

Hopewell M.I.N.D. Prize – Guidelines

The Hopewell M.I.N.D. Prize (Maximizing Innovation in Neuroscience Discovery) was created through a generous \$10M philanthropic commitment from Mr. Sanders Lee to the Hotchkiss Brain Institute (HBI). Mr. Lee, the Founder and Executive Chairman of the Hopewell® Group of Companies is a visionary leader who embraces the idea of technology and science for the betterment of society.

This prize will serve as a catalyst to launch innovative, high-risk, high-impact research projects in brain and mental health at the University of Calgary. The Hopewell M.I.N.D. Prize – unique in Canada – offers up to \$1 million per year for the next ten years to fund research projects that are ahead of the curve. These projects would be at a critical crossroads where an injection of funding has the potential to transform the project into significant community impact. This competition marks the fifth offering of the Prize.

This year's competition continues to support partnerships between Post-Doctoral Fellows and HBI researchers, an approach that enhances collaboration and extends the global influence of the M.I.N.D. Prize.

Finally, the M.I.N.D. Prize is one of the HBI's most prestigious prizes. As the award winner, you will act as an ambassador and occasionally you will be required to attend media events, meetings with donors, and other stakeholders which we will work with you to schedule.

Funds Available and Application Deadlines

Total Prize: Up to \$1 million per award

Duration: Distributed over up to five years

Round 5 Deadlines:

- December 2, 2025: Competition announced
- January 16, 2026: Virtual workshop for interested applicants at 11 am MT
- March 6, 2026: Mandatory Expression of Interest Forms due at 4 pm MT
- April 30, 2026: Applications due at 4 pm MT
- Late June 2026: Selection of finalists
- Fall 2026: Presentations from Finalists and Decision

Send applications to: hbi@ucalgary.ca

Eligibility

The Hopewell M.I.N.D. Prize will be awarded to a Post Doctoral Fellow and full HBI member who collectively possess a demonstrably strong, career-level appropriate, track record/level of expertise in the area of study. The important role played by the research team, including other researchers and research staff, is recognized and should be acknowledged in the application; however, the Prize will be made to the Post Doctoral Fellow and HBI principle investigator responsible for developing and advancing the research. Applicants do not have to be current members of the HBI to apply; however, should a principle investigator who is not a full member of the HBI be awarded the prize, they will have to become a [Full Member](#) prior to submission of the full application.

The Post Doctoral Fellow must be eligible for or currently be in a post-doctoral position as defined by the University of Calgary Postdoctoral Office at the time of the Presentations from the Finalists. Other than relocation costs for the Post-doctoral Fellow, no funding will be released until the Post Doctoral Fellow and HBI principle investigator are both located in Calgary.

Additionally, if the award is jointly awarded to an external Post Doctoral Fellow, that Fellow must be offered and accept a fellowship position (or equivalent) in the laboratory of the full HBI Member, and conduct their research at UCalgary with oversight by the HBI Member. For a list of full HBI Members, please visit our directory [here](#).

The HBI Director, HBI Deputy Director, M.I.N.D. Prize judges, and any content experts involved in the review process are not eligible to apply for the Prize in the competition year.

Application Guidelines

1. The Prize will be determined by the most impactful research project, based on the following principles.
The project:
 - a. is highly innovative in its objectives and proposed approach in an area of Brain and Mental Health research;
 - b. shows potential to create a significant, transformative impact in one or more of the following ways:
 - i. to our foundational knowledge of the brain and/or leads to highly significant clinical advancement;
 - ii. contributes to the HBI's innovation and translational objectives;
 - iii. in the areas of scientific insight, public policy and future health care services and/or innovation;
 - iv. across the HBI, the local community, Canada, and the world.
 - c. enhances the stated research, educational, and career objectives of the Postdoctoral Fellow.

2. Allowable expenditures include salary support for the Postdoctoral Fellow, other trainees and research staff, appropriate relocation costs for Postdoctoral Fellow, support for direct research costs related to the project, community engagement, or innovation activity related to the research project.
3. The Prize recipients are responsible for periodic reporting on the progress of the project. The HBI may withdraw funding if key milestones are missed.

Application Documents

1. Expression of Interest (use Expression of Interest form found on HBI website)
2. Full Application – should adhere to the formatting instructions and include:
 - Cover Sheet (page 6 of this package)
 - Research Plan (9 pages maximum), addressing the following important criteria:
 - Description of Innovation/Research Goals
 - Anticipated Impact of Innovation
 - Key Methodologies/Research Plan
 - Knowledge Translation/Community Engagement (~1 page)
 - Research, Educational and Career Objectives of the Postdoctoral Fellow (~1 page)
 - Required Additional Components:
 - Applicants Bio-sketches for both the Postdoctoral Fellow and HBI Full Member (4 pages maximum, each) highlighting publications, accomplishments relevant to the application, and a list of current and pending (applied for) funding
 - Co-Collaborators/the team members' information, as appropriate, highlight their roles in the project (Do not provide bio-sketches)
 - Key Research Milestones (page 8 of this package)
 - Itemized Budget with Justification (page 9 and 10 of this package). Support for the Postdoctoral Fellow is to be included in the budget and meet the specified terms of the Prize. Do not include budgetary details in the Research Plan section. Budget is required for administrative purposes and will only be considered in the competitive adjudication once the judges determine the shortlist of top proposals
 - Figures and Tables (2 pages maximum). At the applicants' discretion these pages may include details supporting the project such as preliminary data or methodological flow charts.
 - References (2 pages maximum)

Applicants are to submit one PDF document containing all proposal elements (cover sheet, research plan, and required additional components). Applicants are advised to avoid using artificial intelligence writing tools to compose aspects of their proposals.

