Alzheimer's Society

Applicant Guidance 2026

Alzheimer's
Society

Together we are help & hope
for everyone living with dementia

Applicant Guidance 2026

Guidance to support your application for an Alzheimer's Society grant is below. <u>This document does not</u> apply to our pre-doctoral clinical bursary call, clinical training partnership call or <u>Daphne Jackson Fellowship.</u> Applications that do not follow the guidance are likely to be rejected at shortlisting or submission stage.

Contents

Introduction

Alzheimer's Society is dedicated to funding impactful research that advances our understanding of dementia and improves the lives of those affected. We aim to foster innovation, collaboration, and excellence through our funding schemes. This document provides detailed guidance for applicants to the 2026 grant round, covering Projects, Fellowships, and Career Development Grants.

Our open access policy and conflict of interest policy can be found on our website.

Please contact the grants team with any queries: grantenquiries@alzheimers.org.uk

Reasonable adjustments
Please let us know if you require any reasonable adjustments to be made in relation to your application. If you are involving a person with dementia in your application and they require support completing any sections of the application form, please notify the Society to arrange this.

Submitting an application and review process

Applications must be submitted through our online grants system which can be accessed here: https://grants.alzheimers.org.uk. Alzheimer's Society run a two-part process. Proposals that are successful at the shortlisting stage will move to the full proposal review stage.

1. **Outline proposal:** Scientific and lay outline proposals are reviewed by experts within our grant advisory board.

2. **Full proposal:** Successful applicants after this stage will be invited to submit a full proposal for review by our expert review panels, lived experience experts and the grant advisory board.

Outline proposal submitted

Shortlisting by Grant Advisor Board

Unsuccessful after shortlisting

Successful applicants invited to submit full proposal

Lay review by Research Network

Expert review panels and fellowship interviews

Where needed, applicants respond to queries from the ERPs

Grant Advisory Panel meet

Grant Advisory Board meet

Recommendation to the Trustees

Unsuccessful after board meeting

Successful grants awarded

Assessment and Review Process

All applications that fulfil the eligibility criteria will be assessed using the following processes.

Shortlisting
The Grant Advisory Board is made up of both expert external researchers and lay reviewers from Alzheimer's Society's Research Network. The Advisory Board will collectively review all outline proposals against the funding criteria and rank it alongside other applications. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to submit a full application.

