



*A 2018 Brain Awareness Week of Tolima event supported by a global advocacy seed grant in Colombia.*

# 2018 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 2018 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 2018 will have completed their activities by the end of 2018. 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 12 countries in the African, Asia/Pacific, European and Latin American regions: Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Egypt, Ethiopia, Greece, Ireland, Nepal, Russia, Uganda and the United Arab Emirates.

In the fourth round of seed grant applications in 2018, there was a healthy number of submissions for 4 regions. More targeted publicity was made, especially through engaging the support of all partners.

There were a total of 64 applications this year, in comparison to 44 last year. There were 26 from Africa, 14 for Asia/Pacific, 12 from Latin America and 12 for Europe.

This was the second year that the European region was included and there was a positive increase from 7 to 12 European candidates who applied.

Seed grant events will take place in 11 different countries in 2019: Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Chile, Egypt, Ghana, Italy, Mongolia, The Netherlands, Nigeria and Panama.



*2018 Neuroethics Symposium at the American University of Cairo, Egypt.*

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## BUDGET SUMMARY

**Expenses** in 2018, covered a total of 12 seed grants in 4 regions and one networking reception. Three grants of €5,000 each were distributed to each region - Africa, Asia/Pacific, Europe and Latin America, with an overall expenditure of €60,000. There was also a Global Advocacy Initiative Networking Reception that took place at the 2018 FENS Forum in Berlin, Germany, that amounted to €2186. Total expenses for 2018 came to €62,186.

For the year 2019, a total of 11 seed grants were awarded to 4 regions. Africa received 3 grants, Asia/Pacific received 2 grants, Europe received 3 grants and Latin America received 4 grants. The overall expenditure will be approximately €59,000.

**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, they are then sent to a super reviewer, the IBRO Senior Director of Grants, who makes a final review. Once he/she completes the final assessment, applicants are notified of the decisions and awardees are officially announced on the IBRO website and through IBRO social media.



# 2018 AFRICA REPORTS

Three global advocacy seed grants of €5,000 each were awarded to the African region in 2018 to the following organizers:

- **EGYPT:** Mohamed Salama, Egyptian Network for Neurodegenerative Disorders (ENND)
- **ETHIOPIA:** Bereket Duko Adema, Hawassa University
- **UGANDA:** Angelina Kakooza-Mwesige, Uganda Epilepsy Society

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

Mohamed Salama from the Egyptian Network for Neurodegenerative Disorders (ENND), used the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to organize the first ever symposium on neuroethics at the American University of Cairo (AUC). It included a scientific writing workshop, a course on teacher training for young African scientists and hands-on sessions on selected animal models of brain disorders. A total of 100 attendees participated, including the AUC Dean of the School of Sciences and Engineering, Hassan El-Fawal.

**ETHIOPIA: Bereket Duko Adema,** Hawassa University

Bereket Duko Adema from Hawassa University used the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to hold two days of global advocacy workshops that included public lectures on the first day and panel discussions on the second day. Topics covered included the science of the brain, basics of neuroscience, history of neurosciences, neurosciences and mental illness, neurosciences and neurology, neurosciences and behavior, neurochemistry and psychopharmacology and a session on why we need to study neurosciences. Challenges for neuroscience in Ethiopia that the workshops brought up included a lack of funding, public awareness, government support, neuroscience schools and neuroscience research centers.

**UGANDA: Angelina Kakooza-Mwesige,** Uganda Epilepsy Society

Angelina Kakooza-Mwesige from the Epilepsy Society in Uganda plans to enhance the knowledge and skills about epilepsy through 5 one-day workshops which will host 100 participating teachers from government and private primary and secondary schools in each of the five divisions of the Kampala district. These workshops will take place in December 2018 so the report has yet to be submitted at the time of this review.

