

FUNDING GUIDELINES

1. About BrainsCAN

BrainsCAN is Western University's CFREF-funded initiative (Canada First Research Excellence Fund) to increase our understanding of higher brain functions in health and disease.

BrainsCAN endeavors to:

- radically transform our understanding of the brain;
- significantly reduce the impact of cognitive disorders;
- lead public policy and medicolegal ethics debates from a position of knowledge; and
- increase Western University's global reputation as the premiere institute for cognitive neuroscience research.

2. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) at BrainsCAN

Equity – means fairness. It is the removal of systemic barriers and biases enabling all individuals to have equal access to, and to benefit from, any aspect of society.

Diversity – is defined as differences in race, color, place of origin, religion, immigrant and newcomer status, ethnic origin, ability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, and others. It consists of the conditions, expressions and experiences of different groups.

Inclusion – is the practice of creating an environment that ensures all individuals are respected equitably and have access to the same opportunities.

EDI is a top priority for BrainsCAN and through its [EDI Action plan](#), BrainsCAN is committed to meaningful and action-driven considerations of EDI embedded within its research practices and culture. In this way, BrainsCAN seeks to foster a diverse membership that reflects the Canadian society and global environment it serves through research impact. BrainsCAN is working to improve the participation in cognitive neuroscience research of Indigenous persons, persons with disabilities, members of racialized groups, Black people, and members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

This funding aims to improve knowledge and understanding of EDI and help remove the barriers and challenges faced by equity deserving groups. The funding is intended for internal use (within Western and its affiliates) to enhance the research culture, primarily within cognitive neurosciences but also in other disciplines, enhancing EDI more widely. Ultimately, BrainsCAN wishes to provide an environment enabling all researchers, students and staff the opportunity to reach their maximum potential in an accountable space where they feel they belong.

Support provided by persons *not* from equity deserving groups is crucial. Acting as allies, they can help remove the burden of change from those most affected, and their involvement in this funding call is strongly encouraged.

3. Funding Opportunities under BrainsCAN's EDI Initiative

BrainsCAN is offering funding under two streams. **Stream 1** will fund staff, graduate students and researchers to attend EDI-specific training, events and conferences or host external EDI

trainers/knowledge holders to deliver training at Western. **Stream 2** offers the opportunity for individuals or teams to develop new, exciting and innovative ideas for increasing the equity, diversity and inclusiveness of our cognitive neuroscience research environment or wider. Teams could be a mix of staff, faculty and graduate students from a variety of departments and central services. Established university groups are also eligible to seek funding to further enhance their work and activities. Importantly, the impact delivered should fall within the cognitive neuroscience research space, although can reach wider. Ambitious and innovative initiatives are encouraged.

Total funding available for this call - \$110,000.

Stream 1 – EDI Training

4. **Stream 1** is for individuals working in cognitive neuroscience research, either in a research or technical/admin support role. This stream is aimed at helping individuals improve their knowledge and understanding of EDI through funding individual attendance at EDI-specific training courses, conferences and events. Funding will also be provided for external trainers/knowledge holders to deliver training at Western University for a lab team or wider group working within cognitive neuroscience. Training can take place anytime within 12 months of award of funding.

Researchers, graduate students and staff members working in cognitive neuroscience research are eligible to apply, providing they can demonstrate that funding will benefit equity, diversity and inclusion in the wider community. For example, individuals who attend a training course must show how this will benefit the community, either through a sharing event or embedding what has been learned into new attitudes/behaviours/policies and/or procedures in research and support teams.

A maximum of \$3,000 is available per application for Stream 1

4.1. Eligible costs for Stream 1:

- Fees for an individual to attend an EDI specific training course, conference or event - training courses should offer EDI knowledge beyond any free [training offered at Western University](#).
- Fees for an external trainer/knowledge holder to deliver training at Western.
- Travel and accommodation costs for participants attending an EDI-specific training course, conference or event.
- Travel and accommodation costs for an external trainer delivering training at Western (if training is in-person).

4.2. Costs not eligible

- Offsetting of costs for EDI training already taking place at the University.

4.3. Stream 1 eligibility and assessment criteria

- Applicants must be working in the field of cognitive neuroscience either as a graduate student, researcher or in a research/technical/admin support role.
- Training courses must be exclusively focused on EDI and must offer knowledge and expertise over and above the free [training](#) offering at Western.

- Conferences and events must be exclusively focused on EDI.
- Training delivered at Western must be exclusively EDI focused, although can be part of a larger meeting/event. For instance, hosting an EDI session at a faculty research day.
- Applicants must demonstrate a specific need for the training, for example, a gap in knowledge or understanding or practical support on how to implement change.
- Individuals applying to attend training/an event must demonstrate a plan for dissemination to the cognitive neuroscience community, or wider.
- Funding must be spent within 12 months of award.
- Only one application permitted per person including as lead or co-applicant.

