



Call for startup project applications 'brain function and dysfunction'

The University Research Profile Area *Brain Function and Dysfunction over the Lifespan* invites applications for interdisciplinary startup projects. This is the first call with a submission deadline on November 1, 2010. Three projects will be selected. A second and third call will follow in 2011 and 2012. The goal of these startup projects is to facilitate the establishment of new interdisciplinary research collaborations on topics that fit within the [profile area](#).

Play around and explore

Truly novel research questions and approaches require more preparation and exploration than ongoing research does, especially if tackled with new collaborators from other disciplines and using unfamiliar research methods (e.g., brain imaging). This makes it difficult to prepare competitive proposals for research agencies, which commonly expect at least some preliminary data and pilot studies. The purpose of startup projects is to close that gap and to provide creative researchers with the opportunity to play around with an idea and explore its potential, and to learn communicating with new research partners from other disciplines before submitting a full grant proposal to a research agency.

€ 50.000

The three selected startup projects will be funded with a lump sum of € 50.000, which may be spent on researchers, research assistants, technical personnel, and/or apparatus, with no particular restrictions. It is expected that the startup project, if successful, will lead to a project proposal to be submitted to a national or international funding agency. High risk endeavors are particularly encouraged. Also encouraged are proposals from or including labs or research groups that are not yet, or not very strongly, involved in the profile area. This concerns researchers from any faculty and department. If necessary, technical and methodological support for newcomers can be provided by the Leiden Institute for Brain and Cognition (LIBC).

Requirements

Project proposals must include a brief abstract, the main goal and the research design of the project, and a description of the research team with the concrete contributions of the researchers involved. Proposals should be no longer than 4 pages (including references). They should be accompanied by CVs of the researchers involved. Only employees with a (parttime) academic appointment at Leiden University or the LUMC may apply.

Criteria

- The proposals will be ranked by a review committee according to the following criteria: Interdisciplinarity, with higher scores for projects spanning different labs or research groups, departments, and faculties
- Innovation, with higher scores for high-risk, cutting-edge projects

- Promise, with higher scores for projects that, if successful, have a high chance of leading to externally funded projects
- Quality, with higher scores for excellent researchers (irrespective of the risk)

Decision process

Project proposals should be sent to Mattanja Latuhihin-van der Wielen (m.h.latuhihin@lumc.nl). The review committee will rank the proposals and advise the coordinators of the research profile (van den Broek, van Buchem, Hommel, and Rombouts), who will make the final decisions to award the grants.

Review committee members will be eight LIBC/LCTN members from the faculties FSW, Humanities, LUMC, and W&N (2 from each). Committee members are not permitted to participate in any of the proposals from the current round, coordinators will be excluded from handling any proposal in which they are involved .

A first assessment will consider the topic of the proposal (must fall into the Research Profile Area), and the general scientific quality (irrespective of the four criteria) and lead to the exclusion of proposals that do not meet LIBC/LCTN standards. For this first call, € 150.000 are available (i.e. three grants).

Individuals can apply for no more than one grant as a main applicant. No limits apply for co-applicants. Committee members will rank the remaining proposals according to each of the four criteria, from which a total score will be calculated. Applications that are not awarded can be resubmitted for the early 2011 call.

(14 september 2010/LIBC)