Neurodegenerative diseases of aging are among the least understood and most undertreated diseases today. Diseases such as Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s are placing a large and increasing burden on society. If ignored, the social and economic costs to manage these diseases will rise significantly within a generation.

The Weston Brain Institute (the “Institute”) supports research that accelerates the development of therapeutics for neurodegenerative diseases of aging. To help achieve this, the Institute addresses gaps and inefficiencies in the funding market by supporting high-risk, high-reward translational projects, while leveraging world-class business and scientific expertise in a fast and flexible granting process.

Ensuring the world hears about scientific advances in a timely manner is also critical to accelerating treatments. The Weston Brain Institute International Outstanding Achievement Award was created to recognize and highlight the recent outstanding contributions of researchers to the global effort to fight these diseases.

The award is presented once a year, and nominee eligibility alternates between Canadian-based researchers and those based in Ireland, the Netherlands and the UK.

Past awardees include Dr. Peter St George-Hyslop (2016, Canada), and Professor Nick Fox (2017, UK).

In 2018, the award will be honoring a Canadian-based researcher for recent contributions in translational research in neurodegenerative diseases of aging.

Future awards:

- **2019**: Researcher in Ireland, the Netherlands or the UK
- **2020**: Researcher in Canada

### Section 1  Award overview

The award recognizes an exceptional investigator who, in the field of translational research to accelerate the development of therapeutics for neurodegenerative diseases of aging, has made exceptional advances in research in particular in the past 15 years, demonstrated remarkable leadership, and is likely to make substantial scientific contributions to the field in the next 5 -10 years. The awardee should also have made positive societal contributions and have a record of impeccable citizenship in the research community.

The award consists of a $40,000 prize provided to the awardee through a Canada Revenue Agency qualified donee institution with which the awardee is affiliated.

The awardee will be honoured at an award presentation ceremony concurrent with the Society for Neuroscience Annual Meeting in San Diego, California in November 2018. Travel expenses for the
awardee to attend the event will be covered by the Institute.

Section 2  Evaluation criteria

Nominees that meet all eligibility requirements (please refer to Section 4 – Eligibility of Nominees and Nominators) will be reviewed by the award jury.

The following criteria will be used to evaluate applications for this Program:

- **Research contributions** (weight - 75%): The nominee must have accelerated the development of therapeutics for neurodegenerative diseases of aging through exceptional contributions to translational research. In the selection process, greater emphasis (weight - 70%) will be placed on contributions that have occurred in the past 15 years. Contributions that occurred more than 15 years ago, and the potential of a nominee’s future work will also be taken into account in the overall score for ‘Research contributions’ (weight – 15% each for past and future contributions).

  Examples of research contributions include but are not limited to:
  
  - The nominee’s work has resulted in the development of new therapies for neurodegenerative diseases of aging (Note: Nominee’s work may relate to any disease(s) but will be evaluated based on its impact on neurodegenerative diseases of aging.)
  - The nominees’ findings have enabled earlier and/or more accurate diagnosis of the disease, or better ways of tracking disease course or monitoring treatment effects.
  - Receiving national and international awards, and having a track record of competitive extramural funding.
  - The nominee’s research has been recognized internationally as being of the highest quality (e.g. numerous publications in high-impact, peer-reviewed journals).

- **Leadership contributions** (weight – 25%): The nominee must have a record of exceptional leadership in translational research for accelerating the development of therapeutics for neurodegenerative diseases of aging.

  Examples of leadership contributions include but are not limited to:
  
  - Contributing significantly to the mentorship and training of the next generation of researchers in this field.
  - Using leadership positions in the field to spur organizations to unusual levels of achievement.
  - Establishing or leading international consortiums or collaborative projects to accelerate research in the field.

A nominee’s societal contributions and citizenship will be taken into account if all else (i.e., scientific and leadership contributions) is considered equal among the top candidates.

Examples of societal contributions and citizenship include:

- Demonstrating an exceptional level of empathy and concern for patients and families through efforts at improving their quality of life.
- Being collaborative and actively sharing resources.
- Respecting and acknowledging the scientific contributions of peers including those that may be in competition with him/her.
- Working to advance disease awareness and patient education.

An award will not be given if the award jury determines that there is no suitable candidate.

Section 3 Application process

Anyone can submit one or more nominations for the award. Self-nominations are not permitted. Nominators submit nomination(s) through the Institute’s online grants management system (https://weston.smartsimple.co/welcome/neuroscience) by Tuesday June 12, 2018.

The Institute will then contact the nominee to submit a curriculum vitae (CV), two optional letters of reference, and a standard release form.

Completed applications (nomination form, CV, up to two reference letters, release form) submitted no later than Wednesday June 27, 2018 will be prescreened for eligibility and then reviewed by the Institute’s award jury.

