COVID-19 and mental health: Human Brain Project welcomes two new EU-funded research programmes

COVID-19 Call

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, September 30, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Two proposals answering the Human Brain Project's (HBP) calls for expression of interest (CEoI) on "COVID-19 and its impact on brain and mental health" have been selected for European Commission (EC) funding totaling nearly EUR 450 000. The sum will be divided between the two projects.

Funding within this third Specific Grant Agreement (SGA3) will run between December 2021 and March 2023, and is subject to the successful signature of relevant agreements with the EC and the HBP consortium. Once these conditionalities are cleared, the two new projects will be regarded as partners and integrated into the HBP consortium.

This HBP CEoI was launched between March 2021 and April 2021, and 12 eligible projects were admitted. The two that were eventually selected are also expected to contribute to the development of the EBRAINS research infrastructure set up by the HBP. They have the potential to increase the scope of EBRAINS' applications in terms of innovation, neuroscience and clinical research.

Selected proposals

BRAVE

Is there a way out of the COVID-19-induced brain fog? The BRAVE project proposes tackling COVID-19 brain inflammation with computer-designed molecules.

The innovative molecular simulation - which uses the FENIX supercomputing facility of the Human Brain Project - can help. It will work to design molecules targeting brain proteins that

govern inflammation processes. These chemicals could act as potent anti-inflammatories. Once developed, such usable tools could enhance humanity's readiness to face novel pandemics.
The coordinator of this project is the University of Turin, Department of Drug Science and Technology (UNIT), Italy

Its partners:
• University of Pavia, Department of Chemistry (UNIPV), Italy
• Forschungszentrum Jülich, Institute of Neuroscience and Medicine, INM-9 (JUELICH), Germany
• Heidelberg Institute for Theoretical Studies (HITS), Germany

MODEL-COV

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that the virus can also impact the human brain to the point that those affected continue to suffer from prolonged symptoms such as loss of smell and fatigue. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) allows for comparisons between brain properties in people who had COVID-19 and those who did not. By using cutting edge imaging protocols and advanced tools developed by EBRAINS, the MODEL-COV project can study in detail how COVID-19 might have changed the brain, and try to explain the persistence of symptoms.

This project can mathematically model how the COVID-19-affected brain works, compared to a generic unaffected brain. This could then enable health and science to work together to reverse such negative changes. The impact on society would be major, as humanity is currently unsure of the nature of COVID-19 effects on the brain.

The coordinator of this project is the University College London, Queen Square Institute of Neurology (UCL), UK
Its partners are at the University of Pavia, Department of Brain and Behavioral Sciences (UNIPV), Italy.

Peter Zekert
Human Brain Project
+49 2461 6196860
press@humanbrainproject.eu