**Breakout Session 7: Track A** 

Developing Computational Tools to Analyze the Structure of Nerve Cells in the Bowel to Better Understand Digestive Disease



# **Neurobiology of Intrinsic Afferent Neurons**

Developing computational tools to analyze the structure of nerve cells in the bowel to better understand digestive disease 5R01DK129315-03



#### David R. Linden

2024 NIH ODSS AI Supplement Program Virtual PI Meeting, March 28, 2024

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# **Structure-Function in Neuroscience**



#### Images Courtesy of the Cajal Institute, Spanish National Research Council and the Nobel Prize Museum, Stockholm





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Images from Dogiel, 1899 Republished in Furness, 2004, *The Enteric Nervous System* and Courtesy of Tomsk State University

## Single Cell Enteric Neuron Analysis



Morarach et al., 2021 Nat. Neurosci. 24:34-46 Melo et al., 2020 Neurogastroenterol Motil 32:e13989





**Different classes of IPANs possess** morphologies and physiology that uniquely contribute to intestinal function

Ntng1+ ENC<sub>12</sub>

NMU+

**smIPAN** 

CCK+

ENC7

**Diversity of Intrinsic Primary Afferent Neurons (IPANs)** 

Jejunum

NMU+

ENC6

Colon



# Model and Methods



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Enteric NeuroScience Program Created with BioRender.com

# Single Cell 3D Reconstruction





#### Three Cell Morphologies Based on Soma Location and Branching Pattern



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#### **AI/ML Collaboration**



Created with BioRender.com



### Semi-Automated Human-in-the-Loop AI Assisted Mapping





#### **AI Assisted Pre-Mapping**

- Dataset Trained on *C. elegans* neuron
- Connect 3D Shapes, Cleans Data
- Suppress Background





**CNN Model** 





## **User Mapping Function**

- 3D Graph Search
  - Dijkstra's Algorithm
  - A Star Search Algorithm





- Broken paths can be connected.
- User defines the Start and the End of the Neurite Branch.
- The mapping is performed in 3D.





## Mapping Function: Neurite Extraction

- Traced 3D Voxels act as 3D Volumetric Mask
- Intensity Variation is captured within mask
- Adaptive histogram equalization extracts the neuron structure
- The whole neuron is one single connected object



3D Volumetric Mask





# **Application to Broad Neuroscience Field**



Mapped Neuron Neuron Mask in 3D

Mayavi Scene 1 > X X Y Y Z Z 🕄 🖶 🔺 🔀 🖬



Franklin and Paxinos The Mouse Brain In Stereotaxic Coordinates 3rd Ed. 2008.



National Institutes of Health The BRAIN Initiative





Chuck Howe







Ben Clarkson Maria Westphal Kamrul Foysal

**Tim Kline** 

George Cao

## Hybrid Automated Enteric Neuron Mapping Model



# Conclusions

- AI / ML Supports Aims of Parent R01
  - Enhanced Throughput
  - Enhanced Objectivity
- Creation of Neuron Morphology Datasets for Future AI / ML
  - Ground Truth to Improve Fully Automated AI/ML Models
  - Applicability to Broad Neuroscience Community



