



NEUROTRANSMITTER

The Brain Repair Centre is the hub for neuroscience medical research in the Maritimes. This newsletter keeps our researchers and partners up to date on the latest news from the Brain Repair Centre and shares relevant information to foster and grow neuroscience research.



Ahead of the Trend

FROM THE DESK OF
DR. VICTOR RAFUSE, DIRECTOR
BRAIN REPAIR CENTRE

We are pleased to launch this new newsletter to keep you connected with the Brain Repair Centre (BRC). With a healthy membership of more than 300 active researchers and students from across the Maritimes, we produce an impressive collection of leading-edge neuroscience research studies. The caliber of expertise and productivity is exceptional.

Our success comes at a time when grants are more challenging than ever to secure, competition for talent is fierce, and the pace required to stay on top of the latest findings is relentless.

For this reason, the need - the opportunity - to collaborate, share and support one another is more important than ever. The BRC is here to foster and promote just that.

Leaders in collaborative research

In fact, long before the concept of collaborative research was a trend, the BRC saw the potential and power in creating a Dalhousie institute to fuse our neuroscience expertise for the sake of strengthening our research success. In hindsight, the BRC is now a long-standing example of the research approach of the Faculty of Medicine at Dalhousie University. Attuned to the current research and economic environment, Dalhousie Medical School Dean, Dr. David Anderson, is bringing to life the adage 'stronger together'. This sentiment rejuvenates and reaffirms the value of the BRC.

Those not closely connected with the BRC, may be asking, what exactly do we do?

Programs and advocacy

In short, we are here to provide programs, advice and services that advance neuroscience discovery, improve clinical care and contribute to Nova Scotia's economy through research, innovation and global partnerships.

We do this through offering knowledge translation and commercializing grants, hosting journal clubs and connecting with our community of health societies. We also play a role in educating the public on the brain, whether that be by hosting hands-on activities at the Discovery Centre or offering public lectures.

A large part of what we do includes advocating for neuroscience research and the need for further investments. We foster relationships with government and research partners to ensure neuroscience research is top of mind. Growing industry partnerships for economic growth and commercialization is also a focus.

As an example, last month I was pleased to meet with the Hon. Labi Kousoulis, Minister of Labour and Advanced Education. He was impressed with our track record to date and our vision. We left that meeting knowing funding from the Department would continue this year. The funding supports many of our programs and services.

Connect with social media

While I will try to keep you informed on BRC's latest work, I also encourage you to regularly visit our [website](#)

to keep up to date on upcoming events, deadlines for grants and see when BRC members are making headlines. Don't forget to follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) and share your content and photos with @BRCHFX.

As the BRC grows and evolves, we want to do it in step with you. Do you have thoughts on how the BRC can better support you and advance neuroscience research? If so, I'd like to hear from you, email: brainrepair@dal.ca.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION GRANTS

The BRC will soon be calling for submissions for its Knowledge Translation (BRC-KT) grants.

The BRC-KT program provides funding for proof of principle or pre/pro-commercialization research projects of up to 12 months duration. The BRC-KT program is designed to advance research through knowledge translation, with a view to creating new neuroscience-based initiatives, businesses and organizations. Ultimately, BRC KT grants aim to improve brain and neurological health outcomes for Nova Scotians and Canadians.

To date, BRC has awarded 10 peer-reviewed Knowledge Translation grants valued at \$270,000 and has leveraged millions in additional funds.

Details on how to apply will be posted on the [BRC website](#) when available.

BRAIN AWARENESS WEEK

March 12- 16



The BRC is proud to once again sponsor this year's [Brain Awareness Week](#), March 12-16. This year's focus is on understanding mental health and supporting those affected.

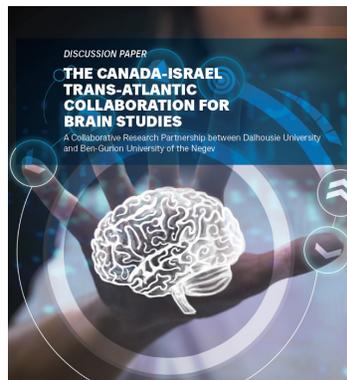
One of the week's highlights is a Neuroscience as an Art Competition. Showcased art will be sold during an online auction. Proceeds raised from the week's events will be donated to [Laing House](#).

The week aims to bring neuroscience-related information to the public. It is organized by a not-for-profit committee of volunteers.

CANADA-ISRAEL PARTNERSHIP

Last November, with the assistance of Dr. David Anderson, Dalhousie's Faculty of Medicine Dean, the BRC announced a new brain research partnership between Dalhousie University and Israel's Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU).

This partnership will facilitate ongoing, joint research projects between the universities. The research will primarily focus on motor control and rehabilitation, traumatic brain injury and neurodevelopment.



We will have interdisciplinary researcher teams, including principal investigators, post-docs and graduate students traveling between the two universities. We expect this will result in a new talent pool of researchers, creating new therapies to go from bench to bedside sooner.