# 2018

## ASIA/ PACIFIC REPORTS

Three global advocacy seed grants of €5,000 each were awarded to the Asia/Pacific region in 2018 to the following organizers:

- **BANGLADESH:** Amin Shakhawat, Bangladeshi Association for Neuroscience
- **NEPAL:** Sandip Shah, BP Koraila Institute of Health Sciences
- **UNITED ARAB EMIRATES:** Sadaf Ahmed, Advance Educational Institute & Research Centre (AEIRC)

## GLOBAL ADVOCACY INITIATIVE

**BANGLADESH:** Amin Shakhawat, Bangladeshi Association for Neuroscience

Amin Shakhawat from the Bangladeshi Association for Neuroscience used the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to form an official organization by gathering Bangladeshi neuroscientists around the world under one umbrella, organize events encouraging young children to learn about neuroscience and increase social awareness about neuroscience research in Bangladesh by gathering local politicians, students and scientists together to discuss challenges. They included a lack of government support to do state-of-the-art neuroscience research, there are not many neuroscientists in Bangladesh who can actively do long-term research in the country and there's no platform to connect all the neuroscientists who are in Bangladesh and abroad.

**NEPAL:** Sandip Shah, BP Koraila Institute of Health Sciences

Sandip Shah from the BP Koraila Institute of Health used the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to organize a program that was held in schools in the Dharan Municipality of Nepal and to create a bilingual video (in Nepalese with English subtitles) to increase awareness and understanding about epilepsy. This is featured on IBRO's website: <https://ibro.org/fighting-spirits-in-nepal/>. Viewers follow a young girl who has an epilepsy attack. Her family thinks that she has been possessed by evil spirits so they take her first to a witch doctor. They eventually visit a medical doctor who explains that she has epilepsy. The story informs the public and policymakers what epilepsy is, how to recognise it and what one should do in case of an attack.

**UNITED ARAB EMIRATES:** Aida Mohammedeid, Arabic Neuroscience Awareness

Aida Mohammedeid from Arabic Neuroscience Awareness used the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to increase brain awareness through the creation of a website targeted to Arabic societies in the Arabic language based on international neuroscience resources and especially tailored to Arabic culture. The objective was to improve Arabic society's knowledge regarding risk factors of brain disorders, remove myths so the public will approach issues more realistically with a positive attitude, provide information about facts and figures, encourage Arabic society to donate/transfer more resources for research activities, provide all information about care and treatment options for patients and establish a communication platform among stakeholders so they can communicate, share experiences and support each other. The website can be found here: [www.asabme.com](http://www.asabme.com).

# 2018 LATIN AMERICA REPORTS

Three global advocacy seed grants of €5,000 each were awarded to the Latin American region in 2018 to the following organizers:

- **BRAZIL:** Maria Lucia De Bustamante Simas, Laboratório de Percepção Visual
- **COLOMBIA:** Liliana Francis Turner, Universidad del Tolima
- **CUBA:** Vivian Reigosa-Crespo, Cuban Neuroscience Center (CNEURO)

## GLOBAL ADVOCACY INITIATIVE

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

Maria Lucia De Bustamante Simas from the Laboratório de Percepção Visual, plans to use the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to organize a National Forum on Schizophrenia in Brazil with key national speakers and international research partners. It will include symposia, roundtables, courses, conferences and thematic communications involving all aspects of research on the subject, with an emphasis on prevention and quality of life. These events have not taken place yet so the report had not been submitted at the time of this review.

**COLOMBIA:** Liliana Francis Turner, Universidad del Tolima

Liliana Francis Turner from the Universidad del Tolima, used the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to organize Brain Awareness Week activities over five days to work with the youngest population (preschool, elementary, and high school students) and sensitize them to the importance of the brain for body health and show them how easy and fun it can be to study the nervous system; to work, reflect and provide tools to teachers - preschool, primary and secondary levels - in the identification and treatment of conflicts in the classroom; and highlight the role played by seed grants in the social extension activities aimed at teaching the neurosciences. A lecture by Dr. Lisette Blanco Lezcano, a researcher at the International Center for Neurological Restoration, in Havana, Cuba; a painting contest; a lecture, "Pay Attention" and Brain Rally at a high school; a symposium for teachers; and a survey was conducted for the writing of the book, *100 questions that children ask about the brain*.