Peer and lay review
Proposals that are shortlisted will be peer reviewed by an Expert Review Panel of subject-specific researchers and lay reviewed by Research Network Volunteers. Shortlisted fellowship and career development applications will be invited to interview with the Expert Review Panel.
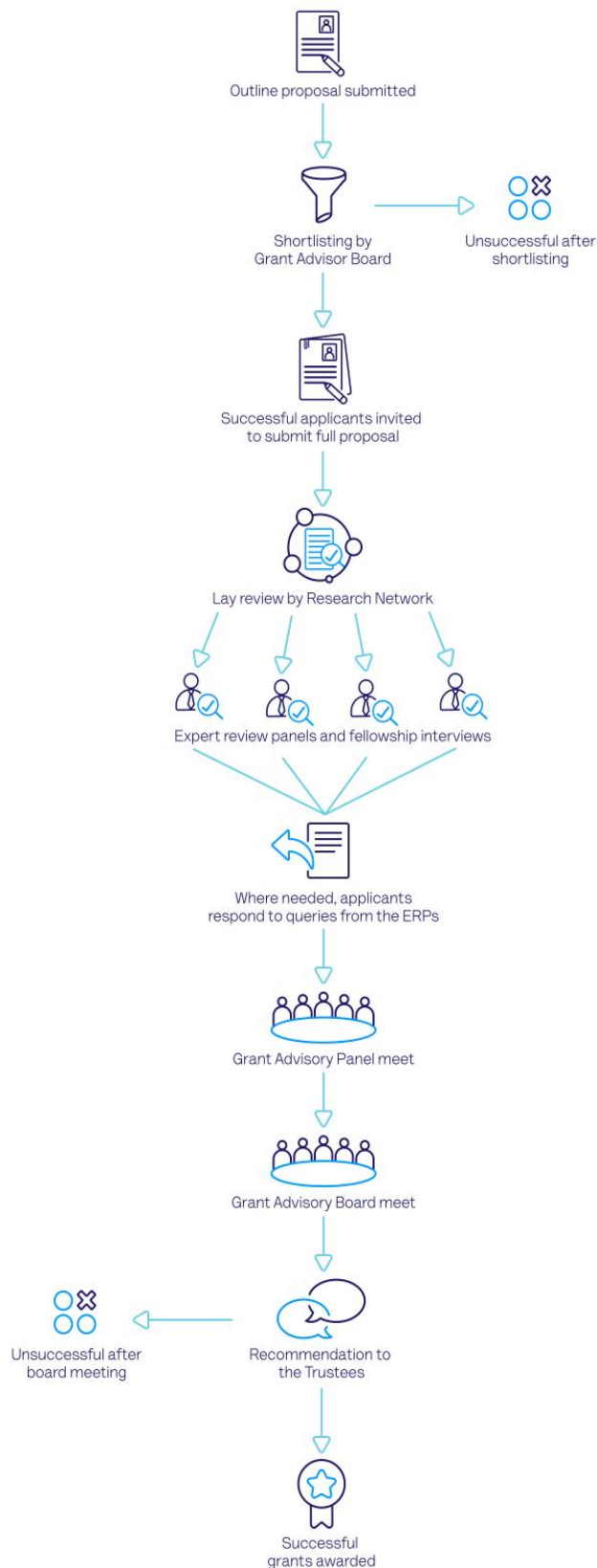
Progression to rebuttal

Progression to the rebuttal stage is determined following the Expert Review Panel assessment. Applications that do not progress to rebuttal will not be considered further and will receive feedback from the peer and lay review stage.

Rebuttal
Feedback is provided to all shortlisted applicants. Applicants invited to rebuttal stage will be given an opportunity to respond to comments from the Expert Review Panel and lay reviewers. Rebuttal will be shared with expert reviewers and lay reviewers before the Advisory Board meeting.

Advisory Panel & Board
The Grant Advisory Panel consists of lay reviewers who collectively review all applications. Their views are then taken forward to the final Grant Advisory Board meeting, where the Board reviews all applications and any submitted rebuttals against the funding criteria to determine the final ranking of applications and funding recommendations.

Application and Decision-making timeframe

The call will follow the timelines outlined below:

- Call opens for outline proposals – **27th January 2026**
- Outline submission deadline – **27th March 2026 (23:59)**
- Shortlisting – **May 2026**
- Shortlisting outcome communicated by **early June 2026**
- Full proposal submissions open – **2nd June 2026**
- Full proposal submission deadline – **24th July 2026 (23:59)**
- Peer and lay review, including interviews – **September to November 2026**
- Funding decisions made by **end of December 2026**

Start dates

When completing your application, it is important that you include a realistic start date for your project if it is successful. As a minimum we would recommend two months after the time the funding decision will be communicated to allow for contracts to be approved and signed.

The start date for the project must be within 12 months of March 2027.

Resubmission policy

- Applicants may resubmit a revised application for the same project in a future grant round.
- However, the Grant Advisory Board will expect the project to have been sufficiently revised to take into account any feedback from the previous grant round's peer and lay review process and further developments in the research field. This should be clearly evidenced in your application.
- Resubmitted applications will be reviewed as new applications and will not be at advantage over other applications; even if an application addresses the reviewer feedback, funding is not guaranteed and an application will need to undergo the full grants review process.
- If applicants are unsure about resubmitting an application, please discuss this with the grants team.

Proposal outline guidance

Outline proposals will be shortlisted by the Grants Advisory Board. Applicants whose outlines are shortlisted will be invited to submit full proposals for review. The Grants Advisory Board will consist of leading experts across dementia research and lay members from our volunteer network with a range of backgrounds and expertise.

