Objective and Scope

The Excellence Funds are the result of a University of Toronto Department of Psychiatry (‘the Department’) fundraising effort to provide seed funding for projects by junior faculty that align with the Department’s strategic plan and priorities as expressed by the donors of funds. The three designated areas of priority are: Research, Education and Creative Professional Activity (CPA). With respect to Research, the seed funds are intended to support projects that will generate pilot data to support a subsequent more definitive peer-reviewed grant application, preferably intended for submission to a provincial or national funding agency.

This academic year, the Department’s Executive Committee has allocated a total of $50,000 to the Excellence Funds.

Eligibility

Applicants must have an academic appointment at the University of Toronto, with a primary appointment in the Department of Psychiatry at the rank of Lecturer or Assistant Professor at the date of applying to the Excellence Fund. Applications submitted by a PI and/or Co-PI who does not have a primary appointment in the Department of Psychiatry will not be considered.

Faculty are eligible to receive only one grant award as a Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator over the lifetime of the Excellence Funds. As a result, an eligible faculty member may be listed as a PI/Co-PI on only one application in a funding cycle (for example, a PI cannot be listed as a Co-PI on another application or an applicant cannot be a Co-PI on two applications).

Research applications only must have one Principal Investigator and one Co-Principal Investigator. The PI and Co-PI must be from separate hospital sites and both hospitals must be either fully or partially affiliated with the Department of Psychiatry. Whilst the PI and Co-PI are both expected to contribute to the development and conduct of the research project, the research does not necessarily have to take place at both sites (whether the research takes place at one or two sites should be primarily determined by the science).

Funding

A maximum of 6 awards will be given this academic year. Consistent with the designation of donated funds, the maximum number of projects that can be allocated to each designated priority area is as follows:
• Research – up to 3 projects.
• Education – up to 2 projects.
• CPA – up to 1 project.

Research projects selected for funding will be awarded up to $10,000 each from the Department of Psychiatry. The requested amount will need to be equally matched by fully affiliated hospital departments for up to a total of $20,000 per project.

Education and CPA projects selected for funding will be awarded up to $5000 each from the Department of Psychiatry. The requested amount will need to be equally matched by fully affiliated hospital departments for a total of up to $10,000 per project.

The University of Toronto’s Department of Psychiatry will match the funds for applicants from hospital sites without practice plans.

‘In-kind’ contributions in lieu of matching funds are not permitted.

The funds must be spent within 12 months of their release by the University of Toronto’s Department of Psychiatry. Funds that are not spent within that time period will be returned to the Department of Psychiatry.

Application Process

The proposed project must be novel and previously unfunded.

All applicants will be required to complete and submit a proposal template electronically according to the priority area they are applying to.

• Click here for the Research template.
• Click here for the Education template.
• Click here for the CPA template.

Applications will not be considered if they do not adhere to the submission guidelines. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

Mentorship

Mentorship of junior faculty is important in order for them to write the best possible application, successfully complete a funded project in the allotted time, and write up the finished project in a timely manner for presentation and publication. Therefore, all applicants are required to submit a signed letter of support from a senior and experienced faculty member who is prepared to act as a mentor to the applicant for the duration of the project (including mentorship in the preparation of the grant application, publications and presentations, and progress and final reports). The
mentor's letter of support must be submitted electronically in the relevant section of the Template. The mentor's letter of support should include, but not be limited to, the following statements: i) the mentor will be available to supervise and support the applicant's project, ii) the mentor will ensure that the applicant: a) presents his/her findings and, in the case of research, submits the work for publication in at least one peer-reviewed journal, and b) prepares the progress reports and final report.

Adjudication

The Excellence Funds Committee will review all applications and advise the Executive Committee, Department of Psychiatry on which applications should be funded.

Conditions of the Fund

Research Ethics Board Approval

- The successful applicant must provide evidence of Research Ethics Board (REB) approval along with consent forms where human subjects are involved in the study, before the funding is released.
- The successful applicant must provide evidence of University Animal Care Committee (ACC) approval where animals are involved in the study, before the funding is released.
- It is expected that the successful applicant will obtain REB or ACC approval (when applicable) within 3 months of the date of notification of the award, in order to receive the award.

Financial Considerations

- The amount of each grant is intended to cover direct costs associated with the study. However, funds may not be used to pay for conference travel, faculty salaries, computer hardware, standing software, printers, course registrations, payment of scientists already employed at an institution, or stipends for faculty. No indirect or facility administrative costs are provided. A maximum of $250 of Excellence Funds may be budgeted for poster or other costs for presentation at the Harvey Stancer Research Day or Don Wasylenki Education Day.

Reporting and Grant Administration

- The grant recipient must provide progress reports to the University of Toronto's Department of Psychiatry at 6 months and 12 months after receipt of the funds summarizing work completed, including any publications and presentations. A final completion report, in the form of a one-page structured abstract that includes the project's findings (in the case of research projects) or outcomes (in the case of Education and CPA projects), as well as an accounting for funds, is due 15 months after receipt of funds.
- Funds will be released in two instalments. The first instalment will be released after the applicant provided evidence of REB or ACC approval, or a letter cosigned by the applicant's mentor indicating why REB or ACC approval isn't
required. The second instalment is conditional on receipt of the 6-month progress report indicating satisfactory progress of the project.

Publications and Presentations

• Awardees are expected to present their methods and findings at the Department of Psychiatry Harvey Stancer Research Day or the Don Wasylewski Education Day. In addition, recipients of research grants are expected to submit their work for publication in peer-reviewed journals.

• All publications and presentations that result in full or in part from a project supported by the Excellence Funds should carry the following acknowledgement: “This research was supported by the University of Toronto Department of Psychiatry Excellence Funds”

Excellence Funds Timeline

2018 Mid October – Call for proposals
2018 Friday December 14, 5pm – Application deadline
2019 Late January – Adjudication meeting
2019 Mid February – Adjudication complete and applicants notified
2019 March to May – First instalment of funds released after receipt of REB or ACC approval (if indicated), with 12 months to then complete the project and an additional 3 months to analyse the data

Information

Should you have any questions about the Excellence Funds or the call for proposals, please do not hesitate to contact:

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