The nominee selected for an award will be contacted in September 2018 to confirm acceptance of the award. The awardee must be able to accept the award in San Diego, California in November 2018, and participate in award activities. The awardee must also allow his/her photograph and publicly available information to be used in describing the award, the ceremony and/or the winner. If the award is turned down or the selected recipient is no longer eligible, the nominee is required to keep the notice of their selection confidential. An awardee accepting the award is required to keep the results of the competition confidential until an official award announcement is made by the Institute.

Section 4 Eligibility of Nominees and Nominators

To be eligible, the nominee must

- Have made exceptional contributions in translational research that have accelerated the development of therapeutics for neurodegenerative diseases of aging, in particular in the past 15 years. Please note that this is NOT a lifetime achievement award.
- Be presently leading translational research on neurodegenerative diseases of aging with a current full-time appointment/position, and have an appointment at a Canada Revenue Agency qualified donee institution in Canada.
- Be working in Canada >50% of the time at or above the assistant professor or equivalent level.
- Have performed >50% of relevant research and leadership contributions in the past 15 years in Canada.
- Have positive recommendations for citizenship in the research community and societal contributions.

The following are not eligible:

- Those who have retired/have Emeritus status.
- Those who do not anticipate having a full-time position in research for the next 5 years.
- Those who will not likely be engaged in translational research to accelerate the development of therapeutics for neurodegenerative diseases of aging for the next 5
years.
- Past recipients of this award.
- Self-nominations.

Anyone located anywhere can nominate an individual. Self-nominations are not permitted.

Institute definitions

Neurodegenerative diseases of aging:
- Alzheimer’s disease
- Dementia with Lewy bodies
- Frontotemporal dementia
- Multiple system atrophy
- Parkinson’s disease
- Progressive supranuclear palsy
- Vascular contributions to the above diseases (not stroke-mediated vascular disease)
- Prodromes to the listed diseases, including
  - Mild cognitive impairment as prodromal to Alzheimer’s disease
  - REM sleep behaviour disorder as prodromal to Parkinson’s disease

Translational research: Applied research towards developing therapeutics for the prevention and/or treatment of human disease. For example, for small molecule drug development, this includes target validation to phase II clinical trials. Basic/discovery research, including but not limited to understanding disease mechanisms and discovering genes implicated in disease, is not in scope.

Therapeutic: A pharmacological approach (including small molecules, biologics, cell therapies and vaccines, including drug repositioning and repurposing), medical device, surgical intervention, or magnetic or electrical brain stimulation. Therapeutics can be for symptomatic relief, disease modification, or prevention. Complementary approaches such as exercise, acupuncture, music, dietary and nutritional supplements are not considered therapeutics. Identification of novel therapeutics is in scope (e.g., high throughput compound screens); however, identification of novel therapeutic targets, including genes implicated in disease, is not in scope.

Tools: An item that accelerates development of therapeutics, e.g., imaging techniques or reagents, biomarkers, and diagnostics.
- Tools must have direct impact on the translational development of therapeutics (as defined by the Institute, i.e., target validation to phase II clinical trials) and will be valued only on their ability to do this. Any value the tools contribute to basic research will not be taken into consideration. For example, tools will not be valued for their ability to identify new targets or understand disease mechanisms.
- Projects covering only the discovery/identification of a tool are out of scope.

Section 5  Confidentiality

Information in the application to this Program will be used by the Institute and the award jury for their review and assessment of the application.

The Institute will keep the nominator’s recommendation and letters of reference confidential.
However, other information in the application to this Program may be used by the Institute for publicity or promotional purposes.

Section 6  Other

Liability and Indemnity
Each nominee and nominator pursuant to this Program acknowledges and agrees in responding to the Program announcement that the nominee and nominator shall have no claim against the Institute, and its respective representatives, related companies or affiliates, should such Program response be unsuccessful for any reason. Each nominee and nominator hereby remises and releases the Institute, its representatives and affiliates, from any cause of action, complaint, or claim in connection with the RFA process and its outcome.

The Institute’s role in this Program is that of a funder. The Institute is not the sponsor of funded projects. As such, the Institute will not assume any liability associated with funded projects and each awardee who is ultimately awarded pursuant to this Program releases the Institute from any and all liability with respect thereto and further indemnifies the Institute, and its respective representatives and affiliates, from any claim or loss whatsoever associated with the applicable award.

Other
The Institute reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications at its discretion and to negotiate the terms of the specific award agreement with the awardee and his/her affiliated institution.

The Institute, at its sole discretion, may change the timeline of the process and/or the recipient of the award. The Institute may, at its discretion, split the award between two or more individuals.

The submission of an application does not bind, either, the Institute, the nominee, or the nominee affiliated institution, by any commitment to provide or receive the award, respectively.