The outline is your opportunity to sell your idea to the shortlisting board. The outline proposal consists of the following components. Please note that the research career and development statement is **required only for early career researcher grants**:

- The scientific outline proposal (up to 3 pages, excluding references; page 3 must contain the costings table only, with no additional text)
- The lay outline proposal (1 page, or up to 2 pages if a glossary is included)
- Research career and development statement (1 page – only for early career researcher grants)

The scientific outline

We suggest that you include the following in your outline:

- Brief background justifying the proposed project
- Aims of the project
- Overview of the proposed project
- Quality of team and research/educational environment
- High-level costings summary (page 3 only, see below)

Costings (outline stage)

Applicants must provide a high-level summary of costs at outline stage using the table below.

This is intended to be a light touch indication of overall cost and value for money. Detailed cost breakdowns and justifications are not required at outline stage.

If invited to submit a full proposal, the total cost requested at full stage must be no more than 10% higher than the total provided at outline stage.

Category	Total cost	Notes (optional – max 2 lines)
Salaries		
Research support staff (if applicable)		
PhD studentship (if applicable)		
Research intern (if applicable)		
Consumables and research costs		
PPI and public engagement		
Training and career development		
Other direct costs		
Any in-kind contribution (if applicable)		
Total cost requested		

The lay outline

Please include a one-page lay summary for our lay board members outlining the aims of the project, relevant background information, and justification in a language suitable for non-researchers. If your proposal includes unavoidable scientific terminology, please include a glossary to ensure clarity for all readers.
We suggest that you include the following in your outline:

- Brief background justifying the proposed project
- Aims of the proposed work
- Potential impact for people affected by dementia

Research career and development

This section is specifically for fellowships and career development grants. It provides applicants with the opportunity to outline their research career to date and explain how this fellowship or grant will support their professional development. Applicants are expected to address the following:

- **Career progression**: Describe the key milestones in your research career, including significant achievements, challenges faced, and how you have addressed them.
- **Knowledge dissemination and engagement**: Highlight any activities where you have shared your research findings with others (e.g., publications, conference presentations, public engagement activities).
- **Teaching and mentorship**: Describe your experience in teaching or mentoring others, including contributions to capacity building or education in your field.
- **Future goals:** Explain why this fellowship or career development grant is crucial at this stage in your career and how it will contribute to your personal and professional growth.

General application guidance

Application development

- Outlines (scientific, lay and research career and development) will be used for shortlisting.
- Applicants must refer to published literature in their chosen area of research. Those that do not are likely to be rejected at shortlisting.
- Applicants should demonstrate their understanding of the background of research on which the proposal is built and that they are aware of other research being conducted both nationally and internationally in the research area. Information on current research in this area and how the proposed project relates to the wider research field must be provided in the application form.
- Applicants must provide information about how their research connects with the wider dementia research environment at their institute.
- Applications must include sufficient detail in the case for support regarding the research methods, to indicate to reviewers that the project is appropriately designed and feasible.
- Applicants should justify the costs claimed in the application and show that the project demonstrates value for money for the Society.
- Applicants that wish to use Alzheimer's Society services or staff as part of their research project (beyond recruitment of participants) **must** contact the office to discuss their application before submission. Email grantenquiries@alzheimers.org.uk

Creating the right team

- The project team **must** include at least one person with a strong track record in dementia research, and the application should demonstrate how the project team will work together. It is strongly recommended that the team includes more than one person with a track record in dementia research.
- For fellowship applications, the supervisory team must have dementia research and supervisory experience, though they are not required to be within the same research institution. Please refer to the eligibility sections for more information.
- For grants that are implementing evidence, consider including one team member with a strong track record in change management, measurement, and an understanding of implementation strategies.
- Although the involvement of people affected by dementia is now expected in research, the involvement of other non-academic stakeholders, for example practitioners, service providers and commissioners, is less well established. Greater involvement of the audiences that your research is relevant to will help to ensure that research addresses practice or service-relevant problems and develops solutions that are more likely to be acceptable and implemented in the real world.

