



CAN-ACN

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR NEUROSCIENCE
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES NEUROSCIENCES

Securing Our Health and Economic Future through Brain Research



Neurological and mental health disorders cost the Canadian economy an estimated **\$61 billion annually**. This is more than cancer and cardiovascular disease combined.¹



1 in 3 Canadians will be directly impacted by a brain disorder, with some projections showing that **50% of the population** will face a mental illness or neurological condition in their lifetime.²



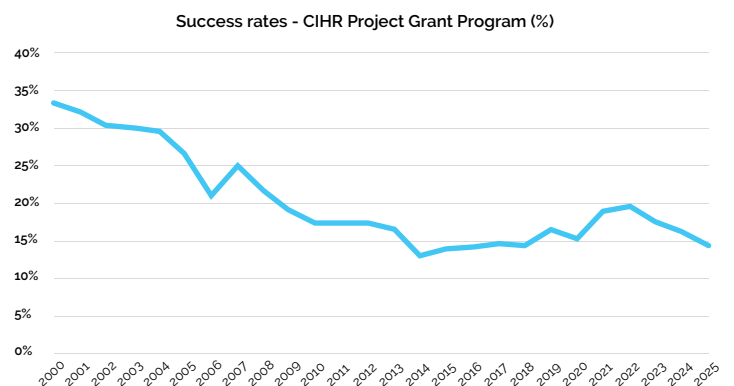
Neuroscience is a cornerstone of Canada's social and economic health. It is not a niche discipline; it is an enabling science that directly supports multiple federal objectives, including health system sustainability, economic growth and productivity, defence readiness, and healthy aging.



Canada is a neuroscience superpower, but we are underfunding our greatest advantage.

STRENGTHENING CANADA'S RESEARCH FOUNDATION

- Canada's research ecosystem is at risk due to a two-decade erosion of support.
- Rebuilding Canada's core research capacity will ensure Canada can attract and retain top talent, maximize public investments, and deliver long-term economic growth.
- CIHR success rates have declined by more than 50% since the early 2000s — falling from roughly 25–30% to approximately 13.6% today.



Call to Action:

The Government of Canada should implement a multi-year plan to rebuild base research funding by:

- **Immediate Boost:** A targeted 25% increase to CIHR project grants in Budget 2026, and to work with CIHR to restore project grant success rates to a 25% benchmark while maintaining two competitions per year.
- **Predictable Growth:** Establish 10% annual growth in base funding for the following four years across CIHR, NSERC, and SSHRC.
- **Objective:** Provide CIHR with the means to restore a 25% success rate for investigator-led project grant applications.

¹ https://mybrainmatters.ca/wp-content/uploads/NHCC-AdvocacySolutionsFinalAugust2020-EN_hires.pdf

² Advocacy - Canadian Association for Neuroscience (CAN-ACN); Mental Health and Substance Use Care | CIHI (2025)

NEUROSCIENCE: AN ENABLING SCIENCE

Neuroscience must be a central focus as the government develops the new **federal capstone research agency**. By making brain research a central priority, Canada can better utilize its existing leadership to tackle the increasing impact of neurological and mental health conditions.

Call to Action:

Designate brain research and neuroscience as a **core mission area** within the new agency.

EMBEDDING NEUROSCIENCE ACROSS FEDERAL PRIORITIES

Neuroscience is foundational to federal priorities beyond core research funding. Embedding neuroscience expertise across government strategies will ensure evidence-based policy development and improve outcomes for Canadians.

Economic Growth

- Optimizing brain health could add \$88 billion to the Canadian GDP by 2050.
- Canada is the only G7 nation with consistently declining R&D intensity (1.8% of GDP vs. the OECD average of 2.7%). Without domestic discovery, we subsidize our competitors by exporting patents and tax revenue to G7 peers.

National Resilience, Defence and Public Safety

- 1 in 6 CAF members experience service-related brain or mental health disorders.
- Researching PTSD and TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury) in Canada ensures sovereign data control and solutions tailored to Canadian veterans and first responders.

Health System Sustainability

- Early-stage research enables earlier diagnosis, preventive strategies, and disease-modifying treatments for neurodegenerative diseases, the leading cause of disability and the second leading cause of death worldwide.

Call to Action:

The Government of Canada should embed neuroscience research and expertise across national strategies related to mental health and addictions, neurodevelopmental disorders, neurodegenerative disorders such as dementia, defence and veterans' health, workforce solutions and artificial intelligence and digital health.



Scan the QR code to learn more about the Canadian Association for Neuroscience

Who is CAN?

- Who We Are: The Canadian Association for Neuroscience (CAN)
- We represent over one thousand researchers across Canada. CAN is your partner in innovation. We are ready to align our world-class research with the government's vision for a prosperous, innovation-driven and prosperous economy.
- Research isn't just a cost; it's Canada's most strategic investment.