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

Vivian Reigosa-Crespo from the Cuban Neuroscience Center (CNEURO) plans to use the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to organize a one-day educational neuroscience advocacy workshop in Havana to highlight how the brain learns, or the scientific understanding of learning, among teachers, policymakers, authoritative leaders and philanthropists. This event will take place in January 2019 so the report has not yet been submitted.



# 2018 PAN- EUROPE REPORTS

Three global advocacy seed grants of €5,000 each were awarded to the Pan-European region in 2018 to the following organizers:

- **GREECE:** Fotini Stylianopoulou, Hellenic Society for Neuroscience
- **IRELAND:** Barry Boland, University College Cork
- **RUSSIA:** Elena Rybnikova, Pavlov Institute of Physiology

### **GREECE: Fotini Stylianopoulou,** Hellenic Society for Neuroscience

Fotini Stylianopoulou from the Hellenic Society for Neuroscience used the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to organize a meeting in Athens with government officials from relevant ministries and funding bodies, as well as Parliament and European Parliament members. It focused on communicating the extent of the burden of brain diseases, both financial and social, 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. Specific topics included: Very low Greek public and private sector funding for neuroscience; national budget for brain research varies a lot; and the ongoing economic crisis (2009–present) and its affect on the availability of funds.

### **IRELAND: Barry Boland,** University College Cork

Barry Boland from the University College Cork used the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to conduct a meeting entitled 'Funding Irish Research for Degenerative Diseases of the Brain'. It was organised by Cork Neuroscience Centre and DNNI (Dementia and Neurodegeneration Network Ireland) in order to explore the issue of funding Irish research for degenerative diseases of the brain and to focus on four themes as follows: Session 1 - The Growing Health Priority of Neurodegenerative Diseases Session; 2 - Patient-Public-Researcher Advocacy; Session 3 - Charity and Philanthropic Funding Support; and Session 4 - Academic-Industry Engagement.

### **RUSSIA: Elena Rybnikova,** Pavlov Institute of Physiology

Elena Rybnikova from the Pavlov Institute of Physiology in Russia used the Global Advocacy Seed Grant to produce a bilingual media-movie product, a reel with two-dimensional animation with pictorial reviews and newsreels of Pavlov's time in Koltushi. It was created by the art school of Russian stage director and museum designer Eugene Strelkov (Nizhny Novgorod) and focused on the history of Pavlov's Koltushi and the first famous experiments on Pavlovian conditioning. It has been posted on the IBRO website and can be found here: <https://ibro.org/global-advocacy-in-russia-pavlovs-koltushi/>.



# 2019 AWARDS

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- **AFRICA:** Egypt, Ghana, Nigeria
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## AFRICA

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

Neuroepidemiology is a critical field of neuroscience that is underestimated in Africa and Middle East. Studying the epidemiological factors controlling various neurological disorders will add a huge amount of knowledge to our understanding of disease pathogenesis, risk factors and protective potentials. Most Egyptian neurologists suffer from a lack of understanding and appreciation about neuroepidemiology so we plan to organize a series of awareness events about the field over the course of the year in different Egyptian cities so local neurologists can meet experts in the field, understand and identify the value of neuroepidemiology and build future collaborations. In addition, we will offer online courses and lectures offered by international experts to all Egyptian and African neuroscientists.

**GHANA:** Hephzi Angela Tagoe, GhScientific

The proposed project is a series of three "Neuroscience experience days" for high school students which will take place in Accra (Greater Accra Region), Ho (Volta Region) and Koforidua (Eastern Region) in the first quarter of 2019. Each day will be focused on giving students practical experience in neuroscience techniques with an element of career mentoring. Two events will be for girls only and the third will be for both boys and girls. Lastly, the opportunity to collect data from participants will be taken and used to help design future activities and inform the government and policymakers on best practices when introducing students to a new field of study.