- Applications that propose a clinical trial or study must demonstrate that a Clinical Trials Unit has been involved in the design and development of the project.
- Appropriate statistical support within the team should be demonstrated for all quantitative studies.

Co-applicant

A co-applicant is an individual who will have intellectual input into, and part ownership of, the research if the application is successful. They are expected to be actively involved in the project but do not necessarily need to be funded by the project. E.g. appropriate methodologists or people affected by dementia. A co-applicant is not limited to a researcher; we encourage the involvement of non-academic stakeholders. We strongly encourage applicants to include early career researchers employed on grant proposals (such as project grants) to be included as co-applicants if they are not lead applicants.

Supervisor

A supervisor/co-supervisor is a researcher who will provide mentorship and support to the fellowship applicant. One or more supervisors should have a track record in dementia research.

Academic Champion

A supervisor/co-supervisor is a researcher who will provide mentorship and support to the fellowship applicant. One or more supervisors should have a track record in dementia research.

Collaborator

A collaborator is any individual named in the body of the application who will not be involved in the day-to-day execution of the project. E.g. someone providing technical advice, voluntary organisations or Applied Research Collaborations (ARCs). A letter of support or email correspondence must be attached from any collaborator indicating their support for the project.

Authorised signatory

An authorised signatory is a research institution member of staff that confirms the institution is willing to administer the award if successfully funded. This person is usually a member of the institution's finance department. Please consult with your authorised signatory as early as possible to ensure this is in place before submission. Please also be aware of any Bank Holidays or other dates which might delay this step.

Patient and Public involvement

Patient and public involvement (PPI) is the term for involving people in your research who have personal experience of dementia - either living with the condition, carers and/or former carers. Meaningful PPI moves beyond communicating research to the public, to involving people in the design and delivery of research. Meaningful PPI enables people affected by dementia as 'experts by experience' to work with academics and clinicians to conduct high quality, relevant research.

Alzheimer's Society has a flexible approach to this as we believe it is important to engage with the right people to work in partnership to ensure your research is more relevant, credible, and impactful. Effective PPI could also involve gathering the views of people who use, or may in the future use, a health service or treatment that your research is focussing on.

Alzheimer's Society grant reviewers expect to see clear descriptions of your plans or evidence of PPI, and your reasons for doing so, in your applications. Your application will be enhanced by details of how you intend to meaningfully involve people or groups who will inform your research. These may include partnerships you have established independently, local PPI services or the Alzheimer's Society Research Network. If you would like to discuss the option of involving the Research Network in your PPI plans, contact researchnetwork@alzheimers.org.uk.

Research Network Involvement

A unique aspect of our funding programme is our involvement of people with lived experience of dementia. We aim to match funded studies with two volunteers who are members of the Research Network. The assigned volunteers meet funded researchers at least annually and during these meetings, there will be the opportunity to seek the views of people affected by dementia about your research and hear about their personal experiences. You can read examples of how our Research Network Volunteers help shape the research we fund here.

Additional PPI resources:

- Applicants may find consulting the NIHR Research Support Service (RSS) useful when developing their application. Contact details for your local RSS are available here.
- Applicants may find the NIHR Research Design Service patient and public involvement in Health and Social Care Research handbook useful when developing PPI plans here.

Research Internships

Funding is available within all our grants and fellowships (excluding pre-doctoral bursaries) for a research internship. This fund covers the stipend for an undergraduate, recent graduate, or someone wishing to gain research experience to conduct a 10-week research project led by the grant holder. Consumables for this project are expected to come from the consumables budget of the grant holder.

Research interns are expected to complete their 10-week project full time to gain the most from the experience and must present their findings to the Society in a report upon finishing.

