



A school awareness event on spinocerebellar ataxias type 7 (SCA-7) organized in Veracruz, Mexico, in 2017 by Global Advocacy Seed Grant awardee, Fundación Beltran-Morgado para el avance y difusión de la neurociencia en Veracruz.

2017 REVIEW

FOUNDING PARTNERS

- Australasian Neuroscience Society (ANS)
- Dana Foundation
- Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS)
- International Society for Neurochemistry (ISN)
- Japan Neuroscience Society (JNS)
- Society for Neuroscience (SfN)

Since the launch of activities in 2014, the Global Advocacy Initiative aims to increase public awareness of brain research and build support for neuroscience research, informed policymaking, training and education around the world.

Global Advocacy Seed Grant activities in 2016-17 continued to underline the importance of this joint initiative in areas of the world challenged by a lack of awareness, resources and support.

Awardees of global advocacy seed grants in 2016/17 will have completed their activities by the end of 2017. Most awardees have already successfully concluded their events.

Events have ranged from scientific meetings, symposia, public lectures, educational school activities, media events, local community engagement, courses and Brain Awareness Week activities.

They have been taking place in 13 countries in the African, Asia/Pacific and Latin American regions: Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Japan, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Puerto Rico, South Africa, Somaliland and Sri Lanka.

The third round of seed grant applications in 2017 showed an overall lower submission rate but a much higher one for the African region.

There were a total of 44 applications this year, in comparison to 64 last year. A large increase in submissions occurred in the African region in 2017. A total of 22 applications were submitted this year, whereas only 12 were received from the region in 2016.

This was the first year that the Pan-European region was included but there were only 7 Europeans who applied so more publicity is needed.

Seed grant events will take place in 12 different countries in 2018: Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Egypt, Ethiopia, Greece, Ireland, Nepal, Russia, Uganda and the United Arab Emirates.



Advocacy seed grant event at the Edna Adan University Hospital in Hargeisa, Somaliland, organized by 2016 awardee, Temesgen Sidamo Summoro (pictured above, far left).

2017 REVIEW

FOUNDING PARTNERS

- Australasian Neuroscience Society (ANS)
- Dana Foundation
- Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS)
- International Society for Neurochemistry (ISN)
- Japan Neuroscience Society (JNS)
- Society for Neuroscience (SfN)

BUDGET SUMMARY

Expenses in 2016/17, covered a total of 14 seed grants in 3 regions. Six grants of €3,300 each were distributed to Latin America and 4 grants each (€5,000 per grant) were awarded to the African and Asia/Pacific regions, with an overall expenditure of €59,800.

For the year 2018, a total of 12 seed grants were awarded to 4 regions. It was the first year that grants went to the Pan-European region. Africa, Asia/Pacific, Latin America and Europe each received three grants of €5,000 each. The overall expenditure was €60,000.

Funding for activities supported by the IBRO Global Advocacy Initiative since 2014 has come from generous contributions made by IBRO, the Dana Foundation, the Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS), the International Society for Neurochemistry (ISN), the Japan Neuroscience Society (JNS) and the Society for Neuroscience (SfN).

REVIEW PROCESS

Reviews and rankings of the IBRO Global Advocacy Seed Grant applications are made by the IBRO African (IBRO-ARC), Asia/Pacific (IBRO-APRC), Latin American (IBRO-LARC) and Pan-European (IBRO-PERC) Regional Committees.

After proposals have been evaluated and ranked by the appropriate regional committees, they are then sent to a super reviewer, the IBRO Senior Director of Grants, who makes a final evaluation. Once he or she completes the final assessment, the applicants are notified of the decisions and the awardees are officially announced on the IBRO website and through IBRO social media.



2016/17

AFRICA

REPORTS

Four global advocacy seed grants of €5,000 each were awarded to the African region in 2016 to the following participants:

- **NIGERIA:** Theresa Ekanem, Neuroscience Society of Nigeria
- **NIGERIA:** James Olopade, The Neuroscience Group
- **SOMALILAND:** Temesgen Sidamo Summoro, Edna Adan University Hospital
- **SOUTH AFRICA:** Janine Roos, Mental Health Information Centre of Southern Africa, Stellenbosch University

NIGERIA: Theresa Ekanem, Neuroscience Society of Nigeria

Theresa Ekanem, President of the Neuroscience Society of Nigeria (NSN), used the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to organize an advocacy event during the 15th NSN Annual Conference, which took place on 12-14 July 2017. Combining the event with the annual conference ensured a wider participation of Society members, the public and other stakeholders. The first day was dedicated entirely to the seed grant advocacy program, focusing on the role of neuroscience research towards achieving the sustainable development goals and its relevance in health policymaking and governance in Nigeria. A total of 110 attendees participated, including the Honourable Ministers of Health and Education. Highlights included: Paper presentations from invited Nigerian and international speakers; a workshop on research funding, teaching and training in neuroscience and research from laboratory to bedside; distribution of promotional advocacy items to Society members and the public; and a radio program that focused on neuroscience advocacy in Nigeria.

