

## **WHAT IS THE HEFFTER RESEARCH INSTITUTE?**

Given the paramount importance of the nature of the human mind to global existence, it is curious -- and unsettling -- to realize how little we know about it. The mind is the source of all discovery and invention, yet the relationship between brain and mind remains a mystery. Since our minds are our only means of solving the problems we face on this planet, understanding how the mind works and the nature of its relationship to the brain is an urgent and compelling priority.

Psychedelics have the unique ability to transform fundamentally the very functions that we consider uniquely human: the way we think, feel, communicate, and solve problems. They shift our cognitive and symbolic capacities, our aesthetic and spiritual sensibilities, and our linguistic and imaginative abilities; the very kinds of brain functions that constitute the fabric of what we experience as mind. Because psychedelic agents are similar to natural substances already present in the human brain, the careful study of their effects upon brain function and experiences provides access to primary states of brain and mind and the connections between them. For these reasons, research with psychedelic substances offers an unparalleled opportunity for understanding the relationship of brain to mind in ways not possible using other methods. Indeed, it is the thesis of the Heffter Research Institute that these substances represent an essential technology for this investigation. From the chemical and neurological level, to the psychological and spiritual, psychedelic research is a complex and difficult area of exploration. Nevertheless, the time has come to apply our scientific sophistication to explore the powerful influences of psychedelics on the brain and mind.

For millennia, psychedelics played essential roles in the culture and spiritual practices of advanced civilizations such as the Mayans, Greeks, and Indo-Aryans. These substances hold similar importance today in many traditional non-Western societies. We are at an historic moment. Old social orders are changing rapidly. Economic powers are restructuring for the future. There is widespread popular interest in the brain and mind as never before. Interest in research with psychedelics seems to be growing, and yet organized financial support for this work is on the wane. The Heffter Research Institute is uniquely poised to be a key player in the revival of psychedelic research.

### **MISSION**

The mission of the Heffter Research Institute is to conduct research of the highest scientific quality with psychedelic substances in order to contribute to a greater understanding of the mind, leading to the improvement of the human condition, and the alleviation of suffering. This mission has already begun to attract scientists and researchers of the highest caliber. The information and new knowledge gained will be disseminated to the medical and scientific communities.

The Heffter Research Institute was incorporated in New Mexico in 1993 as a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization in the belief that such research was not only viable but critically important. The Institute is named after Dr. Arthur Heffter, a turn-of-the-century German research pharmacologist who discovered that mescaline was the principal psychoactive component in the peyote cactus.

The current political and intellectual climate offers new opportunities to reopen avenues of research that have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, to pursue in the past within conventional frameworks. Government agencies will provide support to legitimate researchers of psychedelic agents, as the Institute Founders can testify from long periods of research funding. Nevertheless, when it comes to extending the investigations from animal models to human subjects, or to testing hypotheses that the effects of psychedelics may in certain circumstances be beneficial rather than entirely detrimental, the government's role as a supporter of research has been insufficient.

In order for truly uncompromised and creative research in the field of psychedelic neuropsychopharmacology to have any hope of fulfilling its promise, it must be pursued from within the context of a research institute whose operations and research programs are independent of government funding. The Heffter Research Institute will neither condemn psychedelic drugs nor advocate their uncontrolled use. The sole position of the Institute in this regard will be that psychedelic agents, utilized in thoughtfully designed and carefully conducted scientific experiments, can be used to further the understanding of the mind.

The Heffter Research Institute will provide support, facilities, and opportunities to conduct both basic and clinical scientific research on psychedelic drugs that is legitimate and scientifically sound. The Institute is based on the belief that such investigations hold great potential for producing genuine breakthroughs in the understanding of the human mind. The Founders intend that the Heffter Research Institute will be an enduring institution in the service of humankind.

The general objectives of The Heffter Institute include:

- Developing knowledge regarding, and standards of practice for, the appropriate and safe use of psychedelic drugs in a medical context.
- Conducting basic chemical, pharmacological, and neurobiological investigations on psychedelic substances and their mechanisms of action.
- Conducting ethnopharmacological investigations designed to clarify our understanding of the role played by psychoactive plants in the religious, medical, and social institutions of other cultures.
- Conducting phytochemical and pharmacological investigations of plants and other naturally occurring materials, designed to discover, isolate, and characterize novel natural products with psychedelic or other types of psychoactivity.
- Publishing scientific reports, earning grants and awards; organizing and sponsoring scientific conferences to present research results, and providing a forum for discussions of the appropriate medical and scientific uses of psychedelic drugs.
- Conducting clinical research studies to investigate potential therapeutic applications of psychedelic drugs.
- Informing the scientific and medical communities about the issues of safety, adverse effects, and therapeutic potentials related to psychedelic drug use in a medical context.

## **BE A PARTNER IN THE INSTITUTE'S PROGRESS**

The Heffter Research Institute invites the support of those who wish to help realize its unique and valuable mission. Those individuals, corporations, and foundations, having the vision and commitment to help sponsor this research enterprise, do so knowing that their contribution to the Institute and to the field of medicine is a critically important one.

Gifts for research, operating support, and capital funds are welcomed. In addition to gifts of cash, the Institute accepts gifts of securities as well as planned gifts and bequests. The Institute will work with a prospective donor to help realize the fullest tax advantage possible.

## **THE CHALLENGE**

The Heffter Research Institute's Board of Directors has embarked upon an ambitious course. At this initial stage, research and start-up funds are needed to carry out our mission. Significant contributions will be needed to reach the Institute's short and long-term goals. Potential donors are invited to contact the Institute at 330 Garfield, Suite 301 Santa Fe, NM 87501, to explore our World Wide Web site at <http://www.heffter.org>, or to contact George Greer, M.D., by telephone: (505) 982-0312, Fax: (505) 992-8260, or INTERNET ([george@heffter.org](mailto:george@heffter.org)), to explore how they might wish to participate in this idea whose time has come.