4.4. Stream 1 Application and review process

Applicants for Stream 1 – EDI training, should complete the Stream 1 application form and submit to bcnedi@uwo.ca by **12pm on January 25th 2024**.

Applications will be reviewed by the BrainsCAN EDI Committee review panel, where applications will be ranked and recommendations sent to BrainsCAN's Executive Committee for ratification.

Stream 2 – Innovation for EDI

5. **Stream 2** is for new, innovative ideas within the university for enhancing equity, diversity and inclusion and should be bold and ambitious, with the potential to have a long-term impact. Individuals or teams can apply, with a mix of researchers, graduate students and staff from across the university. University groups or organizations looking to launch initiatives/activities are also eligible. The impact delivered must be within the cognitive neuroscience space, although can reach wider. At least one applicant must work within the field of cognitive neuroscience either in research or a research/technical/admin support role.

Match funding is welcomed under Stream 2, creating the potential for larger, broader projects applicable across wider areas of the university.

A maximum of \$30,000 is available per application for Stream 2.

5.1. Stream 2 Funding objective

Funding must deliver EDI-specific benefits to the cognitive neuroscience community or wider, in order to create accountable spaces where all staff, researchers and students can reach their maximum potential in an environment where they feel they belong. This could be achieved through initiatives targeting specific challenges or barriers facing equity deserving groups, through education, increasing awareness, or bringing people together to increase belonging. Ideas should be new and creative and can be part of a larger initiative.

5.2. Stream 2 Eligible costs

- Guest speaker fees and travel expenses
- Honorariums

- Catering and room hire costs
- Promotional materials / merchandise that promotes an EDI initiative
- Art
- Travel expenses
- Expenses relating to recruitment (for example to recruit to the university students or staff from equity deserving groups)
- Stipend of \$17.00/hr for undergraduate students to set-up/run an initiative on behalf of the main applicant

5.3. Costs not eligible

- Salaries
- Research Equipment
- IT equipment
- Initiatives/activities that are already being funded at Western

5.4. Stream 2 Application and Review Process

Applicants for Stream 2 – Innovation for EDI, should email a brief description of their idea and a list of applicants to bcnedi@uwo.ca as soon as possible and at least six weeks before the application deadline. Applicants will then be notified if their idea has been approved to move to a full application. On receiving approval, applicants should complete the Stream 2 application form and submit to bcnedi@uwo.ca by **12pm on January 25th 2024**.

Applications will be reviewed by the BrainsCAN EDI Committee review panel as well as being sent to one or two external reviewers who will provide written feedback for the Committee. The applications will be ranked and recommendations sent to Executive Committee for ratification.

5.5. Stream 2 eligibility and assessment criteria

- Open to applicants from any unit, department, faculty or service across the university including graduate students, researchers and staff. University organizations/groups with an interest in EDI can also apply. At least one applicant must work in the field of cognitive neuroscience, either as a graduate student, researcher or in a research/technical/admin support role.
- The lead applicant can be a researcher, graduate student or staff member, however, if the project lead is not eligible to hold a research account, they should nominate someone either within the project team or outside the project team to be the funds account holder. This should be someone who is eligible under [university guidelines](#) (will usually be a professor, associate professor or assistant professor – see guidelines for further details). If an applicant is unable to find a suitable account holder, BrainsCAN will identify someone.
- Proposals must address a current challenge/barrier facing those from equity deserving groups working in cognitive neuroscience research or wider (i.e., a challenge or barrier that exists in cognitive neuroscience research but also in other areas).
- Initiatives should align with the ambitions of [BrainsCAN's EDI Action Plan](#).

- Initiatives should be new, creative, ambitious and focus on long-term impact.
- Initiatives should be focused internally within Western/its affiliates.
- Initiatives should be feasible and fit within the proposed budget.
- Applications from teams of researchers, graduate students and staff from across different faculties, departments and services are encouraged to ensure diverse perspectives and expertise. Teams must demonstrate they hold the expertise and experience to appropriately manage and deliver the initiative.
- Clear timelines and milestones for initiatives should be presented, with funding spent by December 31st, 2025.
- Initiatives should have both an impact plan to ensure maximum benefit and a plan to measure success.
- Individuals are limited to one application each. This includes as lead or co-applicant.
- Funding can be used to part-fund larger initiatives.

6. How to apply

To apply for funding under Stream 1 – *EDI Training*, please complete the Stream 1 application form and email to bcnedi@uwo.ca by **12PM on January 25th 2024**.

To apply for funding under Stream 2 – *Innovation for EDI*, email a brief description of your idea and the list of applicants to bcnedi@uwo.ca as soon as possible and at least 6 weeks before the application deadline. If your idea fits the criteria, you will be invited to apply using the Stream 2 application form. Please email the completed application form to bcnedi@uwo.ca by **January 25th 2024**.

7. Further information

If you have any questions or would like further information, please email bcnedi@uwo.ca.