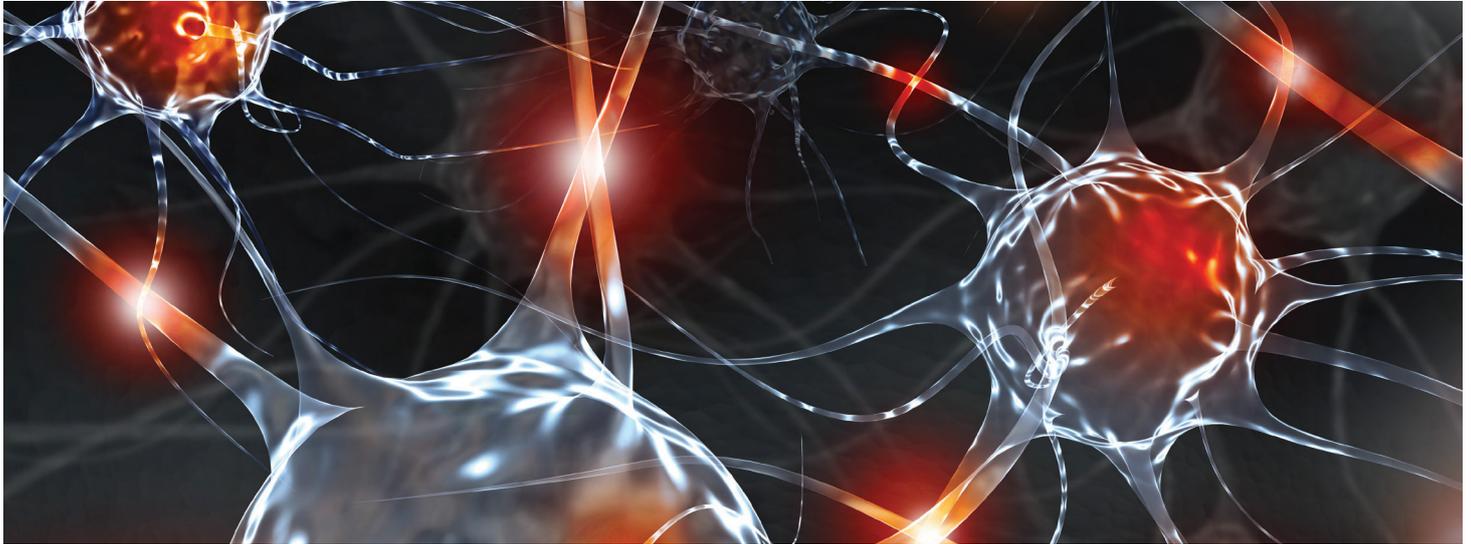


Global Agenda Council on Neuroscience & Behaviour 2012-2014



Understanding/Context

Neuroscience is increasingly prominent on the global agenda. Currently, two of the world's largest multidisciplinary science projects are the BRAIN Initiative in the United States and the Human Brain Project in the European Union. Understanding the human brain is one of the greatest challenges of modern science, and advances in this field have the potential to revolutionize technology as well as the health of the brain. Knowledge about how people reason and make decisions has fuelled interest in behavioural economics and is changing the way policy-makers and civil society groups try to influence the behaviour of citizens and consumers. Increasingly, they understand that lasting change is easier to achieve when the actions that individuals need to take are simple to understand and execute.

Shaping the Agenda

To support these trends, the Global Agenda Council on Neuroscience & Behaviour has been working on two projects. In the area of neuroscience, the Healthy Brain project is helping policy-makers to appreciate how people's brains change and adapt throughout their lives and how the right policy interventions can support the "brain health" of a population. The Council will provide an economic case for these interventions, such as encouraging people to sleep longer or eat a better diet. This will prepare the groundwork so that new research findings can be turned into direct policy approaches at the population level.

The Council is also drafting a paper to explain behaviour change to policy-makers, which should increase the adoption of new approaches to governance based on a better understanding of behaviour. This work emphasizes the promises of behavioural approaches – especially in times of

austerity. It also addresses some of the perceived obstacles that might prevent their wider adoption. Ultimately, behaviour change is one of the approaches to help support evidence-informed policy and help societies reach better governance.

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In the coming year, the Council will build on the work of both projects to help position neuroscience and behaviour change on the global agenda and to raise awareness of their potential to improve the world.

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