NIGERIA: James Olopade, The Neuroscience Group

James Olopade, Professor and Head of the Department of Veterinary Anatomy at the University of Ibadan, used the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to educate young scientists and university students on how to build a career in neuroscience and to raise awareness about the benefits that a university like the University of Ibadan could enjoy if a postgraduate neuroscience program was established. Two public lectures were supported: Professor Richard Brown from Dalhousie University, Canada, spoke about "Developing A Neuroscience Program in Ibadan" and Professor Marina Bentivoglio from the University of Verona, Italy, talked on "Partnership with Africa in the training of brain researchers: Hopes for developing neuroscience as a career." There were 300 attendees and the Vice Chancellor of the University of Ibadan took a keen interest in starting an MSc program in neuroscience.

SOMALILAND: Temesgen Sidamo Summoro, Edna Adan University

Temesgen Sidamo Summoro, Lecturer at Wolaita Sodo University in Ethiopia, used the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to organize a 3-day brain awareness and advocacy conference at Edna Adan University from 13-15 February 2017. The theme was "A Healthy Brain for a Healthy Nation and its Development." To establish a stronger foundation for future support and development of the country's neuroscience community and increase awareness about brain research, health professionals, students and

GLOBAL ADVOCACY INITIATIVE



2016/17

AFRICA REPORTS

Four global advocacy seed grants of €5,000 each were awarded to the African region in 2016 to the following participants:

- **NIGERIA:** Theresa Ekanem, Neuroscience Society of Nigeria
- **NIGERIA:** James Olopade, The Neuroscience Group
- **SOMALILAND:** Temesgen Sidamo Summoro, Edna Adan University Hospital
- **SOUTH AFRICA:** Janine Roos, Mental Health Information Centre of Southern Africa, Stellenbosch University

community and religious leaders participated. Presentation and discussion of research papers, scientific lectures and a final-day focus on increasing awareness about psychotic disorders and their management (delivered in the Somali language) especially designed for religious and community leaders were all included. In addition, media coverage featured a broadcast on BulshoTV, a private mass media in Somaliland, and other highlights on public TV, YouTube and Facebook.

SOUTH AFRICA: Janine Roos, Mental Health Information Centre of Southern Africa, Stellenbosch University

Janine Roos, Director of the Mental Health Information Centre of Southern Africa at Stellenbosch University (SU), will use the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to partner with Dr. Stefan Du Plessis, researcher/clinician at the SU Department of Psychiatry, and organize a Brain Imaging Workshop from 6-8 November 2017 tailored for local school learners, undergraduate and postgraduate students. It will stimulate interest in neuroscience, more specifically the use of structural and functional MRI in brain research, with specific emphasis on findings from Dr. Du Plessis's work in HIV associated neurocognitive disorders. It will also help build partnerships with policymakers in Southern Africa by illustrating the effectiveness of such educational outreach activities. This activity has not been completed yet so the report will be submitted later.

GLOBAL ADVOCACY INITIATIVE



2016/17 ASIA/ PACIFIC REPORTS

Four global advocacy seed grants of €5,000 each were awarded to the Asia/Pacific region in 2016/17 to the following organizers:

- **JAPAN:** Yasushi Miyashita, University of Tokyo
- **NEPAL:** Sunil Dhungel, Neuroscience Society of Nepal
- **PAKISTAN:** Sadaf Ahmed, Advance Educational Institute & Research Centre (AEIRC)
- **SRI LANKA:** Ranil De Silva, Neuroscience Society of Sri Lanka

JAPAN: Yasushi Miyashita, University of Tokyo

Yasushi Miyashita, Professor in the Department of Physiology and Cognitive Neuroscience at the University of Tokyo, used the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to support the Japanese non-profit organization, "Brain Science Promotion Conference." A symposium entitled the "Brain Century Symposium" was organized for this conference, together with the Japanese Neuroscience Society, to increase awareness about the importance of brain research to society. It was held on 13 September 2017 with 540 participants and a noticeable increase in the attendance of science communicators, journalists and science policymakers. Overall, the event helped to increase public understanding and support of brain science as an important benefit to society.

