

Brainy 2021 call for research in neuro-oncology

In memory of Luca Cividini

Despite the increasing amount of research information on brain tumors, available treatments remain limited. This is particularly true for glioblastoma, the most aggressive brain tumor, where standard treatment remains that defined in 2005 by Stupp et al.

BRAINY has been created to help to fill the gap between laboratory research and treatments for brain tumor patients

As a first step, BRAINY will award **one-year support of € 30,000 (before tax)** to a young top-level scientist in the field of neuro-oncology in the form of either **one-year fellowship in experimental or clinical research** or **one year funding for experimental research** to promote original research in leading Italian research institutions.

1. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Experimental research. Italian and foreign researchers holding a scientific degree in Medicine, Biological and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Biotechnology, Biostatistics, Computation Biology, Physics, Mathematics, Engineering, Chemistry, Natural Sciences, or any related field. Selected candidates must carry out their research projects in leading Italian institutions. Candidates may apply for a fellowship or for funding the laboratory activity related to the project they present for this call.

Clinical research. Italian and foreign medical doctors. Candidates must hold a degree in Medicine. Selected candidates must carry out their work in leading Italian Research-Hospitals and shall – based on their expertise – become members of specialized clinical teams, led by top-level referents. Please make sure that all qualifications held by foreign candidates are equivalent to their Italian counterparts, for them to be able to see patients in Italy. Candidates who do not fulfill the legal requirements to work as clinicians in Italy will be excluded from the evaluation procedure. Please be explicit in the Letter of Acceptance by the Hosting Institute that the candidate meets the legal criteria to work as a clinician.

The 12-month fellowships will only be awarded to researchers (Italian or foreigners) for research work at Italian institutions.

For ALL the proposals:

- All candidates must be 35 years old or less **on the 1st of January 2022**. If awarded, the candidate will be asked to confirm in writing that she/he meets all requirements.
- Women with children are allowed to count one extra year per child. If awarded, the candidate will be asked to provide a “family certificate”.
- All proposals must be associated with a **P.I. belonging to the same institution where the candidate will develop her/his research project**.
- **Only ONE application for each Principal Investigator (PI) will be accepted**. No limitations are set for applications from the same institution.

For experimental research grant ONLY:

Candidates must have **at least one original paper as first/co-first/last/co-corresponding author**. “In press” articles are eligible publications but a DOI number if available and proof of manuscript acceptance is mandatory, and must be separately sent at brainy@pec.it. **Submitted/under revision manuscripts**, book chapters, and conference abstracts and proceedings are **not considered eligible** publications.

2. EVALUATION PROCEDURES

All applications sent by the deadline and meeting the eligibility criteria will be evaluated by the **Scientific Committee** that will establish one ranking list, according to the following criteria:

APPLICANTS IN EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH

Candidates will be awarded funding based on:

1. Quality of the applicant's scientific CV.

Please note that academic and professional achievements, studying/working experience abroad, quality of publications (i.e., the impact factor – IF – of the journals), authorship position (first, second, last author, etc.) will be part of the selection criteria.

Lay dissemination activities in schools and/or civil society will be taken into account in the evaluation of the CV. Candidates are strongly invited to indicate the title, place and date, sponsor of every single event. If awarded, the candidate must provide proof of her/his participation in the event.

2. Quality of the proposed research project.

Compliance with the call and field of application, **feasibility, innovation, and translational** basis of the project, as well as the potential of the outlined research to make a substantial contribution to the field, will be evaluated.

3. Quality of the Hosting laboratory and Institution.

Quality of the Host Institution (in terms of laboratories, facilities, etc.) as well as the competence of the PI (– either being the head of the hosting laboratory and/or the senior scientist supervising the overall research project including candidate proposed activities), such as expertise in the field of the project, mentoring, international standing, etc., will be evaluated.

APPLICANTS IN CLINICAL RESEARCH

Candidate medical doctors will be awarded funding based on:

1. Quality of the applicant's CV.

Please note that academic and professional achievements, studying/working experience abroad, and publications in peer-reviewed journals will be a part of the selection criteria.

Dissemination activities in schools and/or civil society will be taken into account in the evaluation of the CV. Candidates are strongly invited to indicate the title, place and date, sponsor of every single event. If awarded, the candidate must provide proof of his/her participation in the event.

2. Quality of the proposed research project.

Compliance with the call and field of application, **feasibility, innovation, and translational** basis of the project, as well as the potential of the outlined research to make a substantial contribution to the field, will be evaluated.

3. Quality of the Hosting Institution.

Institution/Hospital providing comprehensive care together with research activities will be highly valued.

3. GUIDE TO PROPOSAL APPLICATION

Please fill in the application form and the biosketch for the Brainy 2022 call.

