



Research Partnerships – criteria and guidelines for researchers

This document outlines the criteria used when Alzheimer's Society decide whether to enter into a research partnership. Please read this document before completing your application form. **Applications that do not follow the guidance are likely to be rejected.**

Please note we can only review applications at the times indicated on our [partnerships web page](#)

If you have any questions, please contact ResearchPartnerships@alzheimers.org.uk

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Introduction

Research Partnerships relate to research we are *not funding* and include;

- a) Enabling the **involvement and or participation of people affected by dementia** in research
 - b) Using the expertise of Alzheimer's Society to **advise** on aspects of research
 - c) Involving Alzheimer's Society staff in the **delivery** of research
- Alzheimer's Society is the largest care and support charity for people with dementia, and as such many researchers may be interested in working with the Society in a variety of ways. Over the last 5 years, we have worked in partnership with academics to deliver considerable impact for people with dementia. However, we receive a large number of partnership requests and have created a streamlined process to help us prioritise the time and resources we commit to projects.
 - Partnership applications will be reviewed in line with the goals of [Alzheimer's Society Research strategy](#) and strategic priorities, as well as the potential for Alzheimer's Society to make a positive impact on the project.
 - We will carefully consider whether we have the resources to meet the time commitment being requested.
 - If you have innovative ideas for ways to involving our staff, volunteers, or people affected by dementia we are also keen to hear from you.

Essential criteria for all applications

- You must be based at a recognised higher education learning institute, such as a University or in the NHS, AND you must also be studying at PhD level OR have already achieved a PhD or higher Clinical qualification
- The project must have all the necessary ethical approval for the research and you must be able to share proof of the approval with us;
 - If you are in the process of gaining ethical approval this must be stated on the form and you must update us on whether the approval is in place before engaging with our service users or Research Network volunteers.
 - If ethical approval is not required please clearly state the reasons why on the application form
- In order for us to make a decision we need to understand the impact/potential impact of your research – applications should outline plans for implementation and dissemination or future phases of research
- Your application should be submitted as far in advance as possible of any forthcoming deadlines

- We often receive requests for a letter outlining our support for a research study prior to it receiving funding. It is very important that you **let us know the outcome of the funding decision**, so we can plan our resources accordingly. Depending on the ask, it is likely that we will need a follow up conversation once funding is in place to discuss partnership activities in more detail.

Alzheimer's Society expectations

1. Appropriate acknowledgement of contributions to the research from people affected by dementia and or our staff i.e. in publications and other dissemination materials.
2. Regular updates on the progress of your research
3. Contributions to impact reports, and evaluations of the partnership process

Alzheimer's Society staff advising on aspects of the research/involving Alzheimer's Society staff in the delivery of research

Partnership applications can request to draw on the expertise of our staff and organisational expertise; this could be through membership on an advisory group or more complex involvement such as becoming a delivery partner. We aim to support these requests where we have capacity and particularly where they align with our organisational priorities.

Patient and public involvement

- As a partner, Alzheimer's Society is able to draw upon the advice and experience of our [Research Network](#). Our Research Network is a team of over 270 carers, former carers and people with dementia. Research Network volunteers receive training in the research process and regularly review research proposals received by Alzheimer's Society.
- We are looking for precise, interesting and innovative Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) plans with an indication of the time commitment for our service users or Research Network volunteers.
- If research involves people affected by dementia, it is good practice to; feedback the results of the research, the impact of their contribution to the research output or if contributions were made at application stage how their input affected the final application. This is most likely to be a summary written in lay terms and the researcher should be able to give an approximate date of when they will communicate these results.
- When planning the involvement of people affected by dementia in research, it is important to consider the potential costs involved. We recommend the use of the INVOLVE guidance for creating a budget for Patient and Public Involvement. Their [Involvement Cost Calculator](#) provides suggested costing for a range of activities.

Expenses

- Travel: £100 pp (to cover travel, cost will vary according to distance and replacement care costs, where required)
- Catering: £5-10 pp, dependent on requirements (e.g. lunch/refreshments)

Recruiting participants

- Recruiting participants to your study might be part of a partnership with Alzheimer's Society but if that is the only support you require, it is likely that using Join Dementia Research is a more suitable approach, please check the [Join Dementia Research](#) website for more details.
- As a service delivery provider we can draw on the experience of our service users providing they give consent. However we have a duty of care to those who use our services. We should not, for example be involved in direct recruitment for research projects as service users may feel obliged to participate if asked by our staff.
- If your partnership application is successful; we can share the opportunity with the relevant local staff. Depending on local teams capacity the opportunity will then be shared with our service users.
- Alzheimer's Society can assist researchers to publicise their research in a number of ways. For example; handing out a participant information leaflet to service users which includes contact details of the researchers if people would like to take part, or the researcher could come to a service and tell people about their research with the objective that they might wish to take part. If the researcher would like people to complete an online questionnaire or survey we can refer the request to [Talking Point](#).
- **In all cases, the service user should tell the researcher directly that they are willing to take part in research. Under no circumstances should Alzheimer's Society staff pass on contact details to researchers, even if the service user said it was okay to do so. By law, our staff or volunteers cannot be the ones signing people up to participate in research.**
- You must be able to explain how you plan to approach, consent and recruit people into your research;
 - You should be able to provide a 'Participant Information Leaflet', this should answer questions such as; 'what is involved?', 'how much time will it take?', 'will I be paid or reimbursed for my time?', 'are there any risks involved in the research?' and 'who can I contact for help and support?'
 - You should also be able to provide a copy of the consent form. The consent form should explain how data is collected, stored and identified
 - You should also be able to share copies of questionnaires and interview templates with us where relevant
- If during the course of the research you will be spending time with our service users without our staff being present then you will need to send us your proof of **DBS clearance** for working with vulnerable adults when you send your application form to us.