During the review process, the application materials will be treated as confidential by the HBI, and the members of the International Review Committee. The planned October 2026 presentations from the finalists may be open to the public at the sole discretion of the HBI.

General Formatting Instructions

- Use letter size paper
- Use ¾-inch margins
- Use 11-point Calibri, or equivalent font and single-space text (at least 6 lines per inch)
- Use the following major headings within the Research Plan: *Description of Innovation or Research Program, Impact of Innovation or Research Program, Key Methodologies, and Knowledge Translation/Community Engagement*

Review and Presentation Process

- The HBI has established an International Review Committee and tasked them with identification of the most impactful research project.
- Applications received by the Full Application deadline will be subject to administrative review. Only complete applications will proceed to scientific review. Late applicants will not be accepted.
- Applications will follow a three-stage peer review process:
 - In Stage 1, the scientific content of the proposal will be evaluated by the external, non-conflicted International Review Committee who will be asked to comment on: a) scientific merit; b) innovation in its objectives and proposed approach in an area of Brain and Mental Health research; c) potential to generate significant broad impact; d) the strength of the partnership between the Post Doctoral Fellow and HBI Full Member; and e) the expected enhancement to the stated research, educational, and career objectives of the Post Doctoral Fellow.

Only applications judged to be competitive will be sent for review.

- In Stage 2, the International Review Committee will discuss the applications. They will review the previous scientific appraisal and then focus their evaluation determined by the most impactful research project, based on the following principles. The project:
 - i. is highly innovative in its objectives and proposed approach in an area of Brain and Mental Health research;
 - ii. shows potential to create a significant, transformative impact in one or more of the following ways:
 - to our foundational knowledge of the brain and/or leads to highly significant clinical advancement;
 - contributes to the HBI's innovation and translational objectives;
 - in the areas of scientific insight, public policy and future health care services and/or innovation;
 - across the HBI, the local community, Canada and the world
 - iii. enhances the research, educational, and career objectives of the Post Doctoral Fellow

- In Stage 3, the highest-rated applicants may be asked to give Presentations in person to the International Review Committee, HBI leadership, representative of the donor, and additional invited guests. At the HBI's discretion these presentations may be open to the public. Full details will be provided at a later date.
- The decision of the International Review Committee is final and will be announced by the HBI on, or shortly after, the Decision Date.
- The review process will be conducted in confidence and only a brief summary of feedback by the International Review Committee will be provided to applicants whose applications are discussed in detail.

COVER PAGE

Name of Post Doctoral Fellow Applicant:

Name of HBI Member (if applicable):

Email Address of Post Doctoral Applicant:

Title of Project:

Signature of Applicant:

Executive Summary – Lay person

(Please provide a ½ page summary suitable for public distribution – this will be used on web/social media etc)

Key Personnel – includes both key research collaborators at the HBI, and key scientific staff:

(All award holders MUST be a Post-Doctoral Fellow and an HBI Member. HBI Full Member Applicants are encouraged to identify exceptional Post Doctoral Fellow Applicants and jointly develop an application. As well, potential Post Doctoral Fellow Applicants are encouraged to contact HBI Full Member Applicants about potential projects. HBI Full Members can be found on our [member directory page](#). External/international collaborations are welcomed. Please attach an additional page if necessary)

Name	Department/Institution	Email	Role
			Post Doctoral Fellow
			HBI Full Member/ Member/ Principal Investigator

Key Research Milestones:

(Attach an additional page if necessary)

Key Milestone	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5

Budget:

(Provide a high-level synopsis of research expenditures related to the proposed project.)

Budget Item	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Named Post Doctoral Fellow	\$75,000 + Benefits	\$75,000 + Benefits	\$80,000 + Benefits	\$80,000 + Benefits	\$80,000 + Benefits
Other Personnel, Trainees, and Research Staff					
Materials and Supplies (including Reagents, Experimental Animals or Human Subject Costs)					
Knowledge Translation / Community Engagement					
Post Doctoral Expenses					
Other					
Total for each year					

Named Post-Doctoral Fellow Funding: The successful fellow is guaranteed a minimum \$75,000 + benefits annual salary for the first two years of the award, with an increase to \$80,000 minimum annual salary in year 3 onwards. The fellow may also secure additional external awards, subject to approval by the external funding agency. The named fellow will be ineligible for any other HBI fellowship awards during this fellowship.



Application 2025/2026

Budget Justification (1 page maximum):