



UK Dementia
Research Institute

2019 Eisai / UK DRI Research Programme on Dementia

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

UK DRI and Eisai, one of the world's leading research-based pharmaceutical companies (eisai.co.uk), have joined forces to launch a post-doctoral research programme on dementia.

This new programme invites novel research projects in the field of neurodegeneration that may ultimately lead to transformative medicines for dementia patients. This programme's particular disease focus areas are: Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease (and related synucleinopathies) and frontotemporal dementia.

All UK DRI group leaders (at Fellow and Professor level including Ser Cymru and Sir Henry Dale Fellows) are invited to submit proposals. Although any dementia-relevant project will be considered, the following themes are of particular interest:

1. Removal of aggressive factors (beyond beta amyloid) underpinning neurodegenerative diseases, such as: aberrant protein misfolding, aggregation and clearance (including autophagy); mitochondrial dysfunction (including mitophagy); lipid homeostasis.
2. Synaptic health and function.
3. Neuronal regeneration and repair.
4. Immunodementia/neuroinflammation (microglial and astrocyte biology).

The overriding aim of the programme is to better understand the underlying biology that may lead to:

- The identification of new molecular targets, pathways and/or mechanisms for therapeutic intervention.
- Innovative drug methodologies to target the above (such as mechanisms for improved brain delivery, novel chemical or biological entities, cellular or genetic approaches).
- The development of novel *in vitro* or *in vivo* model systems (including cutting edge screening platforms/technologies) translatable to human biological processes, with which to investigate modulation of the above.
- The development of biomarkers for patient selection/stratification or pharmacodynamic assessment of new therapeutics.

This programme will be an active collaboration between the UK DRI Centres and Eisai, who will play an ongoing, active role in the projects and will seek to work with the PIs in adding value wherever possible. For further details see Annex 1.

Awards of up to £221,000 (direct costs) will be provided to support a new three-year post-doctoral position, including salary (plus employer costs) and up to £10,000 per annum for reagents or other expenses (Awards will be made by UK DRI and will be subject to established UKDRI-university overheads).

Up to three awards will be made for this cycle. (This RFP will be repeated in 2020.)

The applicant must satisfy the selection committee that they have ready access to all necessary research facilities, samples, reagents and equipment, and have all necessary regulatory approvals such that the work can start promptly.

Proposals will be assessed and funding decisions made by a joint UK DRI and Eisai committee. Successful applicants and their supported post-doctoral researcher will be required to attend an annual one-day workshop to discuss the ongoing work.

Important Dates

RFP announced: **20 May 2019**

Applications due: **Midnight 19 July 2019**

Recipients announced: **by end-August 2019**

Funding available: **From 2 September 2019**

Guidelines

1. Applicants must be UK DRI group leaders and have established their UK DRI laboratory by the award start date.
2. Applicants may include non-UK DRI investigators as co-applicants or collaborators.
3. Applications must be approved by an appropriate university finance/grants manager.
4. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain all relevant clearances and/or approvals for the proposed work, such as those required for human tissue or animal research.
5. Funding is intended to provide the salary and associated employer costs for a new post-doctoral investigator. An additional £10,000 per annum will be provided for reagents and other customary research costs. The award may not be used for equipment, service contracts, laboratory or other institutionally levied fees, international travel, publications fees etc (Expenses associated with attending the annual workshop may be applied to the award).
6. The project and spending must be completed within 36 months.

Selection Criteria

1. Significance. Does this study address an important problem relevant to our understanding, diagnosis or treatment of dementia or neurodegenerative diseases?
2. Alignment. Does the project align with the programme's stated disease and focus areas?
3. Prospects. If the project is completed successfully, is it likely to lead to ongoing work that will further address the programme's stated aims?
4. Approach. Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative approaches?
5. Innovation. Are the specific aims original and innovative? Does the project employ novel concepts, approaches, or methods?
6. Investigator. Is the applicant qualified to carry out the work?
7. Environment. Does the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Are reagents, tools or other methods in place such that the project can start promptly and be completed within 36 months?

Applications must include the following:

1. Completed cover page (1.0 page) – [Download](#)
2. Research plan (maximum of 7.0 pages). All figures, tables etc must be incorporated into the text.
 - Background and Significance (~ 1.0 page)
 - Specific Aims (~ 1.0 page)
 - Preliminary Studies (~ 1.0 page)
 - Research Design and Methods (study design; data to be collected; analysis plan; proposed follow-up studies (~ 3.0 pages)
 - References (~ 1.0 page)
3. Ancillary Documents
Applications must also include the following pages:
 - Budget (direct costs only) and budget justification (maximum of 1.0 page)
 - Biographical sketch (for applicant only) including up to 5 relevant publications (2.0 pages)
 - Letter from applicant confirming that any proposed collaborators or co-applicants have agreed to take part in the project, that access to any proposed reagents or tools has been confirmed, and providing any other important statements of support. (1.0 page)

Rules and Requirements

1. The deadline for the receipt of the application is **midnight 19 July 2019**.
2. The entire package (12 pages maximum; as described above; no exceptions) must be assembled into a **single PDF** and emailed to enquiries@ukdri.ac.uk
3. Format: All text must be Arial or Calibri 11-point font. Figures, charts, tables, etc must be readily legible. Single-spacing is allowed. Margins, in all directions, must be at least 0.5 inches.

For application process or administrative issues, please contact Polly at polly.downing@ucl.ac.uk

For questions of a scientific nature, please contact Adrian at a.ivinson@ucl.ac.uk

Applications must be submitted to enquiries@ukdri.ac.uk by midnight 19 July 2019.

Annex 1 – Supplementary Funding Details

1. Successful applicants will be assigned an Industrial Lead from Eisai who will liaise with you via quarterly scientific updates.
2. If you recognise an opportunity for Eisai to collaborate (e.g. provide data, expertise, compounds, materials) this will be discussed further and arrangements made.
3. Where Eisai becomes an active collaborator to the project, the university may be required to disclose relevant background IP.
4. Furthermore, the university must recognise and accept that that such a collaboration may result in jointly-owned foreground IP.
5. The university must grant Eisai a royalty-free, irrevocable, non-transferable, non-exclusive licence to use the results owned by the university for the sole purpose of internal research and development.
6. For any jointly owned IP/results the university will be required to grant Eisai the option to take an exclusive licence to commercially exploit such IP/results.
7. For any IP/results owned solely by the university, the university will be required to grant Eisai the option to take an exclusive licence to commercially exploit such IP/results. The terms of any licence will be negotiated in good faith between Eisai, the UK DRI and the university.
8. All other terms and conditions of funding follow the standard terms and conditions outlined in the UK DRI Ltd/University Institute Agreement.