

One of the first actions of the new Iowa Neuroscience Institute in summer 2017 was to award \$4.6 million to five research teams pursuing innovative, multidisciplinary projects focused on diverse areas of neuroscience. These Research Programs of Excellence have been drivers of innovation in the INI and have given us a strong foundation and model for collaborative work by teams that bring together faculty from all reaches of the institute.

Working together, these teams have generated an unbelievable number of grants, including 10 NIH R01 grants, and research publications spanning bench to bedside. Technology based on transfer RNA from Chris Ahern's lab and the Neuronal Ion Channels RPOE was licensed as a gene-therapy by a biotech start-up founded by MIT faculty seeking to treat certain forms of epilepsy. The Neuromodulation RPOE led by Kumar Narayanan laid the foundation for a successful application for a P20 Udall grant as well as the new [Center for Neurodegeneration](#).

Our faculty continue to look for ways to expand the reach of these projects. The Neuromodulation team provides samples to the [NeuroBank Core](#) from patients undergoing deep brain stimulation for Parkinson's. This collaborative commitment to building a robust collection of brain tissue samples made the NeuroBank a key partner in the successful P20 application. Likewise, the Udall grant provides the foundation for the Center for Neurodegeneration, which is already pursuing [clinical trials](#) involving the potentially groundbreaking use of existing drugs shown to reverse and prevent damage in Parkinson's disease models.

Because of ongoing projects like this, the impact of the RPOEs will continue even after the initial funding ends next summer. We are in the process of identifying the next set of projects to build on this success and anticipate announcing the new RPOEs in the first quarter of 2022. This is one of many things I am looking forward to in the new year. I wish you all a very happy holiday season and look forward to an engaging and productive 2022.

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