

# POWER OF BRAINS BEHIND THE INFRASTRUCTURE

The year of 2020, while one of the most challenging years in the life of the [National Imaging Facility \(NIF\)](#), proved to be a year of stronger collaborations and communications. As a national research infrastructure that provides a continuum of capabilities from radiochemistry and radiopharmaceuticals, molecular imaging, through small and large animal imaging, to human imaging across Australia, NIF was hit hard by closure of its human imaging and restrictions on operations of all other facilities. However, it continued to support research with minimal interruption through its network of highly specialised expertise.

Funded by the Australian Government, under the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS), NIF has established a network of imaging experts, based at various organisations across the country, that support infrastructure users by provision of scientific input into experimental design, data capture, cross-disciplinary engagement, and the analysis, integration, interpretation, and communication of research results. One of the challenges of reduced travel was ensuring these experts are aware of new developments in other sites. It is often the informal face to face meetings that reveal what is available to be shared. During the pandemic, these experts came together to exchange experience and develop initiatives that support the functioning of NIF by delivering high quality service and capability to the research community. This was achieved by regular informal drop-in Zoom sessions, which provided opportunity for encouraging each other, as well as share insights. One new initiative, which will have practical application long beyond the current pandemic, was development of a mobile app, "NIF Radiotracer Finder," that provides information on available radiochemistry supplies across Australia. By logging into this app, users can find the radioisotopes, radiotracers, and other relevant information that they might need for their projects. It has a live database, which can easily be updated to include new tracers. Users can search via name or applications.



Scan the QR code to access NIF Radiotracer Finder

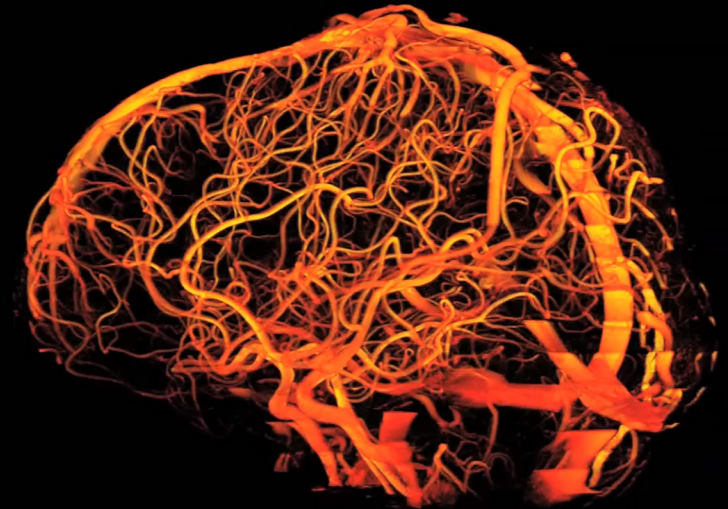


Image credit: The University of Queensland

We are bound to face other challenges, which will require us to use new forms of communication. Things that were once the exception will become the norm. While many of us used Zoom in the past, we would not have imagined 18 months ago that it would become part of normal daily life. So, tools such as NIF Radiotracer Finder, born out of challenging circumstances, can help us to communicate even better. They encourage us to come together as a team. Let us continue to think out of the box as we build collaborations around Research Infrastructure.

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