Terms of reference for the Selection Committee for The Brain Prize

1. Preamble

Every year, the Lundbeck Foundation awards The Brain Prize to one or up to three brain researchers who have individually or as a team made outstanding contributions to international brain research. The prize is awarded to researchers – regardless of nationality, age and gender for contributions ranging from basic research to clinical research. The prize is 10 million DKK (approximately €1.3 million)

The purpose of The Brain Prize and related activities is to encourage and reward outstanding international brain research and to stimulate Danish brain research through an enhanced interaction with other international brain researchers. The Brain Prize is also used as a platform for raising awareness of neuroscience and the importance of Brain research amongst the general public.

Prize winners are expected to interact with Danish brain researchers and the international neuroscience community through lectures, seminars, meetings and site visits, or other activities agreed upon with the Lundbeck Foundation. Brain Prize winners also participate in activities to raise awareness of their research in the general public.

2. Mandate

The selection of researchers to be recommended for the Prize is made by the Selection Committee. In their consideration of candidates, the Selection Committee must take all necessary care to be true to the provisions for The Brain Prize and the applied definition of 'Brain Research'.

3. Governance

The Selection Committee for the Brain Prize reports to the Lundbeck Foundation Board through the Research and Prize Committee. The Research and Prize Committee meets as a minimum with the selection committee immediately following the meeting. At this meeting, the selection committee will, 1. justify their recommendation of candidates and topic, 2. justify, in extraordinary cases, the decision to award The Prize to more than three candidates, 3. disclose any ethical issues related to the scientific topic or candidates. The selection committee must also provide a written recommendation that addresses these three points to the Research and Prize committee within one week of the meeting at which the recommendation is made. This recommendation must include a description of the procedure, showing that the rules established by the Board of Trustees have been observed, and must also include a short statement for each prize winner on the nature and significance of his/her research suitable for a press release.

After receiving the written statements, the Research and Prize Committee ensures that the recommendation has been made in accordance with the provisions and purpose of the Brain Prize and will present the selection committee’s recommendation to the Lundbeck Foundation’s Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees may follow or reject the recommendation. If the recommendation is rejected, the Selection Committee can submit a new recommendation. If the Selection Committee cannot provide a new recommendation or if a new recommendation is also rejected, then the prize will not be awarded in that year. The Board of Trustees cannot follow the recommendation in part by awarding the prize to some but not all of the recommended candidates. The Board of Trustees cannot award the prize to somebody not recommended by the Selection Committee.
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4. Criteria for awarding the Prize

The Prize may be awarded to one or shared by two or three scientists who have distinguished themselves through publication of outstanding results in the field of brain research. It is the task of the Selection Committee to decide in each individual case what characterizes the research as outstanding and therefore why it deserves The Brain Prize.

In the present context, ‘brain research’ shall be defined as research on all aspects of normal and pathological conditions of the brain and the rest of the nervous system. This is a broad research field, ranging from molecular biology, cell biology, physiology and pharmacology research through to behavioural and cognitive studies, and clinical research into the brain’s and nervous system’s diseases. Both fundamental and clinical research can include prevention, identification of disease aetiology, pathogenesis and the improvement of diagnostics and treatment.

The prize winners must be active in research. To be considered research active a candidate for The Brain Prize must satisfy at least two of the following criteria:

- Be a paid employee of a university or research institute.
- Run an active research lab.
- Have current grant funding.
- Have published primary research articles within two years of the January selection committee meeting.

The Committee must strive to reduce the risk of unconscious bias and should seek to establish diversity in their selection of candidates for The Brain Prize.

The Prize cannot be awarded to members of the Selection Committee, to Board members or employees at the Lundbeck Foundation.

5. Secretariat for the Selection Committee

The Director of The Brain Prize and staff from the Grants and Prizes Department of the Lundbeck Foundation will act as the executive secretariat for the Selection Committee. The secretarial assistance will entail but is not limited to the following tasks:

- Communicating and otherwise posting the call for nominations
- Establishing a nomination module on the website of the Lundbeck Foundation
- Making available all nominations for the Selection Committee
- Assisting in providing all necessary supplementary information needed for the evaluation of nominees, e.g. arranging for external evaluations of nominees, as instructed by the Selection Committee, and arranging for, conducting and upon request presenting bibliometric analyses for individual nominees
- Arranging travel and lodging for the Selection Committee, in connection with meetings and the award ceremony
- Providing secretarial assistance to the Selection Committee before, during and after meetings
- Making the selection committee aware of any ethical issues relating to potential prize topics and/or candidates.
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6. Call for Nominations and Nomination

A call for nominations is sent out with at least 3 months’ notice and at least 8 months before the selection process will come to a conclusion.

