AFAR and the McKnight Brain Research Foundation launch new grant program in Cognitive Aging and Memory Loss

New program encourages outstanding mid-career scientists to lead transformative research in the field of cognitive aging.

NEW YORK and ORLANDO—The American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR) and the McKnight Brain Research Foundation (MBRF) are pleased to announce the launch of a new grant award program, The McKnight Brain Research Foundation Innovator Awards in Cognitive Aging and Memory Loss.

The MBRF Innovator Awards in Cognitive Aging and Memory Loss are supported by a $4.5 million grant from the McKnight Brain Research Foundation and will support six investigators over a period of five years. Each year, MBRF and AFAR will provide up to two three-year awards of $250,000 annually. The total award amount of $750,000 over the three-year period will add substantial start-up support to help mid-career scientists develop and/or expand outstanding research programs in cognitive aging and memory loss.

The awards will be given in three grant cycles, in which each year, one award will be made to support studies focusing on clinical translational research and another award toward understanding basic biological mechanisms underlying cognitive aging and age-related memory loss.

“For most Americans, staying ‘mentally sharp’ as they age is a very high priority,” said Michael Dockery, MD, Chair of the McKnight Brain Research Foundation board of trustees. “Even those not affected by Alzheimer’s disease or other dementias will likely undergo cognitive changes due to the normal aging process. With the population of older adults growing rapidly in the United States and across the globe, it is critical that we support researchers dedicated to better understanding and alleviating the effects of age-related cognitive decline and memory loss.”

AFAR has long supported the careers of talented investigators and research on cognitive health. “By providing research funding, AFAR and MRBF are building a cadre of outstanding research scientists across the United States who have the potential to lead transformative research in the field of cognitive aging,” says Stephanie Lederman, EdM, Executive Director, AFAR.

With the new program, MBRF is extending its mission of supporting the next generation of world-class research scientists in the field of cognitive aging and memory loss by targeting outstanding mid-career scientists who have already demonstrated a firm commitment to cognitive aging research and shown the potential to become leaders in the field.

“Providing funding at the mid-career stage capitalizes on a unique opportunity to encourage leading scientists to continue embarking on independent careers that will lead to faster development of new ideas and approaches in cognitive aging research than is possible with traditional funding,” notes Lederman.

“We are excited to partner with AFAR and look forward to seeing the impact of the research bolstered through the new Innovator Awards in Cognitive Aging and Memory Loss,” Dockery added.

The recipients of the first award cycle will be announced by late 2021.

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About AFAR
The American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR) is a national non-profit organization that supports and advances pioneering biomedical research that is revolutionizing how we live healthier and longer. For four decades, AFAR has served as the field’s talent incubator, providing more than $184 million to more than 4,200 investigators at premier research institutions nationwide. A trusted leader and strategist, AFAR also works with public and private funders to steer high quality grant programs and interdisciplinary research networks. AFAR-funded researchers are finding that modifying basic cellular processes can delay—or even prevent—many chronic diseases, often at the same time. They are discovering that it is never too late—or too early—to improve health. This groundbreaking science is paving the way for innovative new therapies that promise to improve and extend our quality of life—at any age. Learn more at www.afar.org or follow AFARorg on Twitter and Facebook.

About the McKnight Brain Research Foundation
Founded in 1999, the McKnight Brain Research Foundation is the nation’s only private foundation devoted exclusively to discovering the mysteries of the aging brain. By supporting research and investigation, we’re working to better understand and alleviate the effects of age-related cognitive decline and memory loss. Learn more about the Foundation at: www.mcknightbrain.org.