NEPAL: Sunil Dhungel, Neuroscience Society of Nepal

Sunil Dhungel, President of the Neuroscience Society of Nepal, used the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to implement a neuroeducation program entitled "Neuroeducation to Psychological Disorders – Mass Hysteria in Rural Government Schools in Nepal." It ran from 10-12 January 2017 and involved a team of 2 clinical doctors, 2 neuroscientists, 3 clinical physiologists, an anatomist, a local organizer, a media professional, a veteran national singer and other supporting staff. The team went to remote secondary and primary government schools about 80km west of Kathmandu and conducted an awareness program about mass hysteria. They explained functional anatomy, entertained with songs, distributed and collected questionnaires about the nervous system, stress and mass hysteria and put on a play about mass hysteria. Educational pamphlets and gifts were passed out and a documentary video was made. Several other schools are now showing interest in hosting the program and Nepali online news portals, national newspapers and the BBC have expressed interest in covering the success of the completed program.

PAKISTAN: Sadaf Ahmed, Advance Educational Institute & Research Centre (AEIRC), University of Karachi

Sadaf Ahmed, Chief Executive Officer of the Advance Educational Institute & Research Centre (AEIRC) at the University of Karachi, used the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to organize a conference, "Neurotransmission: Bridging Gaps ... Making Synapse," at AEIRC that educated researchers, teachers and students about the importance of studying brain health and mental well-being. It took place from 20-22 July 2017. There is a low ratio of students pursuing their career in neuroscience research in Pakistan as well as a prevailing lack of



2016/17

ASIA/ PACIFIC REPORTS

Four global advocacy seed grants of €5,000 each were awarded to the Asia/Pacific region in 2016/17 to the following organizers:

- **JAPAN:** Yasushi Miyashita, University of Tokyo
- **NEPAL:** Sunil Dhungel, Neuroscience Society of Nepal
- **PAKISTAN:** Sadaf Ahmed, Advance Educational Institute & Research Centre (AEIRC)
- **SRI LANKA:** Ranil De Silva, Neuroscience Society of Sri Lanka

opportunities, neuroscience-specific programs and basic and applied neuroscience laboratories. Therefore, the conference was able to further develop a scientific community network that enables researchers to share interests, form collaborations and attract younger scientists to pursue research in neuroscience. There were approximately 450 participants, especially early career researchers who have a common interest in the brain and could benefit from a forum of interaction, networking and dissemination of scientific information.

SRI LANKA: Ranil De Silva, Neuroscience Society of Sri Lanka

Ranil De Silva, President of the Neuroscience Society of Sri Lanka, will use the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to increase advocacy efforts through activities that support dialogue and interaction between policymakers, scientists, legislators, industry leaders, clinicians, patients and the public to address a series of national problems. The rural population comprises 80% of the total population with limited access to health care and a lack of public awareness regarding neurological diseases. It is estimated that around 500,000 adults with diabetes mellitus go undiagnosed in Sri Lanka and is one of the major risk factors for neurological disorders such as stroke and Alzheimer's. The country also suffers from the fastest ageing population in South Asia, a high rate of suicides and alcoholism, inherited neurological diseases due to a high rate of consanguineous marriages and impacts of the 30-year civil war and 2004 tsunami. The advocacy activities which will tackle these issues have not been completed yet so the report will be submitted later.



2016/17 LATIN AMERICA REPORTS

Six global advocacy seed grants of €3,300 each were awarded to the Latin American region in 2015 to the following awardees:

- **ARGENTINA:** Arturo Romano, SAN
- **BRAZIL:** Newton Canteras, SBNeC
- **COLOMBIA:** George Barreto, COLNE
- **MEXICO:** Luis Beltran-Parrazal, Fundación Beltran-Morgado
- **PERU:** Luis Angel Aguilar Mendoza, SONEP
- **PUERTO RICO:** Amaya Miquelajauregui, University of Puerto Rico

ARGENTINA: Arturo Romano, Sociedad Argentina de Investigación en Neurociencias

Arturo Romano, Professor at the University of Buenos Aires, used the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to reinforce the mission of the Sociedad Argentina de Investigación en Neurociencias (SAN), expand advocacy initiatives to support more ambitious proposals submitted by SAN members and to provide more opportunities for interaction between basic researchers and clinicians. From 8-13 March 2016, during the globally recognized Brain Awareness Week, the advocacy seed grant activities were organized in Buenos Aires, Quilmes, La Plata, Córdoba, Alta Gracia, Rio Ceballos, Carlos Paz and Bariloche cities. Funds were also available to support a science journalism networking activity from 5-6 August 2016. There were about 300 people who participated in total for all supported activities.