**NIGERIA:** Chinna Orish, Nigerian Women in Neuroscience Group

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a developmental disorder typified by impaired communication and social skills. The role of nutrition in prevention and management of ASD is largely not emphasized. Our intervention is aimed at emphasizing the role of nutrition in both maternal and child health as a cheap and affordable approach in prevention and management of ASD in the Niger Delta, Nigeria with characteristic environmental pollution. Activities will include lectures on autism and other neuropsychiatric diseases in girls secondary schools, university campuses and churches; television and radio programs; and a career lecture on neuroscience to motivate young girls to pursue careers in neuroscience.



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## ASIA/PACIFIC

**AUSTRALIA:** Linda Richards, Australian Brain Alliance

The toll of brain disease, disorders and injury is high. Conditions intimately linked to the brain are prevalent, and many remain intractable. In Australia, 400 people die from Motor Neuron Disease every year. 32 people are diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease every day. And someone suffers from a stroke every nine minutes. The Australian Brain Alliance (the Alliance) plans to hold a significant political engagement event aimed at securing public, business and political support for a national brain initiative in Australia, and achieving closer engagement between Australian and international brain research networks, and initiatives. Specifically, the Alliance will convene a one-day brain science symposium and targeted meetings with elected representatives at Australia's Parliament House during Brain Awareness Week in March, 2019.

**MONGOLIA:** Battuvshin Lkhavgasuren, Mongolian Neuroscience Society

To address the importance of establishing a brain science institute in Mongolia, the Mongolian Neuroscience Society plans to organize a National Forum for Brain Science with the motto, "Need for a Brain Science Institute," in the House of Parliament. Attendance is estimated around 100 experts including 10 representative officers from government agencies, 10 academicians, 10 physicians, 10 psychologists, 10 graduate students, 10 scientists, and 30 representatives from the general public. We aim to develop and submit a memorandum of demand to the government for establishing a Brain Science Institute, as a nation, in order to support basic research on neurological and psychiatric disorders, training of young scientists, and integration of scientists into a multidisciplinary research platform. To actively engage attention of both the general public and the government, a social media contest in conjunction with the forum will be launched prior to it. The National Forum will be broadcast nationwide and disseminated through television, radio, newspapers and public lectures.



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## LATIN AMERICA

**ARGENTINA:** Silvia Kochen, Institute for Studies in Neurosciences and Complex Systems, ENyS-CONICET

With the Global Advocacy Seed Grant, we will run a series of one-day Seminars “Neuroscience & Art” that will bring together researchers and local artists with the aim of disseminating scientific knowledge in neuroscience and highlighting the importance of neuroscience in public health and education, among others. The seminars are targeted at a wide range of audiences, university students, health care practitioners, educators, policymakers and the public interested in understanding brain function. Each Seminar includes 6 talks given by experts in the field that work in one specific topic (for example: Memory Reconsolidation). At the end of the talks, a group of artists will present their artwork to show how Art understands and interprets the findings of science. Thus, the audience will have the opportunity to reach neuroscience from two different perspectives: from the scientist itself and from conception of the artist.

**BOLIVIA:** Mohammed Mostajo Radji, Clubes de Ciencia Bolivia

Despite over a decade of government stability, the plurinational state of Bolivia persists as the Latin American nation with highest income inequality. Ranked last in the region for innovation and health, Bolivia demonstrates a clear need for effective science outreach and its rich natural resources position the nation to greatly benefit from scientific literacy and policy implementation. The nonprofit Clubes de Ciencia Bolivia will run workshops with lab sessions for students that will expose them to cutting edge findings (such as optogenetic techniques and how these have been used to implant false memories in rodent brains to understand hippocampal function) that would not otherwise be accessible under current educational conditions. A guest speaker from Johns Hopkins University will also be invited to speak.

