



Recruitment for Chair, Department of Neurobiology

January 2026

The Duke University School of Medicine (SOM) seeks a distinguished neuroscientist to serve as the next Chair of the Department of Neurobiology. Reporting directly to the Executive Vice President for Health Affairs of Duke University/Dean of the School of Medicine, the chair has the opportunity to shape a robust academic department with a proven reputation for cutting-edge research and cultivate a wide range of educational opportunities for trainees and staff. The ideal candidate will be an accomplished leader who models the highest standards of professionalism and integrity, has the vision to support and expand an existing interdisciplinary neuroscience research enterprise, and contributes to the field in substantive and impactful ways. The candidate will possess outstanding communication skills, a distinguished research record, dedication to training and mentoring the next generation of scientists, and a commitment to the mission, vision, and values of [Duke University](#) and [Duke Health](#).

Duke Neurobiology is a highly regarded neuroscience department with a robust interdisciplinary faculty with particular strengths in systems neuroscience research including members represented in the National Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Science. Department faculty have strong collaborations across campus.

Candidates should submit a letter of interest and a Curriculum Vitae to Seanna Horan via email at seanna.horan@duke.edu by **February 28, 2026**. Candidates selected to move forward should anticipate virtual interviews in March 2026 followed by in-person visits in April-May 2026.

Chair Responsibilities

Institutional

- Provide strategic direction and leadership for the Department of Neurobiology in its education, research, and service missions; specifically prioritizing the alignment of scientists and research infrastructure with departmental and institutional strategies and program priorities, including those essential to collaborative activities.

- Develop and implement a Departmental strategic plan, including an associated annual budget and operating plans, with the goal of achieving and maintaining a top-tiered, nationally ranked Department.
- Achieve consistent performance targets and metrics.
- Develop research programs that connect fundamental, basic research to clinical and translational programs, capitalizing on collaborations with neuroscience-based clinical departments.
- Lead and sustain philanthropic efforts, and partner with institutional stakeholders to advance philanthropic goals.

Departmental

Research

- Demonstrate a continued commitment to identifying, enunciating, and addressing the most pressing questions in neuroscience research.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how to link and integrate systems, reductionist, and translational approaches to brain function and dysfunction.
- Maintain an active and externally funded research program.
- Recruit, mentor, and develop faculty within Neurobiology and partner with other units including Duke Institute for Brain Sciences (DIBS) to attract and retain top neuroscience research talent that facilitates sustained excellence.

Educational

- Oversee the PhD curriculum.
- Ensure the continued success of the Neurobiology training grant and proactively identify and cultivate opportunities for additional educational programming support.
- Foster and support an environment in which all trainees continue to receive top-tier training and professional development.

Leadership

- Maintain or enhance a strong administrative team which is closely aligned with the objectives of the chair.
- Promote faculty and staff wellness by supporting initiatives that foster resilience, work-life balance, and professional fulfillment.
- Promote and ensure appropriate development opportunities for faculty, including individualized mentorship plans, leadership development, and other support for advancement.

- Perform comprehensive annual evaluations and ensure appropriate conduct in alignment with core values, providing consistent feedback regarding performance/conduct.
- Support responsible stewardship of philanthropic funds.
- Serve on SOM committees related to the overall program and administration, including the Executive Committees, Graduate Medical Education Committee, and other committees essential to the direction of the Department.

Qualifications and Experience

- A PhD or MD/PhD in a neuroscience field
- Tenured Professor
- Distinguished record of national/international neuroscience research
- Strong and successful experience in administrative leadership and research excellence
- Respectful and supportive management style with commitment to professionalism and integrity
- Demonstrated experience in recruiting, developing, and retaining top faculty and trainees
- Superb interpersonal and leadership skills, enabling the ability to build and maintain relationships across the department and enterprise.

Please note that Duke specifically seeks information about past misconduct or policy violations (in the past ten (10) years) and/or relevant pending investigations as part of the application process. Disclosures will not be an automatic bar to hiring but, instead, will initiate further dialogue regarding past actions and steps taken to address them. Disclosures will not be shared with search committees during the application review process.

