WHERE ARE YOU? YOU ARE NEEDED!

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Guest Editorial

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In the early 1960s, the National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Blindness (now the National Institute of Neurological and Communicative Disorders and Stroke—NINCDS) recognized the potential for the further development of nervous-system imaging; this included anatomic and metabolic imaging and their applicability in research and clinical care. In order to assist in the development of the academic cadre needed for the training of personnel for this rapidly evolving area of neuroscience, the institute established a program of Neuroradiology Graduate Training Grants. The grants provided not only financial support for academic training programs but also recognition that neuroradiology was a distinct discipline. Twenty-five years later, we would agree that neuroradiology has been successful and that the discipline and techniques of CNS imaging are now well-established parts of the clinical neuroscience scene.

However, neuroradiology has not yet adequately met one of its important responsibilities—neuroscience research. If one uses as an index the number of research-grant applications or research-career development applications received by the NINCDS during the past 10 years, the number of applications received from physicians trained in neuroradiology is less than that received from any other clinical discipline of NINCDS responsibility. We can speculate why this is true, but the fact remains that neuroradiologic research interests have appeared to focus primarily on improving the technology and methodology of imaging, and have paid scant attention to the use of neuroradiologic skills in the understanding of neurologic function or dysfunction. To put it bluntly, neuroradiology is in danger of giving away its responsibilities and opportunities as part of the biomedical research scene other than serving as participants in other people's studies. I hope this is not what neuroradiology wants.

The NINCDS does not have the responsibility for leadership in neuroradiology. Nor does it have the responsibility for recruiting or training neuroradiologic investigators. These are properly the responsibility of the neuroradiologic community and specifically of its academic units in medical colleges and teaching hospitals. However, the NINCDS can be helpful in providing financial assistance through its Institutional Research Training Grant Program for the conduct of institutional *research* training programs in which neuroradiologic trainees spend at least 2 years developing the research skills necessary to be clinician investigators. In addition, a special NINCDS award program providing 3 to 5 years of stipend support for the development of neurologic clinician investigators is being used effectively by other clinical disciplines to assist in recruitment and training. The program is called the NINCDS Clinical-Investigator Development Award, and it has been markedly successful in that its graduates achieve a 70–75% funding rate for competing research-project grant applications.

NINCDS CLINICAL-INVESTIGATOR DEVELOPMENT AWARD
(Formerly Teacher-Investigator Award)

Purpose:	Prepare Clinically Trained Persons for Research and Teaching Careers
Method:	Provide Support to Bridge Gap between Initial Period of Postdoctoral Study and Secure Academic Appointment
Content:	• Support for a 3-5 Year Period of Research Training and Experience; • Support Period May Be Continuous or Split; • Award May Be Made During Residency and/or Following Residency; • Stipend of Up to $40,000 a Year Plus $10,000-$20,000 a Year for Research Support; Supplementation Is Permitted; • No Obligations to Government on Completion of Award

The neuroscience research community needs the unique insights and skills that neuroradiology has to offer for understanding the nervous system and its disorders. Like neuroradiology, research is a skill that must be learned. The NINCDS can be of assistance through its research training programs in helping neuroradiologic trainees also become clinical scientists. Surely there must be five to 10 young neuroradiologists each year who are interested in learning "why" as well as "how." Where are they? We need them!

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