The National Institutes of Health and the American Tinnitus Association estimates that over 50 million Americans experience tinnitus to some degree. Of these, approximately 12 million have severe enough tinnitus to seek medical attention and about two million patients are so seriously debilitated that they cannot function on a "normal," day-to-day basis. Individuals with severe cases of tinnitus may find it difficult to hear, work, or even sleep. Recent legislation has focused on improving the recognition of and compensation for tinnitus experienced by Veterans. Expert panels have provided recommendations to the Department of Veterans Affairs on the assessment of tinnitus associated with service in the Armed Forces. Currently, the exact physiological cause or causes of tinnitus are not known and there is no cure.

In response to the lack of knowledge on this tinnitus, your task is to write a proposal which will provide key insights into the mechanisms underlying central tinnitus and provide a basis for future studies to develop better methods and interventions to prevent, treat, or cure central tinnitus. Your proposal should also work to identify appropriate applications of your approach for either civilians or military personnel who are at risk of and those that return from war with tinnitus.