About Neurobiology at Duke

Duke is a unique and ideal institution in which to grow a visionary and forward-looking neurobiology program. The university itself is a member of the Association of American Universities, and one of the most prestigious higher education institutions in the country, with 12 nationally prominent schools.

Neurobiology is at the center of Duke, both intellectually and geographically. The Department of Neurobiology is located primarily in the Bryan Neurobiology Building, which is in close proximity to the other basic science departments in the School of Medicine. Faculty from other departments collaborate extensively and participate in Neurobiology

activities because of their interest in neurons and glia. The School of Engineering is just across Research Drive and members of its faculty participate actively in Neurobiology activities. The Duke Hospital and the research areas of the clinical departments are within a 5-minute walk to the Bryan Building. Of the 50 faculty in the Neurobiology Graduate Training Program, housed within the Department of Neurobiology, 17 have primary appointments in Neurobiology and the other 33 have primary appointments in close to 20 other departments.

Opportunities for genuine collaboration and cooperation abound. They include: (1) An inter-school neuro-engineering initiative among at least Neurobiology, Neurosurgery, and Biomedical Engineering with opportunities in neuromodulation, brain-machine interfaces, and molecular engineering; (2) A thriving Alzheimer's Disease Research Center with extensive funding and the opportunity to perform basic science on biological material from Alzheimer's patients and those with high risk, as well as the world leading Bryan Brain Bank. (3) Opportunities in human neuroscience, including collaborations with the Duke Institute for Brain Sciences (DIBS), as well as a vital neuroimaging group, cognitive neuroscience in the College of Arts and Sciences, and availability of human tissue from operative procedures in the Health System. (4) An ongoing capital campaign with neuroscience as a major pillar and opportunities for development of initiatives in neuropsychiatric and neurodegenerative diseases as well as initiatives to promote understanding of how the brain works.

About Duke

[Duke University](#) is a member of the Association of American Universities, and one of the most prestigious higher education institutions in the country, with 12 nationally prominent schools, including the Schools of Medicine, Nursing, Fuqua School of Business, Sanford School of Public Policy, Pratt School of Engineering, Nicholas School of the Environment, Trinity College of Arts & Sciences, Law School, Divinity School, and Graduate School.

Duke's home campus encompasses three contiguous campuses in Durham as well as a Marine Lab in Beaufort, North Carolina. Duke is also active internationally through the Duke-NUS Medical School in Singapore, Duke Kunshan University in China, and over 300 research and education programs across the globe.

About Duke Health

[Duke Health](#) conceptually integrates the Duke University School of Medicine, Duke University Health System, Duke University School of Nursing, and Duke-NUS Medical

School, as well as the Duke Global Health Institute and numerous other centers and institutes, striving for excellence in four key mission areas: health care, education, research, and community partnerships.

Established in 1925, [Duke University School of Medicine](#) is the youngest of the nation's top medical schools and is one of the largest biomedical research enterprises in the country. Led by Dean Mary E. Klotman, MD, who also serves as Executive Vice President for Health Affairs for Duke University and Chief Academic Officer for Duke Health, the School comprises more than 2,600 faculty physicians and researchers, nearly 2,000 students, and more than 6,200 staff in 26 clinical and basic science departments. The school's strong emphasis on research to improve clinical outcomes encourages collaboration and has resulted in the development of numerous centers and institutes including the Duke Clinical Research Institute, the world's largest academic clinical research organization. The School of Medicine offers a wide range of health professions programs, certificate and training programs, and biomedical sciences PhD programs which are administered in partnership with Duke's Graduate School.

[Duke University Health System](#) advances the clinical mission by delivering care across four hospitals (Duke University Hospital, Duke Regional Hospital, Duke Raleigh Hospital, and Duke Health Lake Norman Hospital) and numerous outpatient services, including Duke Health Integrated Practice, Duke Primary Care, Duke HomeCare and Hospice, Duke Health and Wellness, and multiple affiliations. As the Southeast's pre-eminent health care provider, Duke University Health System attracted nearly 76,000 inpatient stays and nearly 5.2 million outpatient visits in FY25. Duke's [Office of Graduate Medical Education](#) program includes more than 218 residency and fellowship programs and more than 1,190 trainees.

