



REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

American Brain Foundation's Cure One, Cure Many Award in Neuroinflammation

FUNDED IN COLLABORATION WITH



APPLICATIONS MANAGED BY



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Important Dates

- Pre-Proposals Accepted: June 2, 2025
- Pre-Proposals Due: July 15, 2025
- Invitations to Submit Full Applications Issued: August 2025
- Full Applications Due: September 30, 2025
- Anticipated Award Announcement: November 2025
- Anticipated Award and Funding Start: January 15, 2026

Program Description

Neuroinflammation contributes to numerous diseases across all stages of life, from fetal development to aging. It plays a central role in neurological conditions ranging from Alzheimer's disease, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, ALS, encephalitis, Huntington's disease, stroke, brain tumor, epilepsy, migraine, chronic pain, myopathy and neuropathy, traumatic brain injury, meningitis, and COVID-19 associated brain disease.

Emerging insights into the disease-associated and neuroprotective/neuro-regenerative roles of neuroinflammation create extraordinary opportunities to harness the immune system's potential to treat, repair, and even cure some of the most pernicious brain disorders, and to extend the healthy lifespan.

The 2025 Cure One, Cure Many Award in Neuroinflammation will be carried out through two types of grants: **Breakthrough Grants** and **Catalyst Grants**. Both types of grants support high-risk, high reward and translational research with a focus on clinical impact.

These grants are funded in collaboration with Encephalitis International (encephalitis.info), Gates Ventures, Genentech (gene.com), National Multiple Sclerosis Society (nationalmssociety.org), NFL Players Association (nflpa.com), and WoodNext Foundation (woodnext.org). Applications will be managed by the American Academy of Neurology (aan.com).

Funding Available

A total of at least \$5.4M is available through this call. The ABF intends to award:

- Two Breakthrough Grants of up to US \$2 million each (up to \$1 million per year for two years)

- At least two Catalyst Grants of up to US \$500,000 (up to \$250,000 per year for two years)

The Selection Committee reserves the right to award a lesser amount if the full request funding is deemed unjustified, or to fund additional applications should funds allow.

Final budgets will be determined based on a review of proposed work. Applicants are encouraged to leverage additional sources of funding and resources.

Eligibility

Applications may be submitted by basic, translational, or clinical investigators from:

- U.S. and international public and private non-profit entities, such as universities, colleges, hospitals, and laboratories.
- U.S. and international biotechnology/pharmaceutical companies, or other publicly or privately held for-profit entities.

The principal investigator should hold an MD, PhD, or equivalent terminal clinical degree.

Applicants may submit only one application and may not submit applications for both a Breakthrough Grant and a Catalyst Grant.

The American Brain Foundation provides equal opportunities to all applicants for funding without regard to race, religion, color, age, sex, pregnancy, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic disposition, neurodiversity, disability, veteran status, or any other protected category under federal, state, and local law.

Evaluation and Selection

The American Brain Foundation seeks interdisciplinary proposals that identify novel inflammation-based mechanisms, pathways, biomarkers, therapies, and/or technologies that have potential to produce significant clinical advances in neurodegenerative, developmental, autoimmune, inflammatory, or neuromuscular diseases.

We encourage applications that involve:

- Mechanistic studies embedded in ongoing clinical trials
- Cross-institutional collaborations between academic institutions and industry
- Studies exploring immunologic commonalities of neurologic diseases
- Development or use of novel disease models
- Bedside human investigations, including interventional and imaging studies, to characterize circuits, function, or cell type specific pathologies or vulnerabilities.
- Teams that include members at all levels of training, including early stage investigators, and a broad range of backgrounds and expertise
- Robust data sharing

The American Brain Foundation and its partners are committed to supporting research that incorporates a broad range of perspectives and includes study populations that reflect the full spectrum of individuals affected by neuroinflammation. Research

consistently shows that teams with varied backgrounds and viewpoints produce stronger outcomes; therefore, we encourage applicants to include information about the composition of the team that will lead the proposed work.

Applications will be reviewed by a selection committee of experts from ABF and its partner organizations. Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. Alignment with research priorities of the Neuroinflammation Initiative
2. Scientific rationale, innovation, and methodological rigor
3. Potential clinical impact and translational value
4. Team expertise and composition
5. Evidence of collaborative partnerships across institutions and with industry
6. Feasibility and approach to data sharing
7. Impact for multiple groups of people and disease areas

Grant Descriptions

Breakthrough Grants

- **Funding:** Up to \$2 million total (up to \$1 million per year for two years)
- **Purpose:** These grants are designed to support interdisciplinary teams investigating novel neuroinflammation mechanisms and the potential development of new biomarkers, therapeutic targets, or technologies. Teams must include members from at least three institutions and ensure that projects bridge multiple disciplines.

Catalyst Grants

- **Funding:** Up to \$500,000 total (up to \$250,000 per year for two years)
- **Purpose:** Catalyst Grants support high-risk, high-reward research projects that explore and innovate, interdisciplinary approaches to neuroinflammation. These grants are intended to help researchers overcome critical research hurdles and offer flexibility to explore bold ideas that have the potential to lead to significant advances in diagnosis, treatment, or prevention.

Pre-Proposal Instructions

Deadline: July 15, 2025 at 5pm CT

Please submit proposals in Arial 11 font, minimum 0.5-inch margins. Content should be non-confidential.

Pre-proposals for both Breakthrough Grants and Catalyst Grants should be no longer than one (1) page and must include:

- Name of grant to which you are applying (Breakthrough Grant or Catalyst Grant)

- Project title
- Name and contact information for the Principal Investigator
- Lay summary (one paragraph)
- Project description outlining key aims, overarching themes, and the role of collaboration/partnerships in the proposed project.
- List of team members and their affiliations (not part of page limit)

Applicants must also upload NIH-style Biosketches for each principal investigator. Biosketches do not count towards the one-page limit.

Full Application Instructions

Deadline: September 30, 2025 at 5pm CT

Full applications are by invitation only.

Breakthrough Grants

Five pages total, excluding cover page and references.

Full applications for **Breakthrough Grants** should include:

- Cover page:
 - Title of proposal
 - Amount of funding requested
 - Principal Investigator name(s), academic or professional titles, departments or companies, and contact info, with one PI designated as the contact PI.
 - Name, title, and contact info for institutional official responsible for grant administration
- Project description
 - Specific aims
 - Background and significance
 - Approach
 - Collaborators and partners
 - Deliverables
 - Criteria for success
 - Brief management plan
- References (not part of page limit)
- Budget and budget justification
 - Up to 15% of the total grant may be used towards indirect costs

Catalyst Grants

Three pages total, excluding cover page and references.

Full applications for **Catalyst Grants** should include:

- Cover page:
 - Title of proposal
 - Amount of funding requested

- Principal Investigator name(s), academic or professional titles, departments or companies, and contact info, with one PI designated as the contact PI.
- Name, title, and contact info for institutional official responsible for grant administration
- Project description
 - Specific aims
 - Background and significance
 - Approach
 - Collaborators and partners
 - Deliverables
 - Criteria for success
 - Brief management plan
- References (not part of page limit)
- Budget and budget justification
 - Applicants may request to use a portion of the grant towards reasonable indirect costs

To Apply

Applications will be managed by the American Academy of Neurology (AAN). All applications must be submitted online via SmartSimple. Visit <https://aan.smartsimple.com/> and follow the instructions for the Cure One, Cure Many Awards.

Contact Information

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