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Canada-Israel Collaboration to advance brain research

(HALIFAX, NS) – November 16, 2017 – Canadian and Israeli brain researchers are creating a partnership to bolster research for the care and treatment of patients living with brain injury and disease. The partnership – The Canada-Israel Trans-Atlantic Collaboration for Brain Studies – was announced at Dalhousie University today. The partnership is between Dalhousie University and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU). It will see the exchange of postdoctoral fellows between the two universities and an international annual research symposium.

The collaboration will be led by two internationally acclaimed institutes: Dalhousie's Brain Repair Centre and BGU's Zlotowski Centre for Neuroscience's Brain Trust. This united research venture is expected to spark new insights, approaches, diagnostics and therapeutics of common brain diseases.

A \$5-million investment would provide sustainable funding for the collaboration; an investment the Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation and the Canadian Associates of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev says will support research that creates new and effective treatments for a wide range of neurological injuries, diseases and disorders.

"The funds raised for this initiative will go directly toward advancing research that will translate into helping individuals achieve a better quality of life," says Mr. Brian Thompson, CEO of the Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation. "This partnership is about strengthening brain research capacity towards improving lives and outcomes of those living with brain injury and disease."

The research will be focused on three key areas: traumatic brain injury, motor control and rehabilitation and neurodevelopment and autism. Each institute will examine similar topics, yet using their respective expertise, offer enriched insight.

Dr. Dan Blumberg, Ben-Gurion University's Vice President and Dean for Research and Development joined Dr. Alice Aiken, Dalhousie's Vice President of Research in Halifax to launch the partnership. "This is a transformative collaboration," said Dr. Blumberg. "By creating opportunities for students and researchers to share knowledge, resources and data, we will help close the knowledge gap in key areas of brain disorders."

Dr. Alon Friedman, a neuroscience researcher with the Brain Repair Centre, came to Nova Scotia from Israel's Ben-Gurion University in 2014.

"The outcomes of this project will have a profound impact on the field of brain research and create a new talent pool of brain researchers," said Dr. Friedman. "It will mean new therapies will go from bench to bedside sooner."

Together, the Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation and the Canadian Associates of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev are endeavoring to raise \$5 million for this exciting partnership.

The **Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation** was founded in 1979 as an independent funding agency, established for the sole purpose of supporting excellence in medical research at Dalhousie Medical School and its affiliated institutions.

Dalhousie's **Brain Repair Centre** is a research institute and the neuro-research hub in Atlantic Canada. The Brain Repair Centre supports world-class medical neuroscience research; fosters economic growth through innovation, worldwide partnerships and commercialization; and, aims to translate research into improved health care.

The **Ben-Gurion University of Negev's (BGU) Zlotowski Centre of Neuroscience**, home of BGU Brain Trust, has earned an international reputation for its interdisciplinary approach to the field. The Brain Trust is committed to turning scientific findings and research result in new treatments and therapeutic interventions.

For more information, please contact:

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