The research collaboration will be led by the Brain Repair Centre and BGU's Zlotowski Centre for Neuroscience's Brain Trust. As many of you may know, our colleague **Dr. Alon Friedman**, a neuroscience researcher with the Brain Repair Centre, came to Nova Scotia from Ben-Gurion University in 2014. BRC Director, **Dr. Vic Rafuse**, recently visited Ben-Gurion University with Dr. Friedman. The first-hand view of the university's research activities confirmed the value of

FUNDING DEADLINES

The following upcoming funding opportunities may be of interest to you:

Provincial government to help fund master's or PhD graduates

Apply for funding to hire a recent master's or PhD graduate. The Innovate to Opportunity (ITO) incentive is now available.

[Learn More](#)

Weston Brain Institute: Rapid Response Canada 2018

Deadline April 19, 2018

The Weston Brain Institute offers up to \$200,000 in seed funding for novel, high-risk, high-reward translational research ideas to accelerate the development of safe and effective treatments for neurodegenerative diseases of aging. Applications in this round must relate to the following disease(s): AD, FTD, MCI, vascular contributions to these diseases, and prodromes to these diseases.

partnership.

[Learn more](#)

The Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation and Canadian Associates of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev have embarked on raising \$5-million to support the initiative. To learn more about the collaboration, please read the [discussion paper](#).

BRC TO SEND STUDENTS TO SfN 2018

The BRC will be providing funds to five students wishing to attend the [SfN 2018](#) (Society of Neuroscience) meeting in November. A call for applications will be posted to the [BRC website](#).

MEMBERS' CORNER

The BRC membership has rich and diverse talent. The following is a sample of BRC members who have recently received grants, been published or featured by media.

GRANT RECIPIENTS

Dr. Angelo Iulianella, member of the Neurodevelopment cluster and AMAP member, was one of a number of researchers from Dalhousie University who received CIHR funding in early 2018 for their innovative health research. [Read more](#)

Dr. Gail Eskes Professor of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neurology received a \$150,000 donation for stroke research project. [Read More](#)

Drs. George Robertson (PhD), Pharmacology and **Turgay Akay** (PhD), Medical Neuroscience were awarded \$300,000 from MS Society for a joint project titled: "Gait parameters as predictors of functional recovery in a mouse model of MS". [Read more](#)

BIOTIC (led by Dr. Steven Beyea) was awarded a \$400,000 Platform Supports Grant from Brain Canada. [Read more](#)

The following BRC researchers were awarded CIHR (Canadian Institutes of Health Research) funding in late 2017:

- **Dr. Alon Friedman**, Medical Neuroscience - Vascular pathology in traumatic brain injury
- **Dr. Balwantray Chauhan** (PhD), Ophthalmology & Visual Science - Changes in the retina and optic nerve in experimental glaucoma
- **Dr. Victor Rafuse** (PhD), Medical Neuroscience - Synaptic dysfunction at the neuromuscular junction in ALS

[Read the full story](#)

MEMBERS GETTING NOTICED

Dr. James Fawcett is published in the *Journal of Cell Biology*.

- "[Polarity protein Angiomotin p130 controls dendritic spine maturation](#)"

Dr. Sultan Darvesh, has made a major discovery using specimens at the Maritime Brain Tissue Bank.

- [Discovery at Dalhousie brain tissue lab could lead to Alzheimer treatment](#)

Drs. Steven Beyea, Aaron Newman and Tim Bardouille were published in the *Brain Injury Journal*.

- [Attentional dysfunction and recovery in concussion: effects on the P300m and contingent magnetic variation](#)

Dr. Angelo Iulianella was published in the *Developmental Dynamics* journal.

- [Ventral neural patterning in the absence of a Shh activity gradient from the floorplate](#)

Did we miss listing your accomplishment? We want to hear about it! Email: brainrepair@dal.ca

STAY CURRENT

Other studies and papers that align with the BRC research priorities:

[We need a national brain-research strategy](#)

Globe and Mail

[Traumatic brain injury: a priority for public health policy](#)

[Exenatide once weekly versus placebo in Parkinson's disease: a randomised, double-blind.](#)

SAVE THE DATE

- [2018 Brain Awareness Week - March 12-16](#)
 - [2018 Rotman Research Institute Traumatic Brain Injury Conference - March 19-21 Toronto](#)
 - [Mind over Matter - Parkinson Canada's Education & Awareness Conference - March 24, Halifax](#)
 - [CAN 2018 - May 13-16, Vancouver, BC](#)
 - [6th Annual Atlantic Regional Developmental Biology Symposium - June 8, Halifax, NS](#)
 - [TBI Across the Lifespan: Research to Practice to Policy - June 11-13, Washington DC](#)
 - [NeuroConX 2018 - July 8-10, Charlottetown, PEI](#)
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The Neurotransmitter

