

Dana Foundation Neuroscience & Society

Letter of Interest [LOI] Guidelines

LOI Content

All submissions are received via the [Grantee Portal](#) in GivingData.

1. Background (1-2 paragraphs)

Provide a brief overview of the need, gap, or problem your project addresses and its significance to advancing the field of neuroscience and society. Please be *concise* – background should simply justify your project’s goals and activities.

- a. Discuss the challenges, limitations, or opportunities motivating this work.
- b. Explain how this work aligns with or intersects broader societal needs and goals, and (if applicable) the consequences if this work is not pursued.

2. Goals (1 paragraph or list)

- a. Please frame your goals in terms of intended impact (*e.g., increased understanding, increased trust, strengthened relationships, broaden representation, increase opportunities, etc.*)
- b. Please aim to make your goals specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.

3. Strategy (4-5 paragraphs)

This section should describe the overall progression of activities leading to deliverables.

a. Activities (2-3 paragraphs)

- i. What activities will you undertake to make progress towards your goals? (*e.g., convene a community advisory board, host listening sessions, create an internship/training program, recruit trainees, host a professional development workshop series, etc.*)
- ii. Please briefly identify which specific methodologies will you utilize (*e.g., human-centered design vs focus group methods, specific pedagogies such as inquiry-based or experiential learning, embedded ethicists models, collaborative communities, etc.*). Choices should be based on the literature, best practices in the field, and/or evidence from prior work.
- iii. Please also identify who will do the work (*project leads, partner organizations, etc.*), who will be engaged (*e.g., researchers, scientists, community leaders, educators, graduate students, etc.*), and any evidence that the intended audience will be receptive to and benefit from the proposed work.

b. Deliverables (1 paragraph or list)

- i. List the products, tools, or other outcomes/deliverables you aim to produce (*e.g., event(s), curricula, website(s), institutional change(s), novel partnerships, etc.*).

c. Evaluation (1 paragraph)

Briefly describe your evaluation methods – How will you evaluate your progress and impact in terms of your goals? (*e.g., surveys, interviews, testimonials, focus groups, event metrics, etc.*).

- i. Evaluations may be quantitative or qualitative to assess impact on participants or the field, and/or efficacy of the chosen approach towards goals.

4. Timeline

- a. Please provide a short description of estimated timeline (narrative or table formatting is acceptable).

5. Alignment (1-2 paragraphs)

- a. Please address how this project is aligned with the [goal and objectives](#) of the Dana Foundation program to which you are applying.
- b. Please also briefly describe how the project aligns with **both** the Dana Foundation’s [mission and values](#).

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6. Budget

- a. Please briefly list the major budget items. A granular line-item budget is not necessary at this stage.
 - i. *Please note that to maximize the impact of our grants, we generally do not fund indirect costs or operational overhead.*

LOI Formatting Guidelines

- Letters should not exceed 3 pages.
- Letters can be single-spaced.
- Font should not exceed 12-point (Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman only).
- Margins should be at least 1 inch on all sides.
- Upload as a single PDF file.
 - Document naming convention: Org. Name_ Abbreviated Project Title_ PI Last Name

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Dana Foundation Programs

Dana Education

Goal: Strengthen neuroscience’s positive role in the world by sparking interest in and supporting education around neuroscience and the many ways it interfaces with our everyday lives.

The [Dana Education program](#) supports education both inside and outside the classroom to capture people’s interest and strengthen their knowledge of neuroscience and its relevance to their everyday lives. We seek to support projects that go beyond teaching basic neuroscience to explore the field’s connections to society and its intersections with ethics, law, policy, humanities, the arts, education, and other disciplines through comprehensive, sustained programming that extends past singular events.

Objectives:

1. Empower people of all ages to use neuroscience in their everyday lives by strengthening their knowledge of the field’s real-world applications and ethical considerations through sustained informal education programs.
2. Engage K-12 students in learning about neuroscience through structured education opportunities (formal and non-formal) that integrate relevant, real-world topics and issues to capture their interest and inspire continued study.
3. Facilitate greater understanding and informed decision-making among professionals by supporting new education approaches on neuroscience topics related to their practice.

Dana NextGen

Goal: Strengthen neuroscience’s positive role in the world by preparing the next generation of scholars to think reflexively and responsibly apply neuroscience knowledge to benefit society by supporting innovative training opportunities, workforce development, and collaboration across disciplines.

The [Dana NextGen program](#) aims to catalyze a new generation of interdisciplinary experts who transform neuroscience and neurotechnology research and development by centering consideration of societal needs throughout the process. We seek to support projects that provide neuroscience and society training opportunities and workforce development at the early career stage, inclusive of undergraduate students through pre-tenure faculty or equivalent, with an emphasis on cross-disciplinary collaboration between neuroscience and non-science disciplines. NextGen trainees will be demographically and intellectually diverse, bridging the divide between neuroscience and the publics it’s meant to serve. We welcome projects that go beyond traditional pedagogy and focus on experiential learning to broaden a trainee’s education such that they are equipped with the necessary resources and collaborators to answer the complex problems raised by advances in neuroscience.

Objectives:

1. Prepare trainees at early career stages to think critically and reflexively about the ethical, legal, and societal implications raised by real-world neuroscience applications through experiential learning and innovative curricula.
2. Strengthen workforce development for careers within academia and beyond, empowering a new generation of scholars in neuroscience and society who will shepherd neuroscience’s positive role in the world.
3. Encourage rigorous, collaborative, and cross-disciplinary work between neuroscience and non-science disciplines to solve complex problems that cannot be answered by neuroscience alone.

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Dana Frontiers

Goal: Strengthen neuroscience’s positive role in the world by increasing collaborative engagement with diverse publics, supporting opportunities for all people to shape neuroscience and benefit from its power and promise.

The [Dana Frontiers program](#) supports multidirectional community engagement to collaboratively identify and address key issues at the intersection of neuroscience and society. We seek to support projects that improve the quality of relationships between communities of people, including patient groups, technology end-users, industry, researchers, clinicians, regulators, ethicists, professionals, policymakers, and more. Frontiers-supported projects also test novel approaches to ensure these different perspectives and voices shape neuroscience research and relevant policies. By supporting neuroscience community engagement, the Frontiers program ultimately aims to build capacity for communities and organizations to collaboratively respond to societal challenges and opportunities related to neuroscience. The Frontiers program’s grant portfolio includes the development of new tools or resources for trust-building and deep listening with communities, support for individual leaders in civic neuroscience, and seeding new opportunities for community collaboration across sectors and identities.

Objectives:

1. Develop engagement resources to cultivate trust and improve the quality of relationships between neuroscience practitioners, policymakers, and communities of people.
2. Pilot innovative multidirectional engagement opportunities to embed community perspectives in research, policy, and decision-making.
3. Support and empower neuroscience and society practitioners who champion inclusive, effective models of multidirectional engagement with diverse publics so that more communities can use neuroscience to address their priorities

Dana Opportunistic

Our grants are organized around the three program areas listed above (Dana Education, NextGen, and Frontiers), with a focus on strengthening neuroscience’s positive role in the world. However, we recognize that we don’t have all the answers and it’s our job to keep looking. If you have a project idea that you believe would strengthen neuroscience’s positive role in the world in alignment with our mission, vision, and values (see <https://dana.org/about-dana/>), but your idea does not align with one of our three primary program areas (Dana Education, NextGen, and Frontiers), please submit it under the Dana Opportunistic program.