The call for nominations is communicated directly by e-mail and/or surface mail to relevant universities and brain research institutions, funding agencies, scientific societies, and selected scientists in the field. It is also communicated by advertisement on the website of the Foundation and its social media channels. It is expected that members of the Selection Committee will act as ‘ambassadors’ for the Prize and be helpful in disseminating knowledge about the Prize, in order to obtain many and relevant nominations.

Anyone can nominate, with the exception of members of the Selection Committee, employees of the Lundbeck Foundation or members of the Lundbeck Foundation’s Board of Trustees. Nomination is made online at the website of the Lundbeck Foundation. The nomination shall include information on the nominee’s name, age, gender and field of research, a short biography and a justification for nomination, based on a selected list of the nominees’ publications, and brief information about the nominator including relation to the nominee.

Self-nomination is not accepted.

The Selection Committee considers only candidates who have been nominated. Nominations of candidates who have not been selected are valid for 3 years.

Revised or re-nominations of earlier nominees are possible and encouraged, provided that nominees still fulfill the criteria for nomination.

7. The Selection Process

Scoring the nominations: Shortly after the closure of the nomination period, the Selection Committee will score the nominations. Scores from individual selection committee members will be collated by the Secretariat and the collated scores will be circulated to all members the selection committee.

Development of individual shortlists: Prior to the first selection committee meeting (usually held in October of each year), each member of the selection committee will develop their own shortlist of topics and associated candidates. Each topic should be accompanied by a one sentence description and a list of potential external expert reviewers for the topic. The individual shortlists should be returned to the secretariat who will collate them and circulate the collated shortlists to the selection committee prior to the first selection committee meeting.

Selection committee meetings. The Selection Committee shall form a quorum when two thirds or more of all the members are present - physically or over the phone or by equivalent means of communication. All the members shall have the opportunity to participate in the transaction of any business, if possible.
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First selection committee meeting (usually held in October each year). The purpose of the first selection committee meeting is to develop a final shortlist of topics and associated candidates. The selection committee should also identify and agree upon a list of external expert reviewers for each shortlisted topic. The meeting will commence by each member of the selection committee presenting their individual shortlists. These presentations will be followed by an open discussion to determine the final shortlist.

External review of shortlisted topics and candidates. On behalf of the selection committee, the secretariat shall solicit external reviews from the expert reviewers identified by the selection committee. External reviews will be provided to the selection committee in advance of the January selection committee. On behalf of the selection committee, the secretariat will perform research to ensure that the selection is made aware of any ethical issues related to the shortlisted candidates and topics.

Second selection committee meeting (usually held in January each year). The purpose of this meeting is to decide the winners of that year. The selection panel should discuss the prize worthiness of the topics and candidates, taking into account the opinions of the external reviews. In addition to the scientific merit of the topic and candidates, the selection committee should disclose knowledge of, and discuss any ethical issues related to any of the shortlisted topics and/candidates. The Selection Committee will normally vote during the selection process. Several votes may be necessary.

Roles of the Chair and Vice Chair. The primary responsibility of the Chair and Vice Chair is to facilitate the selection committee meetings and to ensure that the selection process proceeds in accordance with the terms of reference for The Brain Prize. As described under ‘Governance’, the Chair, together with the Vice Chair must also provide the written recommendation to the Research and Prize committee and short statement for each prize winner on the nature and significance of his/her research suitable for a press release. The Chair and Vice chair will also serve as the primary point of contact between the selection committee and secretariat. For the final vote, the Chair shall have the casting vote in the event of an equality of votes, but in all other instances the Chair, Vice Chair and the rest of the selection committee have equal say.

The names of nominees and the deliberations of the Selection Committee are and must always remain confidential. Only the names of the prize winners and the citations for these will be made public.

8. Prize Ceremony
The members of the Selection Committee will be invited to Copenhagen for the prize ceremony, where the chairman of the Selection Committee shall present the citation for the selection of each prize winner.

9. Rules of Procedure

9.1. Members of the Selection Committee
The Selection Committee consists of between 9 and 12 members. Taken together the members of the Selection Committee shall represent the highest possible level of expertise within the field of brain research, including relevant and comprehensive knowledge about the international scientific world. In terms of scientific merit,
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recognition and knowledge, the members are expected to be outstanding and highly respected by the international scientific community.

No-one over the age of 75 years can be appointed or re-appointed.

The Selection Committee, the chairman and the vice-chairman of the Selection Committee are appointed by the Board of Trustees of the Foundation. The Board of Trustees shall consult the Selection Committee concerning the appointment of new members of the Selection Committee.

The Selection Committee should have at least 4 members having their primary affiliation at a European institution and at least 3 members having their primary affiliation outside Europe. No country, based on primary affiliation, should be represented by more than one third of the members.