Implementation of evidence

If your proposal involves the **implementation of evidence,** please consider the following:

- Work in partnership with a decision maker from the organisation where the implementation activity will be taking place and consider naming this decision maker a co-applicant on the proposal.
- Applications should consider including one team member (co-applicant or collaborator) with a strong track record in change management, measurement, and an understanding of implementation strategies.
- Underpin proposals with an implementation strategy that is grounded in theory.
- Incorporate independent rigorous evaluation of the implementation process to generate robust evidence of impact and learning.
- Depending on the nature of the intervention, project teams may need to include an organisation that can influence wider community, social or healthcare practice and opinion.
- Proposals should demonstrate sufficient evidence that the intervention is ready to be moved into the outside world, for example citing data from up-to-date systematic reviews, relevant pilot/feasibility studies or initial efficacy and/or effectiveness research.

Participant recruitment

- If an application proposes to recruit participants, details must be given on all recruitment strategies and what may happen if the project fails to recruit.
- Applications **must not** solely use Alzheimer's Society as the main avenue for recruitment to the project.
- Applicants should not approach local Alzheimer's Society staff directly about support with recruitment, instead please email: grantenquiries@alzheimers.org.uk
- Join Dementia Research is a national service connecting people with research studies in their area.
- Alzheimer's Society is a National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) non-commercial Partner. Meaning that studies funded by us may be eligible to access NIHR Clinical Research Network (CRN) support. The NIHR CRN supports researchers in planning, setting up and delivering high quality research to the agreed timelines and study recruitment target, for the benefit of the NHS and its patients in England. Contact your local CRN team as early as possible when planning your study to access their support: Study Support Service | NIHR

General finance guidelines

Alzheimer's Society does not pay institutional overheads on research grants. Costs for full proposals should be no more than 10% above those proposed at outline stage.

<u>Eligible costs:</u>

- Salary (including National Insurance and superannuation contributions) of co-applicants if they do not hold a permanent position, or for those that must be bought out of their current contracts to work on the project
- Any direct expense required to complete the project
- Animal purchase and maintenance
- Reasonable dissemination costs to academic and non-academic audiences
- Travel related to the project
- Equipment up to £20,000 per item - detailed justification is required regarding the expected use and demand of any equipment requested
- Care support costs to enable travel of staff employed on the grant

<u>Costs which should not be claimed:</u>

- Indirect costs and overheads, as specified by the research councils
- Salary of the principal investigator or other tenured co-applicants
- Publication charges, including open access fees
- Retrospective funding for work already completed
- 'Top-up' funds for current research projects
- Overspending on current grants
- Advertising/recruitment of staff
- Stationery
- Staff facilities
- Financial services (e.g. accounting, auditing)
- Routine care for patients
- Databases (unless specifically required for the research project)
- Teaching replacement costs

Requested salary costs should be based on a recognised pay model or the host institution's local salary scale, including London weighting if appropriate. Annual increments must be included, which should be based on the host institution's own salary scale. You should not include inflation on salaries. We do not have minimum FTE requirements.

The way in which Excess Treatment Costs are paid for clinical research changed in September 2021. Updated guidance can be found on the NIHR website. If your grant involves excess treatment costs you will be required to submit the Schedule of Events Cost Attribution form with your grant application to the Society. You must email this form to grantenquiries@alzheimers.org.uk with your Society grant application reference number.

Eligibility criteria and grant specific cost guidance

We only accept applications for research projects that will take place at UK-based universities, NHS sites or other recognised higher research institutions.

Project Grants

Principal investigators should have a contract of employment with the host university that exceeds the planned finish date of the research by at least 12 months.

Grant specific cost guidance

Applicants may apply for direct research costs up to £400,000 for up to three years to support their research, providing budgets for staff salary, consumables, and equipment.

Reasonable costs to allow the person(s) working on the project to attend any relevant conferences can also be included.

Alzheimer's Society do not pay the salaries of researchers with a full-time salaried contract of employment. However, you can claim for the salary of co-applicants if they do not hold a full-time salaried position or if they need to be bought out of their contracts with their respective universities to work directly on the project. The applicants must ensure that no more than 100% of FTE is claimed by any co-applicant.