BRAZIL: Newton Canteras, Sociedade Brasileira de Neurociências e Comportamento (SBNeC)

Newton Canteras, Professor at the University of São Paulo, used the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to organize the "Global Advocacy Seminário de Comunicação Científica" (Global Advocacy Seminar on Scientific Communication) that took place on 26 May 2017 at the Instituto de Ciências Biomédicas III, Universidade de São Paulo, and attracted 121 attendees. Renowned journalists and professors specialized in scientific communication were invited to lecture on their experiences and expertise in an organized public event. It provided useful strategies for science communication, guidelines for research communication to the general public, dissemination of neuroscience achievements and an emphasis on the importance of neuroscience research.

COLOMBIA: George Barreto, Colegio Colombiano de Neurociencias (COLNE)

George Barreto, President of the Colegio Colombiano de Neurociencias, used the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to establish a national short-stay grant for graduate students, create a national Neurosciences Student Association and enhance communications through the improvement of COLNE's online presence, especially in redesigning the COLNE website. Different neuroscience research groups within Colombia were brought



2016/17 LATIN AMERICA REPORTS

Six global advocacy seed grants of €3,300 each were awarded to the Latin American region in 2015 to the following awardees:

- **ARGENTINA:** Arturo Romano, SAN
- **BRAZIL:** Newton Canteras, SBNeC
- **COLOMBIA:** George Barreto, COLNE
- **MEXICO:** Luis Beltran-Parrazal, Fundación Beltran-Morgado
- **PERU:** Luis Angel Aguilar Mendoza, SONEP
- **PUERTO RICO:** Amaya Miquelajauregui, University of Puerto Rico

together and are now hosted on the COLNE website as well. These efforts helped to establish a foundation to promote long-term public awareness and develop education training programs and networking activities to consolidate support for brain research at the policy level and in the public domain in Colombia.

MEXICO: Luis Beltran-Parrazal, Fundación Beltran-Morgado para el avance y difusión de la neurociencia en Veracruz

Luis Beltran-Parrazal, Professor of Neurophysiology at Universidad Veracruzana, used the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to hold public outreach events about spinocerebellar ataxia type 7 (SCA-7), deliver a public lecture on hereditary ataxia and the founder effect of SCA7, conduct a scientific symposium on SCA-7 and provide much-needed molecular diagnosis tests, rehabilitation and social inclusion programs. These events took place during Brain Awareness Week 2017 and helped to increase awareness about SCA-7 that appears with a general prevalence of 10.63/100,000 inhabitants in the state of Veracruz. In total, there were over 900 people who participated in our activities, a strong partnership with Ataxia Mexico Foundation was established and we attracted widespread national media coverage.

PERU: Luis Angel Aguilar Mendoza, La Sociedad para la Neurociencia del Perú (SONEP)

Luis Angel Aguilar Mendoza, President of La Sociedad para la Neurociencia del Perú (SONEP), used the IBRO Global Advocacy Seed Grant to support an IBRO-SONEP Neuroscience Conference in Lima on 25 May 2017. Professionals, students, patients, caregivers, doctors, educators and members of the public who were interested in learning about the brain were all invited to attend. Lectures focused on the importance of understanding the structure, operation and care of the nervous system in Peruvian society. The conference helped to address the deficiency of public knowledge in Perú about the brain because of poor dissemination of scientific knowledge and a lack of research support.

PUERTO RICO: Amaya Miquelajauregui, Institute of Neurobiology, University of Puerto Rico

Amaya Miquelajauregui, Assistant Professor of Neurobiology at the University of Puerto Rico, will use the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to trigger continuous, bi-directional interaction between the general public, clinicians and researchers who are involved in autism and brain disorders.

