



Call for Applications for

"EXCELLENT PAPER IN NEUROSCIENCE"

AWARD 2025

EPNA – ELSA Call

With a thematic focus on “Ethical, Legal, and Social Aspects (ELSA) of Neuroscience”

Submission deadline for applications: October 15, 2025

For further information:

<https://www.neuron-eranet.eu/joint-calls/epna/>

or contact

Mr. Maxime Beaudoin

at:

ERA-NET NEURON EPNA Joint Call Secretariat
Fonds de recherche du Québec – secteur Santé (FRQ)

Email: Maxime.Beaudoin@frq.gouv.qc.ca

1. General call description

The ERA-NET NEURON partner countries are issuing the EXCELLENT PAPER IN NEUROSCIENCE AWARD - ELSA of Neuroscience to recognize the remarkable and outstanding scientific publications by early-career researchers in the field of ethical, legal and social aspects of neurosciences. **Sole First Author of original research article** published between **January 1, 2021, and December 31, 2024**, and affiliated with one of the call partner countries listed below are eligible to apply. The deadline for proposal submission is **October 15th, 2025**.

The Excellent Paper in Neuroscience Award –Neuroethics 2025 focuses on “Ethical, Legal, and Social Aspects (ELSA) of Neuroscience”. The article should contribute progress on important research questions regarding ethical, philosophical, legal and socio-cultural aspects related to the neurosciences and their recent advances, to provide scientific knowledge for an informed debate in science and society, evaluate opportunities and risks associated with technological and methodological progress and to expand the general knowledge base.

An award of EUR 3 000 will be granted to the best proposal. The winner will be invited as an “Excellent Paper in Neuroscience” special lecturer during the [FENS forum 2026 in Barcelona, Spain or in another suitable international scientific meeting – details to be confirmed](#). ERA-NET NEURON will cover the award and travel costs related to the lecture.

Call Partner Countries (24): Australia, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, United Kingdom.

2. Aim of the call

Currently ERA-NET NEURON (the Network of European Funding for Neuroscience Research) links 28 national research funding programs and organizations in the field of disease-related neurosciences in Europe, Israel, Turkey, Taiwan, and Canada. The EXCELLENT PAPER IN NEUROSCIENCE AWARD – ELSA will emphasize the importance of Ethical, Legal, and Social Aspects (ELSA) of Neuroscience and will contribute to integrating the neuroscience research community. The award is designed as a form of support and encouragement for researchers at the early stage of their career.

3. Eligibility

The application must fulfil the following criteria:

Author:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <u>sole first Author</u> in the proposed publication. Shared first authorships is not considered for the award. The Author must have been affiliated with a call partner country at the time of publication (list of eligible countries above). Pre-doctoral and postdoctoral early career researchers until a maximum of three years from a PhD or an equivalent degree¹ at the date of publication. Eligible breaks include parental leaves, long-term illness, and national service. Concerning parental leave, national rules apply, or 12 months per child, whichever is the greatest.
Publication:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Award period: published between January 1, 2021, and December 31, 2024. Affiliation of the <u>sole first Author</u> with a call partner country as stated in the publication. Articles published in open access or available via open access publication repository is encouraged. Original research articles published in an international peer review journal. The topic of the article must be clearly relevant to important questions regarding ethical, philosophical, legal and socio-cultural aspects related to the neurosciences and their recent advances. Subjects under this general heading include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the consequences of the development of neuroscientific diagnostic methods, b) issues in clinical research with patients suffering from neurological or psychiatric diseases, c) Intelligent technologies and close human-machine interaction, d) biobanking of neural tissue, e) the use of brain data; brain interventions in legal context, f) the impact of modern neuroscience on traditional philosophical questions, concepts and theories regarding fundamental aspects of human nature, g) neuroenhancement such as alteration of mental states, h) abnormal behaviour reduced to deviant brain states, i) societal and cultural changes induced by neuroscientific knowledge and its application, j) responsible research and innovation in neurotechnology and neuroscience.

Exclusion: Papers without primarily ethical, legal and/or social implications are excluded from this call.

4. Application

Eligible early-career researchers may submit a proposal for the EXCELLENT PAPER IN NEUROSCIENCE AWARD. The proposal must be submitted by [email](#) using the on-line PDF form available through the [NEURON web page](#). Both

¹ [Equivalent degrees to the PhD](#) may vary from a different country. A Medical degree alone is not sufficient. In addition, a minimum formation in research (M.Sc. or Ph.D.) is required or proof of an appointment that requires doctoral equivalency (e.g. post-doctoral fellowship, professorship appointment).

pre- and postdoctoral early-career researchers working in ERA-NET NEURON partner countries are encouraged to apply.

Applications **are only accepted from the sole first author of an original peer-reviewed research article**. The on-line application must include the following information bundled in one single PDF format attachment.

- 1) Introduction (minimum font size 11, Arial/Calibri/Times or comparable) including the following:
 - Application form (of the first author)
 - **One-page** short biosketch of the author
 - **One-page** summary addressing the significance of the work
 - A pitch of not more than **250 characters** (including spaces) describing the research focus of the article and the applicant's role in it.
- 2) PDF of the original research article (published within the eligible award period)

The deadline for applications is **October 15th, 2025**. Applications must be sent by email to the [ERA-NET NEURON EPNA joint call secretariat](#) (see details in the application form) by 5:00 PM (UTC-GMT). Incomplete or late applications will be automatically rejected.

5. Evaluation

ERA-NET NEURON partners will select the proposals upon consultation of ELSA's experts in the neuroscience field. The proposals will be evaluated as a whole, based on the following criteria:

- ✓ theoretical approach and scientific quality
- ✓ novelty and innovativeness of scientific concept/hypothesis
- ✓ scientific and societal impact for the area
- ✓ contribution of the ECR to the research discovery.

