

## The Peter O'Donnell Jr. Brain Institute Focused Funding – Sprouts Project

### Program Description

The Peter O'Donnell Jr. Brain Institute (OBI) Sprouts grant program at UT Southwestern Medical Center is offering internal grants to provide funding for focused research support to facilitate the collection of pilot data to explore new directions that are not easily covered by other funding sources. These awards are primarily aimed at supporting new ideas from trainees working with OBI Investigators.

Submitted proposals should describe the targeted collection of pilot data for a novel research direction. Funding through this program is intended to encourage creative, high-quality research that also advances the training of young laboratory or clinical scientists and help enhance the portfolio of OBI research. All brain-related research areas are eligible, including both laboratory and clinical research. Preference will be given to proposals in the following areas: cell and molecular mechanisms of neurodegenerative disease; delineation and/or modulation of normal and disease-altered brain circuits.

### Award Information (See Program Timeline below)

- Estimated Number of Awards: up to six awards annually, subject to availability of funds
- Maximum Total Funding Per Project: up to \$25,000 to be awarded March, 1, 2025.
- Submission Deadline: December 1, 2024, 11:59PM

### Eligibility

- Single PI applications are allowable
- PI must be a trainee working under the supervision of an OBI Investigator (e.g., a graduate student, postdoctoral fellow, resident or clinical fellow).
- Only one proposal is allowable per PI laboratory

### Program Timeline

September 2024	Request for proposals (RFP) released
December 1, 2024	Applications due
February 2025	Awards announced
March 1, 2025	Funds available, Grant performance period begins
November 2025	Formal progress report due to OBI
March 1, 2025	Funding closed, Grant performance ends
June 2025	Final report due to OBI
October 2025	OBI Funded Grants Retreat – Final Report Presentation

### Proposal Submission Instructions

Submit all applications through the online Microsoft Forms link, here: [Microsoft Forms - OBI Sprouts Project application](#)

### Regulatory Compliance

Projects are subject to applicable federal, state, and local regulation, as well as UTSW policy. It is the PI responsibility to ensure compliance with UTSW Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), export control, conflict of interest, and UTSW safety regulations and approvals.

### Application Components

	Component	Format limit (maximum)
1.	Specific Aims	1 page
2.	Key references	1 page
3.	Budget	<i>Use a table format</i>
4.	Budget justification	1 page
5.	Biographical sketches from PI and mentor	5 pages per biosketch <a href="#">NIH template - Biosketch</a>

All documents will be single-spaced, no less than 12 point Times New Roman font, 1" margins on all document sides

1. Specific Aims  
State concisely the goals of the proposed research with expected outcomes, including the impact that the results of the proposed research will have on the research fields involved. List succinctly the specific objectives of the research proposed.
2. Key References  
This attachment should include any references. References should be limited, relevant, and concise.
3. Budget  
Use a table format
4. Budget Justification  
This form includes details for all expenditures and budget line items (e.g., time and effort, materials, supplies, travel) needed to support the research project.
5. Biographical Sketches  
Biographical sketches are required for all PI (NIH Fellowship template) and OBI Investigator Mentor, (non-Fellowship NIH template), found here: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>

### **Budget Considerations**

Funds may be utilized for direct expenditures in accordance with the following:

- Salary support is allowable for individual(s) who are making significant effort towards the goal of the proposed research.
- Fringe benefits are allowable in proportion to salary charged to the award.
- Consumable scientific items — materials and supplies, any item with a cost of less than \$5,000/unit; must be justified as needed for project success.
- Core Facility Services – costs associated with services performed by a recognized UT Southwestern Core Facility
- Expenses related to animal research and human subjects research, including compensation to human subjects.
- Contracts for activities outside of UT Southwestern (must be clearly and convincingly described as necessary for successful execution of the proposed project). Consultant fees and/or related expenditures are allowable, excluding any overhead costs.

The following are excluded as direct expenditures:

- General office supplies, equipment or expenses
- Building construction, alteration, renovation, rent or utilities
- Student tuition or fees
- Membership dues
- Overhead
- Equipment – unit cost of \$5,000 and useable life of greater than one year
- Payments of salaries to non-UT Southwestern personnel
- Refreshments
- Domestic and international travel

### **Grant Administration**

The PI (applicant) is responsible for the administration of grant funds. All grant expenditures must conform to state and university regulations and approvals. In particular, the PI must be certain that over-expenditures do

not occur, and that all funds are fully expended according to programmatic deadlines. All work must be completed within the performance period.

**Any publication or presentation resulting from this award should acknowledge the support from the Peter O'Donnell Jr. Brain Institute at UT Southwestern Medical Center.**

### **Peer Review**

Applications will be reviewed by an internal OBI Grant Review Committee. This committee is appointed by OBI leadership. Proposals will be evaluated based on the criteria below:

- Significance
- Innovation
- Approach

NIH grant review criteria, updated for OBI: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/peer-review.htm#scoring2>

### **Information Disclosure**

Patentable ideas, trade secrets, or other confidential information should be included in applications only when such information is necessary to convey an understanding of the proposed project. If a grant is awarded, the OBI may use or disclose the information in internal administrative business, marketing communications (internal and external), OBI-sponsored events, department and center newsletters, and in other ways necessary for the project's success. It is the PI's responsibility to convey any concerns regarding confidentiality in the initial application, including requests for non-disclosure, which will be reviewed and evaluated by the Sprouts committee.

### **Mentor Involvement**

Should your application be successful, it is anticipated that you and your mentor will engage in and provide support for various OBI programs throughout the year. This may involve participation in committee membership, offering ad-hoc counsel or advice, serving as a judge for poster sessions, or responding to other special requests as needed.

### **Contact Information**

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