

Kavli Neuroscience Discovery Institute Distinguished Doctoral Fellows Program 2024-25

Submission deadline April 15, 2024

Objective

The KavliNDI Distinguished Doctoral Fellowship enables doctoral fellows at Johns Hopkins University to pursue cross-disciplinary research, aligned with the mission of the Kavli Neuroscience Discovery Institute (Kavli NDI), in neuroscience, engineering, and data science.

Award Information

We invite proposals for funding up to \$40,000 per year for two years. Second year funding is contingent on acceptable progress, as described in the progress report, due two months prior to the start of the second year. Successful awardees will receive upto \$1,500 over the course of the fellowship to attend conferences and workshops relevant to their project.

Eligibility

- Full-time JHU mid and advanced stage graduate student trainees.
- Fellows must be co-mentored by full-time faculty members at JHU who are eligible to serve as Principal Investigator (PI) and Co-PI.
- At least one mentor must be an existing Kavli NDI member.
- The PI and Co-PI must be from distinct disciplines, such that together they bridge neuroscience to engineering and/or data science.
- The award cannot be held concurrently with a fellowship that supports salary (or stipend) and benefits.
- Investigators can be PI/Co-PI on multiple applications. However, there will be a limit of one award total per PI (in each of the two categories – Postdoctoral and Doctoral fellowship).
- Past awardees cannot be considered. However, PI of a past awardee can apply again as a PI/Co-PI.

Key Dates

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| March 15 th | Application portal opens |
| April 15 th | Applications due by 11:59 PM, Eastern Standard Time |
| Mid-May to Mid-June | Notification of decision |
| July 1 st | Expected start date of award period |

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Proposal Preparation and Submission

Formatting Requirements

All application materials must be formatted to fit on 8.5 x 11" paper with 1-inch margins, single line spacing, 12-point Arial or Helvetica font. Please adhere to the specified page limit for each section (mentioned below).

Submit applications via [Link]

The application deadline is April 15th, 2024 (11:59 PM, Eastern Standard Time).

Proposal Materials

Proposals should include the following items:

1. **Applicant's Biosketch**, not to exceed five (5) pages, in accordance with NIH guidelines (for formatting assistance see <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/>).
2. **PI and Co-PI** should include:
 - **Each PI's Biosketch**, not to exceed five (5) pages, in accordance with NIH guidelines (for formatting assistance see <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/>).
 - A brief, 1-page statement summarizing the **qualifications and specific expertise** that will be contributed to the project, and how these skills will be integrated together for co-mentorship of the applicant throughout the entirety of the Fellowship.
 - A 1-page **mentorship plan** that clearly delineates how the fellow, PI and Co-PI mentors intend to integrate their research to form a cohesive team at the start of support and throughout the tenure of the project. This section should delineate specific steps the team will take to ensure they are supporting the goal of creating new synergies across disciplines directly between the Fellow, PIs, and the other members of their laboratories including, but not be limited to, participation of the Fellow in lab meetings for both laboratories, a description of how often mentees will meet each PI, and how each PI will participate in mentorship throughout the fellowship.
 - A list of each PI's **existing funding** for research related to the projects. Following NIH format for description of "Other Support".
3. **Project Title**: Title reflecting the central concepts of the project, not to exceed 30 words.
4. **Lay Abstract**: Lay description of the project in 300 words or less, written to be conceptually accessible to a non-expert audience, and highlighting the potential impact of the proposed research.
5. **Project Description** (5 pages maximum, not including references): This document must contain the following sections:
 - **Background and Specific Aims**: This section should clearly describe the background, the objectives of the project, and the hypotheses or questions addressed. This section should end with a numbered list of the Aims.
 - **Approach**: This section should clearly describe the research design, measures, data analysis plan, and any preliminary data.

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- **Significance:** This section should briefly describe how the project addresses each of the evaluation criteria listed below. This section should illustrate the importance of the project or describe the critical barrier to progress in brain research and how the project will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or practice if the Aims are achieved.
- **Project Timeline for Years 1 and 2:** This section should include a brief project timeline that identifies major project activities and their projected completion dates (e.g., experiment development, data analysis, manuscript submission).
- 6. Note that the the Kavli NDI award must be used exclusively to support the salary of the awarded Postdoctoral Fellow (stipend and fringe).
- 7. **Letters of Reference (2):** Two letters of references, uploaded directly by reference writers to application portal, that address the suitability of the fellow to undertake these studies. Letters must be written by individuals other than the proposed mentors.

Application Review Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated by a team of internal reviewers. Priority will be given to proposals that are strongest in meeting the following criteria, which will be explicitly evaluated in the review process:

- **Innovation:** The project seeks to have a transformative role in neuroscience discovery, encompassing the development of novel strategies, generates innovative tools, and/or establishes facile data management/analysis methods, ultimately contributing to greater understanding of the structure/function of the nervous system.
- **Interdisciplinary:** The project uses multiple theoretical and empirical approaches to neuroscience, and clearly draws on expertise spanning more than one discipline, department, and/or division in the University.
- **Sustainability:** The project is likely to generate preliminary data that could be used to generate continuing support for the research, including grant proposals to federal institutions, private foundations, and/or industrial partners when the grant period is complete.
- **Approach:** The project's design, methods, and analytic plan are well-developed, integrated, and appropriate to the Aims of the proposed project and the research environment with consideration of potential pitfalls and alternative solutions.
- **Strength of PI, Co-PI and Research Team:** The PI's have each demonstrated an ability to carry out and publish high quality research on their own, and as a team the members are uniquely qualified to create new synergies across fields with appropriate content knowledge and methodological practice to carry out all elements of the proposed project.
- **Cohesion of PI, Co-PI and Fellow as a Research Team:** High level of research integration and preparedness to develop/maintain cohesion of the team is delineated clearly from commencement of the award and throughout the tenure of the project.

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Frequently Asked Questions:

Can my PI and Co-PI be in the same department/school?

Yes. Interdisciplinary nature of PI is defined by the expertise of the PI and Co-PI. You are welcome to submit applications with PIs and Co-PIs from the same school/department, so long as their expertise is distinct. This distinction should be outlined in the application.

Do I need preliminary data?

We encourage new ideas that are collaborative in nature. We suggest submitting projects that have enough preliminary data to demonstrate feasibility and also be conducive to a co-mentoring plan.

I already have an NSF/NIH/other fellowship. Can I still apply?

No. The award cannot be held concurrently with another fellowship that supports salary (or stipend).

I'm currently supported by a fellowship. If chosen, can I start my Kavli fellowship after the current fellowship ends?

No, you cannot be supported by an existing fellowship at the time of commencement of this award.

What happens if I am awarded another fellowship during my Kavli Award period?

You will have to forfeit your Kavli fellowship and return the pro-rated funds to the Institute.

I have received an award in the past. Can I apply again?

No. Past awardees cannot be considered in the same category. However, a previous graduate fellow can apply for a postdoctoral fellowship. The PI of a past awardee can apply again as a PI/Co-PI.

Is there a limit on the number of applications per lab?

No. Each lab/PI can submit more than one application (propose to serve as PI/Co-PI on multiple applications). However, a lab/PI can receive a maximum of one (1) fellowship in each of the two categories.

Please direct any additional questions to Sarada Viswanathan, Scientific Director, Kavli NDI,