The aforementioned criteria should be reflected through all different sections of the proposal.

Based on the evaluation, the highest-ranked proposal will be awarded the prize.

6. Management

The ERA-NET NEURON EPNA Joint Call Secretariat together with the national funding agencies will be responsible for the management of the evaluation process.

The Joint Call Secretariat will inform the applicants about the decisions individually in early 2026.

7. Award Presentation/Recognition

The winner will be **awarded at the [FENS forum](#) on July 6-10, 2026, in Barcelona, Spain or in another suitable international scientific meeting – details to be confirmed**. The winner may also be invited to present at ERA-NET NEURON networking events and contribute to the planning of the future support activities of the early-career researchers (ECR) or other activities within the NEURON network.

8. Call Schedule

• Announcement of the call	August 2025
• Deadline for proposal submission	October 15th, 2025
• Evaluation of the proposals	November 2025 - January 2026
• Decisions and information about the evaluation results	Early 2026
• Award Presentation Ceremony/recognition	FENS Forum 2026 or in another suitable international scientific meeting

9. National Contact points

For further information, follow the links below or contact your national representative:

Table 1: List of all the eligible countries for this call

Country	Contact person	Contact information
Australia	Dr. Kirilly Agnew	National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) international@nhmrc.gov.au https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/
Belgium (Flanders)	Dr. Kristien Peeters Mr. Toon Monbaliu	Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO) eranet@fwo.be www.fwo.be
Belgium (French-speaking community)	Dr. Florence Quist	Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique – FNRS (F.R.S.-FNRS) florence.quist@frs-fnrs.be www.frs-fnrs.be
Canada (Québec)	Mr. Maxime Beaudoin	Fonds de recherche du Québec – secteur Santé (FRQ) Maxime.Beaudoin@frq.gouv.qc.ca www.frq.gouv.qc.ca/
Croatia	Mr. Mateo Ante Bosnić	Ministarstvo Znanosti I Obrazovanja (MZO) MateoAnte.Bosnic@mzo.hr https://mzo.gov.hr/en
Estonia	Mr. Argo Soon	Eesti Teadusagentuur (Estonian Research Council, ETAG) Argo.Soon@etag.ee www.etag.ee
Finland	Dr. Aki Salo	Academy of Finland (AKA) aki.salo@aka.fi www.aka.fi
France	Dr. Catherine Marquer	National Research Agency (ANR) Health & Biology Department catherine.marquer@agencerecherche.fr www.agence-nationale-recherche.fr
	Prof. Dr. Bernard Poulain	Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) bernard.poulain@cnrs-dir.fr http://www.cnrs.fr/
	Dr. Etienne Hirsch	INSERM etienne.hirsch@inserm.fr www.inserm.fr
Germany	Dr. Anna Gossen	German Programme Management Health Research (DLR-PT) anna.gossen@dlr.de www.gesundheitsforschung-bmftr.de
Hungary	Dr. Klára Horváth	National Research, Development and Innovation Office (NKFIH) klara.horvath@nkfi.gov.hu nkfi.gov.hu/palyazoknak
Ireland	Dr. Amanda Daly	Health Research Board (HRB) Amanda.Daly@hrb.ie https://www.hrb.ie/

Country	Contact person	Contact information
Israel	Dr. Liron Even-Faitelson	Chief Scientist Office, Ministry of Health (CSO-MOH) liron.ef@moh.gov.il www.health.gov.il
Italy	Dr. Chiara Ciccarelli	Ministero della Salute (IT-MOH) c.ciccarelli@sanita.it www.ministerosalute.it/
Latvia	Dr. Uldis Berkis	Latvian Council of Science (LZP) Uldis.Berkis@viaa.gov.lv www.lza.lv
Lithuania	Dr. Živilė Ruželė	Research Council of Lithuania (LMT) zivile.ruzele@lmt.lt www.lmt.lt/en
Norway	Dr. Alexandra Bjørk-Skaflestad	The Research Council of Norway (RCN) alb@rcn.no or alb@forskningsradet.no www.forskningsradet.no
Poland	Dr. Marcin Chmielewski	National Centre for Research and Development (NCBR) marcin.chmielewski@ncbr.gov.pl www.ncbir.pl
Portugal	Dr. Alexandre Mauricio	Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia (FCT) Alexandre.Mauricio@fct.pt www.fct.pt
Romania	Prof. Mihaela Manole	CAROL DAVILA University of Medicine and Pharmacy/Neuroscience (UEFISCDI) Mihaela.manole@uefiscdi.ro www.uefiscdi.gov.ro
Slovakia	Dr. Katarina Bibova	Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS) bibova@up.upsav.sk www.sak.sk
Spain	Mrs. Esther Chacón	Agencia Estatal de Investigación – State Research Agency (AEI) neuron@aei.gob.es http://www.aei.gob.es/
	Mrs. Maria Cristina Nieto Garcia	National Institute of Health Carlos III (ISCIII) mnieto@isciii.es http://www.isciii.es/
Switzerland	Dr. Francis Parlange	Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF) francis.parlange@snf.ch www.snf.ch
Taiwan	Ms. Ching-Mei Tang	National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) cmtom@nstc.gov.tw https://www.nstc.gov.tw/?l=en

Country	Contact person	Contact information
Turkey	Dr. Recep Emrah Çevik	The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK) emrah.cevik@tubitak.gov.tr www.tubitak.gov.tr
UK	Dr. Siv Vingill	Medical Research Council (MRC) Siv.Vingill@mrc.ukri.org www.mrc.ac.uk