GLOBAL ADVOCACY INITIATIVE



2016/17 LATIN AMERICA REPORTS

Six global advocacy seed grants of €3,300 each were awarded to the Latin American region in 2015 to the following awardees:

- **ARGENTINA:** Arturo Romano, SAN
- **BRAZIL:** Newton Canteras, SBNeC
- **COLOMBIA:** George Barreto, COLNE
- **MEXICO:** Luis Beltran-Parrazal, Fundación Beltran-Morgado
- **PERU:** Luis Angel Aguilar Mendoza, SONEP
- **PUERTO RICO:** Amaya Miquelajauregui, University of Puerto Rico

Educational symposia in English and Spanish will provide a forum to share knowledge and experience. Multimedia bilingual recordings will support the discussions and Q&A sessions will be accessible to the public and policymakers once uploaded. This will promote a culture of interaction and knowledge in the management and detection of autism-spectrum disorders and hopefully lead to improved understanding, care and policies. Because of Hurricane Maria in September 2017, the seed grant-supported activities had to be suspended but they will be rescheduled as soon as it is possible.



2018 AWARDS

Twelve global advocacy seed grants were awarded to the African, Asia/Pacific, Latin American and Pan-European regions for 2018.

- **AFRICA:** Egypt, Ethiopia, Uganda
- **ASIA/PACIFIC:** Bangladesh, Nepal, United Arab Emirates
- **LATIN AMERICA:** Brazil, Colombia, Cuba
- **PAN-EUROPE:** Greece, Ireland, Russia

AFRICA

EGYPT: Mohamed Salama, Egyptian Network for Neurodegenerative Disorders (ENND)

'Neuroethics' is short hand for the ethical, legal and social implications of neuroscience. The field emerged in the early 2000s, at a time when neuroscience was consolidating its recent success in the study of human cognition and beginning to make progress understanding social and emotional processes and individual differences. These scientific advances opened the door to an unprecedented ability to explain, predict and even control human behaviour, raising a host of ethical, legal and social issues. Organized by our research team, scientists from Africa, the Diaspora and the Western Hemisphere will gather in Cairo, Egypt, for the first Neuroethics Global Advocacy Workshop for Neuroscience. Parallel activities will include a scientific writing workshop as well as a course on teacher training for young African scientists and hands-on sessions on selected animal models of brain disorders. The primary objective of the proposed workshop is to support individuals with ethics expertise in order to develop the capabilities to conduct original empirical or conceptual research on critical ethical issues in neuroscience research in Africa.

ETHIOPIA: Bereket Duko Adema, Hawassa University

Advocacy is considered to be one of the eleven areas for action in any mental health policy because of the benefits that it produces for people with mental disorders and their families. The advocacy movement has substantially influenced neurosciences-related policy and legislation in many different countries. Nevertheless, in Ethiopia, little is known about mental health in general and the field of neuroscience in particular. There is actually no neuroscience expert in the country. Therefore, with the support of our global advocacy seed grant, we plan to do the following: Raise awareness and disseminate information through public lectures by known and respected scholars; provide training during conferences through the use of videos and other multimedia platforms; and conduct a panel discussion between different neuroscience experts for a scientific and non-scientific policymaking audience. Our primary objective will be to improve awareness and attitudes within academic, public and policymaking communities regarding research in the field of neuroscience.



2018 AWARDS

Twelve global advocacy seed grants were awarded to the African, Asia/Pacific, Latin American and Pan-European regions for 2018.

- **AFRICA:** Egypt, Ethiopia, Uganda
- **ASIA/PACIFIC:** Bangladesh, Nepal, United Arab Emirates
- **LATIN AMERICA:** Brazil, Colombia, Cuba
- **PAN-EUROPE:** Greece, Ireland, Russia

AFRICA

UGANDA: Angelina Kakooza-Mwesige, Epilepsy Society

A study conducted in Uganda on children diagnosed with epilepsy noted that the mean school grades of children with epilepsy were found to be lower than those of children without epilepsy in all subjects. Unfortunately, the teacher's knowledge and attitudes about epilepsy was poor. The majority of the teachers (75.8%) thought that children with epilepsy generally had below average intelligence, 35.3% thought that epilepsy was contagious, while 58.8% were afraid of having a child with epilepsy in their class. These negative attitudes and insufficient knowledge related to epilepsy point to the prevailing myths and cultural beliefs that still exist in Uganda communities, as well as the lack of focused education and training programs about epilepsy for school teachers training. Therefore, our overall seed grant project aim will be to enhance the knowledge and skills about epilepsy through 5 one-day workshops. Each workshop will host 100 participating teachers from government and private primary and secondary schools in each of the five divisions of the Kampala district.