9.2. Impartiality

The Lundbeck Foundation applies the rules and principled codes of conduct governing impartiality described below. These are based on the Danish Public Administration Act’s chapter 2 on impartiality. The impartiality rules are developed to ensure a balanced presence of professional expertise, transparency and impartiality in the Lundbeck Foundation’s decisions.

The rules apply to members of the Lundbeck Foundation’s board of directors, members of the Foundation’s grant and selection committees, external reviewers, executive management, and others who have an influence on the Foundation’s decisions on award of grants and prizes.

A person will be deemed to have a conflict of interest and therefore excluded from the decision-making process in a specific case, if said person has a personal or economic interest in the outcome of the specific case:

1. Said person has a familial relationship to the applicant, i.e. spouse/cohabiting partner (current and former), relation or relation by marriage in direct line of ascent or descent, relation such as a niece or nephew or another close relation with a personal or economic interest in the outcome of the specific case.

2. Said person is or has previously been a supervisor for, or supervisee of the candidate or, in any other way has collaborated closely with the candidate within the past five years,

3. Said person has released a publication together with the candidate within the past five years

4. Said person has been in a close academic collaboration within the past five years or aims to enter into a close, academic collaboration with the candidate during the year following the award of The Brain Prize.

5. Said person is employed in the same academic department as the candidate

6. The candidate is in a research team of which said person is a member or has been a member within the past five years.
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A person who has a conflict of interest, or in a specific case may be in doubt, is required to notify the Lundbeck Foundation of such in advance and describe the nature of the conflict of interest. The chairman of the Brain Prize selection committee will decide, together with the administration, whether the conflict of interest will be upheld. Non-compliance will be considered a breach of the rules governing impartiality.

In the event of a conflict of interest a selection committee member who has a conflict of interest with a nominee cannot take part in any decision-making process that includes said nominee, nor participate in the discussion of said nominee or the group of candidates of which the said nominee is part.

Specifically, during the voting rounds of The Brain Prize selection process a selection committee member who has a conflict of interest cannot participate if said nominee is a candidate for the voting.

The following consequences will apply if breach of Lundbeck Foundation’s impartiality rules can be proven:

- The evaluation of the candidate must be repeated without the influence of disqualified members in the same way as if the impartiality rules had not been breached.

- All cases of breach or circumvention of the impartiality rules must be reported to the Foundation’s board of directors, which will take charge of the further processing of the case.

9.3. Term

Members of the Selection Committee are appointed for a period of time corresponding to the awarding of two prizes. Re-appointment may take place twice, meaning that no member can be involved in awarding more than 6 prizes. Members of the selection committee will be appointed as Chair or Vice Chair for a period of 2 years. This may be extended for an additional 2 years at the Lundbeck Foundation’s discretion.

9.4. Remuneration

The members shall receive remuneration for their work, determined by The Board of Trustees.

9.5. Resolutions of the Selection Committee

Provided that proper notice has been given of a meeting, the Selection Committee shall form a quorum when two thirds or more of all the members are present - physically or over the phone or by equivalent means of communication. All the members shall have the opportunity to participate in the transaction of any business, if possible.

9.6. Minute Book

Any member dissenting from a resolution of the Selection Committee is entitled to have his/her dissenting opinion entered in the minute book.
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9.7. Attendance of the Director of The Brain Prize

Serving as executive secretary for the Selection Committee, the Director of The Brain Prize and relevant staff from the Grants and Prizes Department are entitled to attend in full at meetings.

9.8. Duty of confidentiality

The meetings and deliberations of the Selection Committee shall be strictly confidential. The members shall not divulge to third parties any information disclosed to them in the execution of their duties as members of the committee. The members shall keep in a proper manner all material provided to them by reason of their membership.

9.9. Communications

The Director of The Brain Prize represents the Foundation in matters pertinent to The Brain Prize. The Director of Science may represent the Brain Prize when necessary or appropriate. No member of the Selection Committee shall, without the permission of the Director of Research and/or the Director of The Brain Prize, make any statement to the mass media or otherwise communicate the affairs of the Foundation and/or The Brain Prize to third parties or the public. This shall be the case also after a member retires from the Selection Committee.

9.10. Acceptance

All members of the Selection Committee shall sign these terms of reference and thereby declare that they have read and understood the requirements hereof. Upon appointment, any new member shall be informed of these Terms of Reference and by signing the Terms of Reference the member declares having read and understood the requirement hereof.

9.11. Alteration, Amendment and Addition

These Terms of Reference may be altered, amended or added to at the discretion of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation.

Approved by the Lundbeck Foundation Board of Trustees March 12th 2024
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Adopted by the Selection Committee on:

Selection Committee:

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