



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## VISITING SCIENTIST AND ENGINEER EXPAND DISCOVERIES AT ALLEN INSTITUTE FOR BRAIN SCIENCE

*Sharad Ramanathan, Ph.D., and Craig Forest, Ph.D., use tenures to build upon their own research while making valuable scientific and engineering contributions to Allen Institute teams*

**SEATTLE, WASH. — August 21, 2014** — The Allen Institute for Brain Science welcomes a visiting scientist from Harvard and a visiting engineer from Georgia Tech: Sharad Ramanathan, Ph.D.; and Craig Forest, Ph.D. Both Ramanathan and Forest will bring their distinct knowledge and backgrounds to the expanding scientific teams at the Allen Institute.

### **Sharad Ramanathan, Ph.D.**

Sharad Ramanathan, Ph.D., is visiting from the Harvard School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, where he is a Professor of Molecular and Cellular Biology and the Gordon McKay Professor of Applied Physics. His research is focused on understanding how cells and organisms interpret their environment and process signals in order to make decisions, using a combination of computational, theoretical and experimental tools. His lab at Harvard studies the general design principles of circuits in several species, including mouse, human, and the *C. elegans* worm. During his time at the Allen Institute, Ramanathan will serve as the head of the *In Vitro* Human Cell Types Program, which aims to understand how human neurons differentiate into different cell types as they mature.

### **Craig Forest, Ph.D.**

Craig Forest, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Georgia Tech, where he also holds faculty positions in Bioengineering and Biomedical Engineering. His primary area of research is in adapting automated robotic technology that can collect and process large amounts of data for both genetic science and neuroscience applications. At the Allen Institute, he is collaborating with scientists to improve and adapt a technology called patch clamping, which allows scientists to study the small channels that control the movement of molecules in and out of individual neurons. Forest is working to automate the technology used in patch clamping in order to more effectively gather data from many neurons at the same time, improving both efficiency and the quality of data collected.

### **About the Allen Institute for Brain Science**

The Allen Institute for Brain Science ([www.alleninstitute.org](http://www.alleninstitute.org)) is an independent, 501(c)(3) nonprofit medical research organization dedicated to accelerating the understanding of how the human brain works in health and disease. Using a big science approach, the Allen Institute generates useful public resources used by researchers and organizations around the globe, drives technological and analytical advances, and discovers fundamental brain properties through integration of experiments, modeling and theory. Launched in 2003 with a seed contribution from founder and philanthropist Paul G. Allen, the Allen Institute is supported by a diversity of government, foundation and private funds to enable its projects. Given the Institute's achievements, Mr. Allen committed an additional \$300 million in 2012 for the first four years of a ten-year plan

to further propel and expand the Institute's scientific programs, bringing his total commitment to date to \$500 million. The Allen Institute's data and tools are publicly available online at [www.brain-map.org](http://www.brain-map.org).

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