2018 AWARDS

Twelve global advocacy seed grants were awarded to the African, Asia/Pacific, Latin American and Pan-European regions for 2018.

- **AFRICA:** Egypt, Ethiopia, Uganda
- **ASIA/PACIFIC:** Bangladesh, Nepal, United Arab Emirates
- **LATIN AMERICA:** Brazil, Colombia, Cuba
- **PAN-EUROPE:** Greece, Ireland, Russia

ASIA/PACIFIC

BANGLADESH: Amin Shakhawat, Bangladeshi Association for Neuroscience

Our aim is to raise awareness about neuroscience research among students in Bangladesh and gather as many Bangladeshi neuroscientists as possible who are interested in pursuing neuroscience research in Bangladesh. Members who live abroad will help, guide and collaborate with faculties located in the country to establish neuroscience research groups/programs in their respective universities. The global advocacy seed grant will help support these efforts in promoting neuroscience research at local and national levels. Our initial goal is to bring all the neuroscientists (international and national) under one official platform. This platform will allow Bangladeshi neuroscientists to begin a dialogue on a common strategy to promote neuroscience research in Bangladesh. We will organize official quarterly meetings by inviting neuroscientists who are living in Bangladesh or outside (through video conferences), discuss the progress of our mission and develop effective strategies to promote neuroscience research in the country. A neuroscience committee will be set up to work exclusively on reaching goals and developing liaisons with government officials, university heads and policymakers to promote neuroscience.

NEPAL: Sandip Shah, B.P. Koraila Institute of Health Sciences

Epilepsy is one of the most common neurological disorders in Nepal, with a prevalence of 7.5 in 1000 people. Despite global advances in modern medicine, prevailing fear, misunderstanding and the resulting social stigma and discrimination often force people with epilepsy "into the shadows." Our global advocacy seed grant therefore aims to dispel myths and misconceptions by properly educating patients, families, communities and policymakers. We will organize a program to be held in the Dharan Municipality of Nepal. Target populations will be students of secondary level schools, educators, government officials, patients and their families, medical graduates, MBBS and resident doctors. The goals and objectives will be to increase knowledge regarding the human brain and its functions, mass awareness about the importance of the brain and brain research among ordinary citizens, students and policymakers, increase awareness regarding epilepsy in Nepal and early diagnosis and referral to treatment centers. Also, a documentary, "Ek Naya Din (A New Day)," will be screened. It is a 1-hour feature film in the local language that has tried to bust the myths and misconceptions surrounding epilepsy through the story of an educated family caught between superstitious beliefs and modern values.



2018 AWARDS

Twelve global advocacy seed grants were awarded to the African, Asia/Pacific, Latin American and Pan-European regions for 2018.

- **AFRICA:** Egypt, Ethiopia, Uganda
- **ASIA/PACIFIC:** Bangladesh, Nepal, United Arab Emirates
- **LATIN AMERICA:** Brazil, Colombia, Cuba
- **PAN-EUROPE:** Greece, Ireland, Russia

ASIA/PACIFIC

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Aida Mohammedeid, Arabic Neuroscience Awareness

The public understanding of neuroscience still needs huge improvement in Arabic society all around the world. Unfortunately, there are no adequate and reliable references for Arabic societies. We are aiming to prepare a webpage targeted to Arabic societies in the Arabic language based on international neuroscience resources and especially tailored to Arabic culture. We expect this initiative will help to substantially improve the levels of awareness in Arabic societies, providing the following benefits:

- Improve Arabic society knowledge regarding risk factors so the public can take protective measures as much as possible and change their lifestyles whenever possible
- Remove myths from society so people will approach issues more realistically with positive attitudes
- Provide information about facts and figures to the Arabic public and encourage Arabic societies to donate/transfer more resources and funds for research activities
- Provide all information needed regarding care and treatment options so patients and caregivers will have more clarity to make informed decisions
- Establish a communication platform among stakeholders (patients, carers, practitioners, researchers) to communicate, share experiences and support each other

Our global advocacy seed grant will help to set up and promote a reliable and easy-to-access resource for Arabic speakers regarding neurological disorders and up-to-date research literature in the field of neuroscience.



2018 AWARDS

Twelve global advocacy seed grants were awarded to the African, Asia/Pacific, Latin American and Pan-European regions for 2018.

