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Memo

To: Associate Deans Research
Cc: Deans, Research Officers
From: Rui Wang, Interim Vice-President Research & Innovation
Date: March 25, 2020
Subject: York University Internal Process for 1907 Trailblazer Award

Introduction

Please find below information regarding the internal call for applications for the [1907 Research Award](#), which is a new annual award to early career MDs and PhDs to investigate causes and cures of mental health conditions.

Institutions are limited to **two submissions**; therefore, an internal process will inform the selection of those applications which go forward. The review process will also provide feedback designed to increase the quality and competitiveness of submissions from York University.

Please note that given the current situation with COVID-19 and the changes to York University operations, **the Office of Research Services (ORS) is now accepting electronic submission of research applications**. For instructions on how to submit applications electronically and on electronic approvals for ORS Checklists, please see <https://research.info.yorku.ca/2020/03/important-news-submission-of-research-applications-and-ors-checklists/>.

This information should be circulated to your respective Research Directors, Research Officers and faculty members, to ensure their familiarity with the internal selection process.

1907 Trailblazer Award

The [1907 Trailblazer Award](#) was established to encourage high-impact, step-change approaches to research in the brain and mind sciences for mental health. It is targeted towards scientists who think creatively across disciplines and who are motivated to “swim against the tides of consensus”. In addition to supporting a specific research project, the Award intends to increase the size of the talent pool of early career investigators researching causes and cures for mental illness.

The Award provides a US\$100,000 research gift on an unrestricted basis, a US\$20,000 prize to enhance the economic security of the scientist, and travel and expense coverage for attendance at two annual meetings. Each winner will be invited to two annual meetings to present interim findings (year 1) and final findings (year 2), where they can form scientific

relationships with other Award winners, 1907 Research's Advisory Board Directors and Research Directors. Three Award recipients will be selected this year.

Applications should describe programs of work that aim to improve knowledge and outcomes of **psychiatric illness** through brain-mind research. Eligible disciplines include, but are not limited to, neuroscience, neurology, psychology, psychiatry, cognitive neuroscience, clinical psychology, computational neuroscience, neuroimaging, genetics and engineering (including novel technologies and devices). See [Request for Application](#) for more details on what kind of research is supported.

Projects must be grounded in the study of biological mechanisms underlying brain function, cognitive processes, and/or consciousness. Both basic science projects and those focused on near-term applications (e.g. disruptive technologies and potential clinical interventions) are supported.

*Research applications **may be related, but cannot be identical**, to any other currently funded project.*

Eligibility

Applicants should be an **early career researcher**, defined as being within ten years of the date when the PhD/MD degree was awarded (whichever came later and with exceptions for maternity leave, paternity leave and other excused absences).

Applicants must also be currently employed by a university or public research institute in the US, UK or Canada, with full-time employment guaranteed for the duration of the project (tenure or tenure-track and international equivalents). Applicants must already work in a supervisory role (PhD, MD, Postdoctoral supervisor primary or secondary).

Applicants will have demonstrated independence from senior colleagues. They must be able to initiate and direct their own research as principal investigator, have full responsibility for running their labs and full control of their research funds.

Applicants will have a strong track record of scientific publications relevant to their research program.

Selection Criteria

The key criterion for assessing applications will be the extent to which research programs bring us closer to causes and cures based on an enhanced understanding of how aberrant neurobiological and/or psychological mechanisms give rise to behavioral (objective) and psychological (subjective) symptoms. Applications that test the efficacy of an existing intervention or follow established research paradigms are not suitable for this call.

Internal Selection Process

- Faculties are asked to submit applications for review by the Major Awards Advisory Committee (MAAC). There is no limit as to the number of applications that Faculties may bring forward.
- The MAAC will review the submissions and provide feedback to applicants as well as advice to inform institutional decision making on which applications to advance to the funder.
- Abby Vogus, SIRI Specialist, Office of Research Services, will work with applicants to prepare final documentation for submission.

Internal Application Package (due April 10, 2020 by email to avogus@yorku.ca)

A complete internal application package includes:

- A Faculty memo that includes the following:
 - Endorsement of the application, attesting to the applicant's suitability for the award.
 - A description of any commitments to support the applicant's project including, but not limited to, relief from teaching/administrative duties.
 - A description of how overheads will be used, if applicable. Faculties are reminded the [overhead policy](#) applies; any application not requesting overheads must apply for a waiver.
- A signed ORS checklist. For directions on electronic approval of ORS Checklists, see <https://research.info.yorku.ca/2020/03/important-news-submission-of-research-applications-and-ors-checklists/>
- A draft submission that addresses the following questions (max 4 pages):
 1. What is the novel idea and what is the potential impact to the field?
 2. What is the scientific rationale of the idea given current gaps in knowledge?
 3. What is your execution plan and why are you uniquely positioned to execute?
 4. Why is 1907 Research best positioned to partner with you?
- An updated CV (with publication list) that includes a section on conventions in the field, highlighting author order on papers, top journals for your field, and any other information you think will be relevant to inform the assessment of your CV by an interdisciplinary committee.

Completed Application Package (due June 30, 2020 before midnight)

Once selected, SIRI will register the applicants and obtain passcodes for access to the application portal. SIRI support will be available to strengthen proposals. Please note that SIRI must receive an electronic copy of the final, submitted materials.

The complete application package, which **applicants submit directly through the application portal**, includes the following components:

- Final proposal which addresses the following questions (max 4 pages):
 1. What is the novel idea and what is the potential impact to the field?
 2. What is the scientific rationale of the idea given current gaps in knowledge?
 3. What is your execution plan and why are you uniquely positioned to execute?
 4. Why is 1907 Research best positioned to partner with you?
- CV with publication list.
- Responses to a series of short-form questions related to sex, gender and diversity; ethics; and confidentiality.

Short-listed candidates will then be interviewed remotely.

Relevant Deadlines ***Note deadlines have been revised in light of COVID-19 interruptions

Date	Milestone
April 10, 2020	Faculties submit internal applications to ORS
Late April	MAAC Review
Late April	Institutional decisions and feedback provided to applicants
May 31, 2020	SIRI submits letters of support and obtains application portal access
June 30, 2020	Submission deadline
	Shortlisting and interview process
October 31, 2020	Award recipients selected/announced

Contact

For more information please contact Abby Vogus, SIRI Specialist, Office of Research Services, avogus@yorku.ca, ext. 44670.