**CHILE:** Patricio Rojas Montecinos, Chilean Society of Neuroscience

Chile is the second highest consumer of cocaine and marijuana in Latin America according to the 2015 World Drug Report elaborated by the UN Office of Drugs and Crime. It is only surpassed by Uruguay, which legalized the use of marijuana last year. The main rise in marijuana consumption in Chile has occurred among adolescents and young



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## LATIN AMERICA

adults, and this is a call to educate and generate a deep awareness about the impact of drug use on the developing and adult brain. The Chilean Society of Neuroscience plans to develop educational material and organize a two-day Symposium that will include key presentations and discussions among researchers, clinicians and policy makers, aiming to address the general public, with special emphasis on high-school and university students.

**PANAMA:** Jagannatha Kosagisharafi, Institute of Scientific Research and Technological Advances

Panama has a unique aging population unlike other Spanish groups because of genetic diversity due to the Canal, etc. Diet, stress, alcohol and exercise are major issues in the country which all affect mental health. Brain disorders are the second major disorder in Panama. The Institute will advocate evidence-based information on the role of nutrition, stress, alcohol and exercise on healthy brain aging. We will conduct a special session based on the mixing of young and aged groups to understand the social relations on health aging. During the sessions, we will conduct mini-mental, blood pressure, and glucose tests and a demonstration of EEG and Doppler in collaboration with doctors. We will focus on 75 aged and 75 young student communities. We also plan to invite diplomats for this activity so that they are motivated to invest in brain research in the near future.



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## PAN-EUROPE

**ITALY:** Micaela Morelli, Italian Society for Neuroscience

During the UniStem Day at the University of Cagliari, the Italian Society for Neuroscience will help raise awareness and understanding about brain research and grow networks of researchers through the following activities: Supporting two speakers to describe the basis of cell duplication and what stem cells are; producing and showing a kick-off video and an audio connection within participating European countries; talks by scientists and researchers about their everyday life in science will be conducted; educational activities including visits to neuroscience laboratories will be supported; and games, discussions, films and open workshops with science communicators.

**ITALY:** Giuseppe Pignataro, Italian Society for Neuroscience

The Italian Society for Neuroscience would like to start, encourage and foster the interest of pre-university students in the professional world of neuroscience. In an analogy with other scientific societies, it is proposed an amendment to the Statutes of the Italian Society of Neuroscience (SINS) in order to make it possible to enroll high school students as SINS members. These members, coordinated by a Regional Coordinator, will be called Junior Members. The seed grant will help support Junior Members will meet in conjunction with the National Convention of SINS. During the conference, some representatives will be able to visit local institutions of scientific importance and attend conference sessions. An ad hoc data-club symposium will also be organized for Junior Members.

**THE NETHERLANDS:** Bert Lenaert, Brain Injury Center

In the province of Limburg (Netherlands), one out of four people will be confronted with brain injury caused by accident, stroke, surgery, or disease in their personal environment. The mission of the Brain Injury Center Limburg (BICL) is to improve the quality of life of individuals who sustained brain injury and their environment by acquiring, applying, and spreading scientific knowledge. During the 2019 Brain Awareness Week, BICL will organize its third symposium covering a broad range of topics related to research on and care for individuals with brain injury. The Global Advocacy Seed Grant will allow patients, families and caregivers to enroll at strongly reduced admission fees (free if financially feasible), thereby lowering the threshold to their participation. This will increase public awareness and will help putting the long-term needs of patients and their environment on the agenda of policymakers.



*Politicians attending the Hellenic Society for Neuroscience Advocacy event in Athens in 2018.*

## 2019 LOOKING AHEAD

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

Current funding partners - IBRO, the Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS), the Japan Neuroscience Society (JNS) and the Society for Neuroscience (SfN) – have shown generous and continued support of this initiative.

Expanding global activity in advocacy and outreach work, a growing resource and network of seed grant alumni and experiences as well as the 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, seed grants awarded for events to take place in 2020 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.**