- **AFRICA:** Egypt, Ethiopia, Uganda
- **ASIA/PACIFIC:** Bangladesh, Nepal, United Arab Emirates
- **LATIN AMERICA:** Brazil, Colombia, Cuba
- **PAN-EUROPE:** Greece, Ireland, Russia

LATIN AMERICA

BRAZIL: Maria Lucia De Bustamante Simas, Laboratório de Percepção Visual

In Brazil, there are more than 50 groups working on schizophrenia according to Plataforma Lattes, a federal national database of researchers and research groups in the country. However, the general population, patients and their families do not have access to the research and resources that have been developed in the country regarding schizophrenia. Our purpose is to bring together all the labs in the country that work on this theme in order to achieve common goals for the personal and social benefit of those who suffer from this disorder. With the global advocacy seed grant, we are planning a national forum on schizophrenia with key national speakers on the theme and international research partners. Among the activities scheduled are symposia, round tables, courses, conferences, thematic communications involving all theoretical and empirical aspects of research on the subject, with emphasis on prevention and quality of life. The project will have a webpage and fanpage to announce our forum as well as to provide well-informed material on the theme to the public.

COLOMBIA: Liliana Francis Turner, Universidad del Tolima

Physical and mental health should be pillars of public policies aimed at ensuring a state of social well-being and increased life expectancy. Colombia is not a country foreign to population aging. In this context, basic research aimed at neurodegenerative diseases, which appear mostly in later life, need to be better known and disseminated in the political and administrative environment that is responsible for the decisions inherent in the budgets for such research. On the other hand, Colombia is a country with large numbers of displaced persons as a result of the prolonged armed conflict that has recently moved towards peace. Multiple sequelae, essentially psychological, must be addressed by public policies and by the educational system of our country. Therefore, neuroscience research focusing on the psychological impact of the war, especially concerning vulnerable populations (women, children and youth), are of special interest at this time. We will use our global advocacy seed grant to address these issues through activities organized within the framework of the "Brain Week at the University of Tolima 2018."



2018 AWARDS

Twelve global advocacy seed grants were awarded to the African, Asia/Pacific, Latin American and Pan-European regions for 2018.

- **AFRICA:** Egypt, Ethiopia, Uganda
- **ASIA/PACIFIC:** Bangladesh, Nepal, United Arab Emirates
- **LATIN AMERICA:** Brazil, Colombia, Cuba
- **PAN-EUROPE:** Greece, Ireland, Russia

LATIN AMERICA

CUBA: Vivian Reigosa-Crespo, Cuban Neurosciences Center (CNEURO)

A scientific understanding of learning can aid education in a number of ways: Authentic messages about how the brain learns can help dissipate the growing number of “neuromyths” amongst educators; new approaches to learning, where educators and scientists are collaboratively developing neurocognitive interventions for typical and atypical learners in respect of improving literacy, numeracy, reasoning and many other skills; and a basic understanding about how the brain learns in teacher training and development promises to empower teachers to approach their own practice more scientifically. We therefore will use our global advocacy seed grant to organize a 1-day educational neuroscience advocacy workshop in Havana to highlight these and other benefits. This initiative will help to increase awareness of the importance of scientific understanding of learning among teachers, policymakers, authoritative leaders and philanthropists. CNEURO has much experience in bridging neuroscience findings and educational practices. Our research teams have developed tools suitable for implementing school-based programs focused on neurocognitive development and we work closely with the Cuban Ministry of Education to facilitate the introduction of research findings into educational practices.

2018 AWARDS

Twelve global advocacy seed grants were awarded to the African, Asia/Pacific, Latin American and Pan-European regions for 2018.

- **AFRICA:** Egypt, Ethiopia, Uganda
- **ASIA/PACIFIC:** Bangladesh, Nepal, United Arab Emirates
- **LATIN AMERICA:** Brazil, Colombia, Cuba
- **PAN-EUROPE:** Greece, Ireland, Russia

GLOBAL ADVOCACY INITIATIVE

PAN-EUROPE

GREECE: Fotini Stylianopoulou, Hellenic Society for Neuroscience

Greece is still in the midst of a chronic financial crisis profoundly affecting the funding of science in general. Proactive measures have to be taken in order to persuade decision-making politicians and public servants of the importance of neuroscience research for society and thus secure future budgetary support for brain-related research. Taking advantage of a former FENS advocacy funding initiative in 2011, we organized advocacy activities which established a foundation for interaction with political players and societal stakeholders. The aim of our current global advocacy seed grant project will be to continue the advocacy campaign at the national level. This will include the organization of a meeting in Athens with government officials, as well as Greek and European Parliament members. In these meetings, the focus will be on communicating the extent of the burden of brain diseases, both financial and social. We will also stress the importance of basic neuroscience research in understanding brain function and dysfunction and the development of effective, preventive, therapeutic and rehabilitation approaches for brain-related diseases.

