Catalyst Grant Competition
Applications due by March 11, 2024 by 5pm
Contact azrieli.accelerator@ucalgary.ca for more information

About the Azrieli Accelerator
The Azrieli Accelerator is an initiative of the Office of the Vice-President Research at UCalgary which applies strategic funding to cultivate and launch research and collaborative opportunities with a focus on neurodevelopment and neurodevelopmental conditions with a lifespan approach. Our investment framework is guided by principles of transdisciplinary research, impact, engagement, collaborations, and partnership. Through the Azrieli Accelerator’s Catalyst Grant program, we aim to create opportunities for investigators from across UCalgary to apply their expertise to research challenges related to neurodevelopment and neurodevelopmental conditions.

The Azrieli Accelerator supports all pillars of research – from foundational/basic science and clinical research projects to those focused on social and population health and the experience of people living with neurodevelopmental conditions. In addition, this initiative funds neurodevelopmental conditions research that can have impact at any point across the lifespan, and thus we welcome proposals from any developmental period – from pre-natal to childhood to older adulthood.

For the purposes of this competition, we define neurodevelopmental conditions as a group of heterogenous conditions emergent in early childhood that affect brain development. These conditions persist throughout an individual’s lifespan, impacting behavioural, social, cognitive, and motor abilities in different ways with variable levels of impact from person to person and across different conditions. Neurodevelopmental conditions encompass a wide spectrum of disabilities, including autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), intellectual disability, specific learning disorders, communication disorders, motor disorders and Tourette syndrome, genetic neurodevelopmental syndromes (such as Fragile X), fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD), cerebral palsy, among others.

About the 2024 Catalyst Grant Competition
This competition aims to build capacity in the three thematic areas of focus of the Azrieli Accelerator:

- Brain Circuitry
- Microbiome Influences
- Supports, Services and Systems

Proposals within each of these themes can explore, as examples:
- Fundamental discovery research focused on mechanisms of brain development relevant for understanding neurodevelopmental conditions.
- Research focused on interventions and clinical settings.
- Research focused on well-being, community, and quality of life.
- Population health research.
The funding pool: At least six grants, up to $50,000 each, will be awarded.

Duration of award: 2 years

Proposal Criteria: Proposals must fall within the mandate of the Azrieli Accelerator. The project should enable a researcher (or a research team) to initiate and catalyze research projects that will increase their competitiveness for larger scale external funding opportunities.

- We encourage applications that engage transdisciplinary approaches.
- Involvement of early career researchers and senior research trainees is encouraged.
- Funds will be held by the Nominated Principal Applicant, who must be a UCalgary faculty member.
- A researcher can only be listed as Nominated Principal Applicant on one Azrieli Accelerator Catalyst Grant application.
- Nominated Principal Applicants who currently hold an Azrieli Accelerator Catalyst Grant are not eligible to apply as a Nominated Principal Applicant, but can be listed as a co-applicant or collaborator on another Nominated Principal Applicant’s proposal in this competition.
- For applications that include a team: Proposals should outline contributions of each team member, including a description of relevant expertise.
- Proposals should consider equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility principles in the context of research activities and the research team (if applicable).
- If applicable: Team members (both internal and external to UCalgary) may provide matching fund contributions (cash or in-kind) to increase the value of the award.

Use of Funds: Eligible expenses include any aspect of the project (e.g., data collection, animal costs, participant fees), including funds spent on the salary for a person dedicated to the research project (e.g., postdoc, grad student, research associate, etc.). Please note that salary cannot be provided for individuals listed as applicants on the proposal. All expenses must be justified.

Expected Outcomes: Catalyst awards are designed to ready projects for a future program proposal to grant funding opportunities through local, provincial, national, or international funding agencies and partners. Projects should identify how the results of this research project will be applied – whether through further research, knowledge mobilization and/or community engagement.

Adjudication: Azrieli Accelerator will coordinate the review process and conduct an initial eligibility review with leadership. Applications must fit within the mandate of the Azrieli Accelerator in order to be eligible.

Applicants should identify which thematic area their proposal primarily aligns with: Brain Circuitry; Microbiome Influences; or Supports, Services & Systems.

Proposals will be judged based on the following criteria:

- Scientific merit and impact (50%)
- Feasibility and expertise (25%)
- Long-term objectives (25%)
**Instructions:**

- Please use Arial 11pt font or Times New Roman 12pt font and set page margins to 0.5 in/1.27cm on all sides.
- Address the Submission Details and Sections A – F within the page allotments outlined below. Figures, charts, tables, etc. should be included within the allowed allotments.
- Submit a single .pdf file with the following naming system: “Last name of Nominated Principal Investigator _ Short Project title.pdf”.
- Files should be emailed to azrieli.accelerator@ucalgary.ca by 5pm on March 11 2024.
- You will receive a confirmation of receipt email within 48 hrs of submission. If you do not receive a confirmation of receipt, please reach out to confirm your application was received.

**Applications should include the following:**

**Submission Details:**
- Project Title:
- Nominated Principal Applicant:
- Contact info for Nominated Principal Applicant:
- Co-applicants (if applicable):
- Thematic area the proposal is aligned with: Brain Circuitry OR Microbiome Influences OR Supports, Services and Systems

**Section A: Research Proposal – maximum of 2 pages**
- Within this section, please address the following:
  - Description of proposed project
  - The need: How will this project impact the research field and your own research program?
  - Outcomes: By the end of this project and this funding, what outcomes will have been achieved?

**Section B: Budget – maximum of 1 page**
- Up to $50,000 can be requested. Provide a justification for use of funds, including descriptions of the staff required to complete the project (already part of the team or to be hired are both acceptable).
- *If applicable:* If the total budget for the full project includes contributions from other sources – please outline those as well.

**Section C: Feasibility and expertise – maximum of 2 pages**
- Please describe your readiness to begin and complete the project.
- Outline any research personnel or collaborators and the roles they will play in the project.

**Section D: Long-term objectives – maximum of 1 page**
- In this section, please address the following questions:
  - What future funding opportunity will this project ready you for?
  - Who is the intended audience of your research communications and results? Examples of the intended audience include: the research community, your own research priorities, community members, health systems, community organizations, etc.
• Once this project is completed, what do you foresee as the next opportunity for the application of these research results? Next opportunities could include: another funding application to an external funding agency, the next research questions, implementation, etc.

Section E: References (no page limits)

Section F: CVs – maximum of 5 pages per CV
Please include a maximum 5 page CV for the Nominated Principal Applicant and any other co-applicants (if applicable) which must cover the following categories:
• Biographical information
• Current position at UCalgary
• Active funding and/or awards
• Publications (from the last five years)
• Other relevant activities

The Azrieli Accelerator Catalyst Grant Competition will be shared broadly with our partners in Faculties, Institutes and Centres from across UCalgary. If you have any questions, please reach out to: azrieli.accelerator@ucalgary.ca.