



TEMPLETON POSITIVE NEUROSCIENCE AWARDS REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Supported by a grant from the John Templeton Foundation, the Positive Psychology Center of the University of Pennsylvania has established the Templeton Positive Neuroscience Awards. We are currently requesting applications for these awards to support innovative research projects at the intersection of neuroscience and Positive Psychology.

AWARD GUIDELINES

We seek to support talented young investigators conducting research aimed at gaining a better understanding of the ways in which the brain enables flourishing.

We will grant up to 20 two-year awards averaging \$200,000 to methodologically rigorous projects that apply tools of neuroscience to positive psychological concepts in the following core areas:

Virtue, strength, and positive emotion: What are the neural bases of the cognitive and affective capacities that enable virtues such as discipline, persistence, honesty, compassion, love, curiosity, social and practical intelligence, courage, creativity, and optimism?

Exceptional abilities: What is special about the brains of exceptional individuals and what can we learn from them?

Meaning and positive purpose: How does the brain enable individuals and groups to find meaning and achieve larger goals?

Decisions, values, and free will: How does the brain enable decisions based on values and how can decision-making be improved? What can neuroscience reveal about the nature of human freedom?

Religious belief, prayer, and meditation: How do religious and spiritual practices affect neural function and behavior?

While the primary aim of the Templeton Positive Neuroscience Awards is to support new neuroscientific research in the areas described above, we recognize the importance of behavioral research to neuroscience and encourage proposals that include and/or build on behavioral research.

We encourage collaborative proposals in which two investigators with complementary skills, one a neuroscientist and one a psychologist, join forces to conduct research that they would be less able to conduct separately. Such collaborative proposals may be eligible for awards equivalent to that of two individual awards, up to \$400,000 over two-years.

We will consider proposals that do not involve the collection of neuroscientific data *per se*, provided that the research has direct bearing on neuroscientific research — for example, behavioral genetics, animal behavior, and psychophysiology.

We welcome proposals that build on existing research, provided that the aims of the proposed research are directly relevant to Positive Psychology. We construe Positive Psychology broadly to include the five core topics of interest listed above as well as research in:

- Positive emotion
- Flow and engagement
- Noble purpose and meaning
- Positive relations
- Attachment
- Personality and behavioral genetics
- Social and emotional intelligence
- Moral judgment
- Self-control and Future-mindedness
- Resilience and optimism
- Creativity
- Happiness and subjective well-being
- Brain-body interaction
- Altruism, empathy, trust, and cooperation
- Interventions and outcomes

ELIGIBILITY

The Templeton Positive Neuroscience Awards are open to researchers worldwide who hold a Ph.D., M.D., or equivalent at the time of application and are no more than ten years beyond their doctorate or no more than ten years beyond their post-doctoral education.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested applicants will complete and submit an online application form and attachments including a short Letter of Intent and *curriculum vitae* by 8 p.m. ET on September 30, 2009.

The Letters of Intent will be reviewed by the Positive Neuroscience Steering Committee and Distinguished Senior Advisors. In December, 2009, 40 finalists will be invited to submit full proposals (due March 1, 2010) and present those proposals at a mandatory research symposium scheduled for June, 2010. Twenty award winners will be selected from the 40 finalists. The grant period will begin on August 1, 2010.

To apply for a Templeton Positive Neuroscience Award, carefully review all of the information below. This is a two step application process including 1) preparation of your Letter of Intent and *curriculum vitae* and 2) submission of online application form with attached required documents.

LETTER OF INTENT INSTRUCTIONS

The Letter of Intent should be no more than three pages in length and be written in 12-point Times New Roman font. It should accomplish the following:

- Describe how the proposed research addresses one of the core questions outlined above
- Specify research methodology and technology needed
- Include a project budget
- Include a title for the proposed research
- Identify likely collaborators

The selection criteria by which the steering committee will evaluate Letters of Intent and select the 40 finalists will include:

- **ELIGIBILITY:** Does the primary investigator (PI) hold a Ph.D., M.D., or equivalent and is the PI no more than ten years beyond his or her doctorate or post-doctoral education?
- **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:** Does the letter of intent include a research narrative, title, budget, and *curriculum vitae*?
- **RELEVANCE:** Is the project relevant to one of the core research themes?

- **EXPERTISE:** Does the PI demonstrate expertise in the proposed research area?
- **SCIENTIFIC MERIT:** Does the proposal employ rigorous scientific and statistical methods?
- **FEASIBILITY:** Is the proposed research feasible given the timeline and budget?
- **PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY:** Does the proposal research substantially engage broader psychological, philosophical and theological ideas?

THE ONLINE APPLICATION FORM

After preparing your Letter of Intent and *curriculum vitae*, please complete the online application form and submit those documents at: www.posneuroscience.org/application. No hard copy paper documents (mailed or faxed) will be accepted.

DEADLINE FOR YOUR APPLICATION

The online application form and documents must be received by **8:00 p.m. ET on September 30, 2009**.

All applicants — finalists and non-finalists — will be notified in December 2009 after the committee conducts the review process. Finalists will receive instructions for full proposals at that time. Applicants will not receive a critique of their Letters of Intent.

RESEARCH RETREATS

In addition to the June 2010 symposium for the 40 finalists, Steering Committee, and Senior Advisors, two annual Positive Neuroscience retreats are scheduled for June 2011 and June 2012 for the 20 awardees. The winning principal investigators will have the opportunity to report on research progress and exchange ideas with other scholars. Our goal is to encourage interdisciplinary collaboration and create a Positive Neuroscience Network.

RESEARCH DISSEMINATION

We will support dissemination of this research through a Positive Neuroscience website and an edited book. The website will serve as a public information hub and support communication between researchers with private social networking tools. News, events, and publications will be regularly updated.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS**2009**

July 1 Request for Applications announced
September 30 Submission deadline for Letters of Intent
December 15 40 finalists notified and invited to submit full proposals

2010

March 1 Submission deadline for full proposals
June Conference for finalists with Senior Scientists
July 15 Award winners notified
August 1 Start date for all grants

2011

March 1 First progress report due
June Annual Network Retreat
September 1 Mid-project progress report due

2012

March 1 Third progress report due
June Annual Network Retreat
November 1 Official grant end date
December 1 Final report due

CONTACT

Please direct all inquiries to:

Denise Clegg, Program Officer
University of Pennsylvania
Positive Psychology Center
Phone: 215-746-5084
Fax: 215-573-2188
Email: dclegg@psych.upenn.edu