IRELAND: Barry Boland, University College Dublin

Following the recent economic crisis in 2008, funding for neuroscience in Ireland has been affected, leading to an exodus of most postgraduate researchers and some principal investigators into alternative careers. Unlike other countries, which set aside specific funding for neuroscience research and public engagement, the Irish government does not allocate sufficient funding for neuroscience research, and we want to address this by using our global advocacy seed grant to support activities during the 2018 Brain Awareness Week. We will host a national advocacy event with three objectives: To raise awareness of the prevalence of neurological and psychiatric conditions that need basic research funding to support a global initiative to develop disease-modifying treatments; inform members of the public during a one-day public meeting/symposium on neurological disorders at a large public venue in Cork City; and engage government representatives, members of international philanthropic and charity organisations and the national media during a one-day symposium in Cork that will specifically address the need for more neuroscience funding in Ireland.

2018 AWARDS

Twelve global advocacy seed grants were awarded to the African, Asia/Pacific, Latin American and Pan-European regions for 2018.

- **AFRICA:** Egypt, Ethiopia, Uganda
- **ASIA/PACIFIC:** Bangladesh, Nepal, United Arab Emirates
- **LATIN AMERICA:** Brazil, Colombia, Cuba
- **PAN-EUROPE:** Greece, Ireland, Russia

GLOBAL ADVOCACY INITIATIVE

PAN-EUROPE

RUSSIA: Elena Rybnikova, Pavlov Institute of Physiology, Russian Academy of Sciences

The primary goal of our global advocacy seed grant project is to disseminate existing resources and develop new ones dedicated to advocacy about the first Nobel laureate (1904), Ivan Pavlov. We aim to enhance public awareness about the not so widely known fact that Ivan Pavlov was the founder of behavioural genetics. He contributed to the emergence of behavioural genetics, calling it “experimental genetics of higher nervous activity” (HNA). For these purposes, he created in 1926 a biological station in the outskirts of St. Petersburg (Leningrad) in Ingermanland Village Koltushi in order to breed dog strains with different types of HNA. The “Old Laboratory” built in Koltushi in 1930 still houses Pavlov's functioning soundproof chamber for conditioning. Authentically Pavlovian, this setup is also still equipped with a large set of different bells, zooms and tones, dog feeding racks and a glass capillary mounted on a ruler for measuring dog's salivation. A modern media-movie product, a reel with two-dimensional animation with pictorial reviews and newsreels of Pavlov's time in Koltushi, will be created by Russian stage director and museum designer Eugene Strelkov (Nizhny Novgorod). It will be both in Russian and English to increase awareness about Pavlov and his work worldwide. Alongside with the proposed film, an interactive map of Pavlovian Koltushi called “The Capital of Conditioning” will be created.



2016/17 Global Advocacy Seed Grant Awardee, the Advance Educational Institute & Research Centre (AEIRC), at the University of Karachi, Pakistan, during their conference, "Neurotransmission: Bridging Gaps ... Making Synapse."

2018 LOOKING AHEAD

Next year will be the fifth year that the Global Advocacy Initiative will offer seed grants.

All current funding partners - IBRO, the Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS), the International Society for Neurochemistry (ISN), the Japan Neuroscience Society (JNS) and the Society for Neuroscience (SfN) – have shown generous and continued support of this initiative. In addition, the Dana Foundation has expressed a renewed interest to participate again.

Expanding global activity in advocacy and outreach work, a growing network of seed grant alumni and successful implementation of selected events have encouraged this ongoing commitment to the Initiative's seed grant funding.

Brain advocacy around the world has proven to be a necessary prerequisite for increasing public awareness and understanding of neuroscience, developing multi-disciplinary partnership networks,

communicating research advances and attracting more funding and policy support for brain research.

To reinforce our efforts and empower the program with previous work and lessons learned, 2018 seed grants will continue to be open to applicants from four regions – Africa, Asia Pacific, Latin America and Pan-Europe.

Special attention will be paid to those areas which have more challenging research environments, including restrictive funding and institutional support. World Bank categories of lower and middle income countries will continue to be used to distinguish eligibility, as well as consideration of changing economic and policy environments.

IBRO thanks its partners and participating awardees for their dedicated commitment to brain advocacy.