[Duke Health Integrated Practice](#) within Duke University Health System encompasses more than 3,100 clinicians and 2,200 nurses, clinical and administrative staff. The physician-led entity operates more than 110 specialty care and primary care clinics throughout central and eastern North Carolina in 2.9 million annual visits. Duke Primary Care (DPC) is part of Duke University Health System and is the largest primary care network in the Greater Triangle, with family and internal medicine providers, pediatricians and urgent care clinicians in 50 locations throughout the region. The network includes 37 primary care practice sites and nine urgent care centers.

[Duke University Hospital](#) is both a research hospital where medical advances are created and a teaching hospital for students of medicine, nursing and related health sciences. Duke University Hospital has 1,060 inpatient beds and offers comprehensive diagnostic and therapeutic facilities, including a regional emergency/trauma center, a major surgery suite with 56 operating rooms, an endosurgery center, eye surgery center, outpatient

surgery center, and diagnostic and interventional radiology centers. It is also home to the Duke Children's Hospital and Health Center, Duke Heart Center, Duke Transplant Services, and the Duke Cancer Institute. [Duke Raleigh Hospital, a campus of Duke University Hospital](#), is primarily a surgical hospital specializing in cancer, cardiac, orthopaedic, gastrointestinal, and neurosurgical care. The 186-bed hospital has a 34-room surgical platform to support its specialized care. [Duke Regional Hospital](#) has served Durham, Orange, Person, Granville, and Alamance counties and the surrounding areas for over 45 years. Duke Regional Hospital has 388 inpatient beds and offers a comprehensive range of medical, surgical, and diagnostic services. In 2025, Duke Health acquired the 123-bed acute-care hospital formerly known as Lake Norman Regional Medical Center. [Duke Health Lake Norman](#) includes 24-hour emergency medicine, a weight loss surgery center, women's services, the Stork's Landing Maternity Center, cardiology, and surgical services. It also includes an orthopaedic specialty center, an outpatient imaging center, and an outpatient surgery center.

The Community

The Triangle region is made up of three anchor cities: Durham, Raleigh, and Chapel Hill. Together, the three cities are the economic engine for the state with an estimated population of over two million residents. The Triangle region's intellectual capital draws a workforce for major employers including Duke University, IBM, GlaxoSmithKline, Siemens, John Deere, Biogen Idec, United Therapeutics, Syngenta Biotechnology, SAS Institute, the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, North Carolina Central University, North Carolina State University, and others.

The Triangle is one of the richest areas for cultural attractions, outdoor recreation, and sports. Residents and visitors can enjoy the Durham Performing Arts Center, North Carolina Museum of Art, Contemporary Arts Museum, North Carolina Symphony, and the many restaurants and cafes around the area's university campuses. The area has the most live music venues in North Carolina. This family-friendly area also has a children's museum, 200-plus parks, and a 152-mile greenway system for safe biking and hiking. The Triangle is a great place for sports fans, with college athletics and professional hockey, soccer, and baseball teams.

The tri-city area, known for its research/technology roots and collegiate rivalries, is luring new residents every day with strong job growth and a high quality of life. In recent years, U.S. News and World Report, Business Insider, and Livability all named Raleigh-Durham in the top 10 best places to live in the country. Forbes also named it 'best city in the U.S. for

business and careers' and the #10 most educated city in the U.S., and Southern Living named Durham 'The South's tastiest town'.

To learn more, visit:

<http://www.workinthetriangle.com>

<https://www.discoverdurham.com>

Duke is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer committed to providing employment opportunity without regard to an individual's age, color, disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

Duke aspires to create a community built on collaboration, innovation, creativity, and belonging. Our collective success depends on the robust exchange of ideas – an exchange that is best when all perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences are valued. To achieve this exchange, it is essential that all members of the community feel secure and welcome, that the contributions of all individuals are respected, and that all voices are heard. All members of our community have a responsibility to uphold these values.