or equivalent) and are a member of the BWH research community (i.e., a primary appointment at BWH that coincides with the funding period).
- You are a junior investigator (postdoc, clinical fellow, instructor or equivalent, or assistant professor within three years of appointment).
- US and non-US citizens are welcome to apply.
- Each applicant may submit only one application.

Other Terms

- All recipients will be expected to (1) provide a final report at the end of the funding period, plus other updates on request, and (2) participate in PIN events where they will present their work to internal or external audiences.
- Recipients shall remain full-time employees at BWH for the duration of the Fellowship. If an awardee leaves BWH, all unspent funds shall be returned to the Program for Interdisciplinary Neuroscience.

Review Criteria

Applications will be judged by a panel of expert reviewers, who will be invited to consider the following criteria when making their recommendations:

- **Applicant qualifications**—Does the applicant's track record demonstrate exceptional accomplishment, future promise, and commitment to basic or clinical neuroscience research? Do they have the necessary skills, training and time commitment to conduct the proposed work?

- **Significance**—Does the project address an important scientific question or technical/practical challenge in the field of basic or clinical neuroscience (or specifically neuro-oncology in the case of the targeted award)?

- **Novelty**—Does the project represent a new and potentially promising direction that would make it appropriate for pilot funding, rather than being a continuation of an existing project within the lab?

- **Environment**—Does applicant's lab and collaborative network provide opportunities (e.g. training, mentorship, access to resources and expertise) that will advance the applicant's research project and career development?

- **Approach**—Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed and appropriate to the aims of the project? Does the applicant acknowledge potential obstacles and consider alternative approaches?

- **Realistic**—Is the project feasible and likely to be completed in the proposed one-year time frame with the proposed resources?

- **Path Forward**—If the proposed work is successful, is it likely to lead to further funding, a durable collaborative relationship, changes in clinical practice and/or other tangible outcomes?

Decisions of the Selection Committee shall be final. No written feedback will be provided to applicants.

Application Materials

1. Completed PIN sheet and standard MGB cover sheet (download here as a single PDF).
2. A three-page research statement describing the work that you propose to undertake. You may include figures, images, tables or other material. However, they and the main text must fit on three pages. References may be in addition to the three-page limit. Text should be 11-point font or larger (Times New Roman, Arial or similar). Single spacing is allowed, provided all material is readily legible. Margins must be at least 0.5 inches in all directions.
3. A statement describing your interest in the field, including future career goals and how these will be advanced by the proposed project. Also please state: i) the anticipated fraction of your time to be devoted to this project; ii) the start date for your project if funded; iii) an estimated timetable for the project, including key milestones; and iv) how results may lead to further funding opportunities and/or other tangible outcomes. (Maximum of 500 words.)
4. A one-year budget for a maximum of $50,000 direct costs plus applicable indirect costs, not to exceed 20%.
5. Your CV or Biosketch and a summary of other support, current or pending. (Maximum 5 pages.)
6. A letter of support from your PI, department/division head or other senior mentor within BWH. (Maximum of one page, on letterhead.)
7. (For applicants below the rank of Assistant Professor and who do not have an independent lab) your PI's CV including current and pending support. (Maximum 5 pages).

All items, in the above order, must be compiled into a ***single*** PDF**.** Only the single PDF document will be shared with the review committee. Incomplete application packages may be rejected.

How to apply

- Deadline for receipt of the application is **Friday Oct 10, 2025**
- Applications must be submitted electronically to: cgjennings@bwh.harvard.edu with copy to bwhneurosciences@bwh.harvard.edu.
- In order to preserve the format of your application and to facilitate distribution to reviewers, you must submit your ***completed application as a single PDF*** document. Multiple PDFs, Word or other file formats will not be accepted.

For general information about the Program for Interdisciplinary Neuroscience, please visit our website. For questions about the Pilot Funding program, contact:

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Applications must be received no later than Friday Oct 10, 2025