If the research plan includes research in humans, the approval of the local Ethics Committee or Institutional Review Board (IRB) is mandatory. As above, when available a copy of the authorization should be provided during the application process. This is advantageous for the candidate because authorization presence/absence will be taken into account by the evaluating committee in terms of project feasibility. If not included in the application, it **must** be provided upon grant acceptance or at most one month before the start of the grant. Failure to provide the requested documentation will result in fellowship loss. If human samples are from other laboratories provide the authorization released to the collaborator together with a justification/collaboration letter.

Please note that during the application process you will be also asked to upload the following documentation:

- One letter of recommendation not dated before 1st January 2020 (mandatory). The letter can be written by the hosting PI.
- A letter of acceptance by the hosting institute, signed by the director of the department where the candidate will develop her/his project. This letter must include the declaration that, if the candidate is awarded a BRAINY fellowship, she/he will be able to carry out her/his research in the hosting Institution; it should also include the name of the laboratory, the name of the P.I./Professor/Group leader who will supervise the candidate, the department and the Institution where the research will take place. In the acceptance letter please state clearly that all expenses covered by the **DGL 81/2008 (Attuazione dell'articolo 1 della legge 3 agosto 2007, n. 123, in materia di tutela della salute e della sicurezza nei luoghi di lavoro)** are under the responsibility of the hosting institute.
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OTHER INFORMATION

- All application materials must be written in English.
- All files must be in PDF or Word format.
- Each candidate is allowed to enter only one application. Candidates who enter more than one application will be excluded from the evaluation process.
- After submitting your application, it will **NOT** be possible to ask for amendments or corrections.

4. FUNDING REGULATIONS

- The total amount of the 2022 Brainy grant is € 30,000 (before tax). Part of the gross salary will be directed to tax coverage (IRPEF, Italian regional and municipal taxes). Please note that BRAINY fellowships do NOT provide any payment for retirement contributions, such as INPS due to the current fiscal law.
- Our Fellowship guarantees insurance to each researcher, covering permanent disabilities resulting from a workplace-related accident or disease, fatal accidents, and partial reimbursement of medical expenses. Please note that all expenses covered by the **DGL 81/2008 (Attuazione dell'articolo 1 della legge 3 agosto 2007, n. 123, in materia di tutela della salute e della sicurezza nei luoghi di lavoro)** are under the responsibility of the hosting institute. Please **state** in the acceptance letter that **the hosting institute agrees to this clause**.
- In case of **maternity leave** (provided the leave started at least 1 month after the beginning of the fellowship), Associazione Brainy will **freeze the fellowship** and will then restore the payments once the researcher will be back in the lab, extending the period of fellowship to deliver all the 12 monthly payments. · The fellowship can be terminated at any time by giving advanced notice (at least 15 days before interruption) to BRAINY by email at **brainy@pec.it**. The grant is **strictly personal**: in case of withdrawal, **it** will be transferred to the next best-ranked candidate or to Associazione Brainy.
- The fellowship **CANNOT** be combined with any other form of bursary; similarly, the fellowship is not compatible with either temporary or permanent employment by any other Institution; the fellowship is compatible with forms of funding other than the above, provided that they do not exceed a total of € 10,000 (before tax) per annum.

5. REPORTING

The awardee of BRAINY fellowship or grant will be required to produce one **mid-term report** after 6 months, and one **final report** at the end of the 12 months.

The **mid-term report** is required within the first two weeks of the seventh month of the fellowship. Please note that if BRAINY does not receive the mid-term report by this deadline, payment will be suspended until the report is submitted.

In November 2022 all BRAINY fellows will be asked to produce a **short, non-technical update of the project** to be presented to private sponsors, regardless of the starting date of the fellowship. This report is mandatory and does not substitute the mid-term or the final report.

The **final report** must be submitted at least two weeks after the end of the 12th month.

All reports must be sent via mail to brainy@pec.it.

6. DURATION

Grants awarded by BRAINY will have a duration of 12 months and will **start on 1st January 2022**: the starting date can be postponed until **no later than 1st April 2022**.

7. AWARD OBLIGATIONS

All successful applicants must acknowledge **BRAINY in any publication** related to the granted proposal and those generated from any other research activities, carried out during the period supported by BRAINY. Furthermore, a **pdf version of all published manuscripts** acknowledging BRAINY must be sent to the address brainy@pec.it **no later than 2 weeks** after publication in Pubmed.

Once a candidate has been granted a BRAINY fellowship, by accepting it she/he agrees to cooperate with BRAINY in its dissemination activities and promotion of its scientific research, whenever required. The candidate must therefore be **available to be interviewed** for articles in printed and online journals and **participate in promotional events** (such as press conferences, meetings in schools, and events with the general public) or other scientific dissemination activities organized by BRAINY.

8. DEADLINE

All applications must be sent no later than November 13, 2021 midnight (Central European Time, CET). After completing the online form, you will receive a confirmation email at the email address supplied. The list of awarded candidates will be published on our website www.associazionebrainy.com on **December 14, 2021**. For any further information, feel free to contact BRAINY at the following e-mail address: brainy@pec.it