MIND PRIZE
“Maximizing Innovation in Neuroscience Discovery”
An initiative from The Pershing Square Foundation
Frequently Asked Questions

ELIGIBILITY

1.) Q: How many PIs from an institution can apply?
   A: This is an open call for proposals, so multiple PIs from an institution in the USA may apply as long as they meet the eligibility requirements. We have no limit and applicants do not need to be nominated.

2.) Q: Can postdoctoral fellows apply?
   A: Unfortunately, no. Assistant Professors, Associate Professors, or Full Professors (or equivalent) with independent experience running their own labs from a minimum of one to a maximum of 10 years by the start date of the MIND Prize (May 2024) may apply. Salaries for postdocs in these labs may be on the submitted budgets.

3.) Q: What does “independent research experience” mean?
   A: Independent research experience means the start of a tenure-track faculty appointment or independent lab space, with a maximum of 10 years of experience by May 2024.

4.) Q: Can scientists from biotech startups apply?
   A: No, MIND Prize applicants must be full-time tenure-track faculty members at 501(c)3 research institutions in the USA.

5.) Q: Is a PI allowed to submit two LOIs for two very distinct projects?
   A: No, only one LOI is allowed per PI. We encourage them to choose their most innovative, high-risk, high-reward project to submit! However, a PI can be listed as a collaborator on another lead PIs application.

6.) Q: Do you make eligibility exceptions for parental leave and other similar extenuating circumstances?
   A: We do on a case-by-case basis. Please contact info@mindprize.org with additional information on the applicant’s exact situation.
THE APPLICATION

7.) Q: How should I format my LOI?
   A: The LOI is a one-page document in Georgia, 11-point font and single-spaced with 0.5-inch (NIH
   standard) margins.

8.) Q: Do figures need to be included in the one-page limit? What about references?
   A: While neither are required, figures need to be confined to the one-page limit, while references
   can be appended to an additional page(s). However, we encourage that any figures included
   remain legible for our reviewers.

9.) Q: Are there naming requirements for the application files?
   A: No, there aren’t any file naming requirements for the application files. As long as they are
   submitted as PDFs, applicants can name them whatever they’d like (reviewers don’t see the file
   name).

10.) Q: Where can I find the biosketch and budget templates?
    A: Once an applicant registers and begins to create an application on our application submission
    portal (https://prizeapplication.smapply.io), they will have access to the biosketch and budget
    templates.

11.) Q: How much is the award total and how much can I budget for direct and indirect costs per year?
    A: The award total is $750,000 over three years, so $250,000/year. This includes the indirect costs
    (not to exceed 10%), so annually it would be $225,000 in direct costs and $25,000 in indirect costs.

    Therefore, the budget should be constructed as follows:

    |                      | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Total |
    |----------------------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
    | Total Direct Costs   | $225,000 | $225,000 | $225,000 | $675,000 |
    | Indirect Costs (10%) | $25,000  | $25,000  | $25,000  | $75,000  |
    | TOTAL (Direct + Indirect) | $250,000 | $250,000 | $250,000 | $750,000 |

12.) Q: Should the budget take into account the full $750,000 award, or can I apply for a smaller
    amount of funding, such as $400,000?
    A: The award is $750,000 over three years, so the proposed project should be large enough in
    scope to have a budget that requires the full award amount. We do not accept budgets for amounts
    smaller than $750,000.
13.) Q: Is there a salary cap?
   A: No, we do not have a salary cap.

14.) Q: Do you allow carryover from year to year, and no-cost extensions?
   A: Budgets should not be designed to have carryover each year, but we do approve carryover as
   needed and requested in annual grant reporting, with adequate explanation. We also approve no-
   cost extensions at the end of an award term on a case-by-case basis. More details on this are
   included in our award terms and conditions, should an applicant be selected for funding.

15.) Q: In the biosketch publication list, can applicants include pre-prints?
   A: Yes, you absolutely can, but we’d recommend also including some fully published papers so that
   the reviewers can see the types of journals published in thus far, as that is also helpful.

16.) Q: I plan on having collaborator(s). Is this OK? Do I need to submit their biosketch and/or letters
    of support?
   A: This is a single investigator award, so there may only be one lead PI who is the primary applicant.
   However, we do allow collaborations! Applicants do not need to include the biosketches of
   collaborators or any letters of support. We encourage collaborations, but the reviewers will focus
   first and foremost on the primary applicant’s accomplishments, background, and work. If these
   wish to be included, they can be uploaded as additional files.

17.) Q: Will I need to submit a full proposal if my LOI is reviewed favorably?
   A: No, as of now the MIND Prize does not have a full proposal stage in the reviewing process. After
   the LOI, invited finalists will be asked to submit a PowerPoint presentation of no more than three
   slides. However, we recommend that applicants be ready to answer any detailed questions about
   their proposed project and provide additional information as needed, as there will be time for Q&A
   from the MIND Prize Scientific Advisory Board.

18.) Q: Who should submit the online application? Can this be the PI applicant? Or should this be
    someone from the academic institution?
   A: Ideally, it should be the PI applicant, and the email address associated with the application
   should be that of the PI applicant.