

UVA Wise Neuroscience Pilot Grants 2026

The UVA Wise Neuroscience Committee offers this seed funding program for transformative neuroscience research projects. The purpose of the program is to tackle important questions, promote interdisciplinary collaboration, and perform groundbreaking work that will enhance our research enterprise.

Deadline to Apply: April 17, 2026, 11:59pm EDT

Proposed projects may be on any subject related to neuroscience research. Projects may be basic, translational, or clinical research, or a combination.

Successful proposals will have high potential to promote the health and wellbeing of residents of Central Appalachia and concrete plans for pursuing subsequent extramural funding. Priority will be given to proposals that include community stakeholders and partners. Examples of possible projects include:

- History and utility of regional botanical treatments for anxiety and depression
- The influence of endocrine disruptors on development
- Cellular signaling in response to substance abuse or addiction
- Multilevel stress exposures and substance use disorders
- Trauma-informed strategies to prevent or treat substance use disorders
- Occupational exposures to contaminants and Parkinson's disease
- Studies to construct human cognition models and understand the roles of different brain systems and regions in thought and behavior
- Advances in long-term memory care

The Award period will be from July 1, 2026 through November 1, 2027 (Final Reports will be due on November 15, 2027). Awards of up to **\$50,000** will be given. Only faculty from UVA Wise may serve as sponsored investigators. Proposals that include multidisciplinary teams involving students, collaborators across institutions, and/or engagement with community partners are encouraged. Faculty may only be funded by one **new** grant for this cycle of funding. Brief written feedback will be returned to all applicants.

Proposals that include multidisciplinary project teams of two or more faculty members at UVA Wise may be eligible for additional course buyouts, project materials, or extended project periods.

Successful applicants will be asked to provide an abstract of their project proposal for posting on UVA and UVA Wise Grand Challenge websites. Mid-term and final reports will be required for reporting to Academic Affairs at both UVA Wise and UVA. Award recipients will be required to deliver an oral presentation of their research to the college during the award year. Presentations may be given by the lead faculty member and participating undergraduate students. The event should be publicized to ensure community awareness and encourage public attendance.

Required Proposal Components:

1. Project description (two pages maximum) should include the following:
 - i. Title of project
 - ii. Investigators
 - iii. Significance
 - iv. Approach
 - v. Innovation & Potential Scientific Impact
 - vi. Project milestones at 6 months
2. References Cited (not included in page limit)
3. Biographical Sketches for Key Personnel (not included in page limit)
4. Budget (not included in page limit)
 - i. Personnel costs (including faculty course buyouts), and
 - ii. OTPS (equipment, supplies, travel, other).
 - iii. Grant-related conference travel and attendance expenses should be included in the proposed budget, as awardees will be ineligible for Research and Professional Development funding from the Office of Academic Affairs during the grant year.
 - iv. Grant-related conference travel for students could also be included in the budget
5. Other Support (if applicable and up to one page)
 - i. Community partners, additional funding sources, and timelines.

6. Impact Statement (up to one page)

- i. Describe the impact that this award will have on the health and wellbeing of the residents of Central Appalachia.
- ii. Plans for Extramural Support: Provide a list of planned future proposals including agency/foundation and submission dates.

Applicants should include any anticipated conference attendance expenses in their proposed budgets because they will be ineligible for Research and Professional Development funding from the Office of Academic Affairs for project-related travel during the grant year.

**Additional information regarding the proposal may be requested by the review committee following initial review.*

Criteria for Evaluation Include:

- Mentorship –Project provides UVA Wise student opportunities for research
- Relevance – Capacity to promote the health and wellbeing of residents of our region
- Scientific merit – Significance, Innovation, Approach
- Potential - For future extramural funding and/or campus/community enhancement
- Budget – Projections are reasonable and necessary.

Indirect costs do not apply. Sponsored projects subject to budget modification with written feedback from the committee. Applicants will have an opportunity to respond to reviewer critiques and address budget concerns with the committee.

Proposal Submission Format:

1. Assemble entire application as a single PDF file titled:
“Lastname_Firstname_2026PilotGrant.pdf”
2. Send your proposal to Dr. Trisha Folds-Bennett [thf5t@uvawise.edu]