Any applicant on a project grant proposal wishing to apply for their own salary must submit the application jointly with a tenured senior member (preferably the head) of the department in which they propose to work.

Salaries cannot be claimed for project management time.

Research internships can be requested within project grants.

Fellowships

Eligibility

- All fellowship applicants should be eligible to work in the UK and the host institution must be in the UK.
- The fellow's supervisory team or where relevant, academic champion, must have a previous track-record in dementia research and the application must demonstrate how this team will provide mentorship and support to the fellow during the award.
- Information on how the team will work together should be provided in the application, along with details about how the research connects with the wider dementia environment at the fellow's institute.

If you have any questions about which fellowship you should apply for, please contact the grants team.

Postdoctoral Fellowship

Postdoctoral Fellowships are for those early in their research careers. This fellowship will permit exceptional early career researchers or final year PhD students to apply for research funding, with the support of supervisors, to prepare them for academic independence. This fellowship is flexible and can cover a range of career stages.

- Applicants must be in the final year of their PhD or later and must have submitted their thesis and passed their *viva voce* examination at the commencement of the grant - no later than 12 months after the grant award.
- Applicants must not already be in open-ended, university-funded posts (e.g. university lecturer).
- It is recognised that in some non-biomedical fields of research, a PhD has not been commonly supported. In exceptional circumstances, applicants without a PhD but with an equivalent track record and duration of research and other qualifications should contact the grants team to discuss if they might be eligible to apply for the scheme.

The candidate should demonstrate:

- Ability to deliver ethically sound, high-quality research and its potential impact.
- Capability to learn new approaches, communication activities, engagement with people with dementia and supporters, and methods/techniques.
- Willingness to be an ambassador for Alzheimer's Society and for dementia research more generally.
- A clear career plan outlining their pathway to independence.

Of equal importance, applications will be assessed on the richness of the training environment and quality and relevance of the project.

Grant specific cost guidance

Funding is available for up to 4 (four) years full-time, though the duration may be extended for part-time applicants. Applicants may apply for direct research costs to cover their annual salary and consumables to support their research:

- Reasonable salary for the fellow.
- Up to £20k per annum to cover materials and consumables.
- £1000pa for career development costs including:
    - Travel for training/conferences
    - Conference registration and materials
    - Training
    - Support for a UK-based secondment
- (optional) £3000 to cover stipend for a 10-week research intern (see page 7).

- (optional) £3000 support for an overseas secondment. Secondments taken abroad must be fully justified within the application.

Supervisors must be employed at the host institution for the duration of the grant.

Dementia Research Leader Fellowship

The Dementia Research Leader Fellowship is for talented researchers who wish to build on a number of successful years of research. The aim of this scheme is to develop dementia research leaders who have the ambition and skills to produce excellent and innovative research, foster an inclusive research culture, and drive change for people affected by dementia.

Applicants will have an established track record in research as evidenced by publications, collaborations, grant funding, extracurricular activities, or leadership roles.

- It is recognised that in some non-biomedical fields of research, a PhD has not been commonly supported. In exceptional circumstances, applicants without a PhD, but with an equivalent track record and duration of research and other qualifications should contact the research office to discuss if they might be eligible to apply for the scheme.
- Applicants should not already be in open-ended, university-funded posts (e.g. university lecturer).

This fellowship supports people from diverse disciplines and career paths, including those returning from a career break or time in other roles. However, it is expected that all applicants include at least one academic Champion who is a dementia research expert.

The candidate should demonstrate:

- A track record of delivering high-quality, respected research demonstrating impact in their field.
- Ability to be an independent researcher, and able to lead and train others.
- Knowledge of research outside their immediate area of interest, as well as an aptitude for identifying and engaging in new and multi-disciplinary research and debate.
- Willingness to be an ambassador for Alzheimer's Society and for dementia research more generally.

Of importance, applications will be assessed on the richness of the training environment and quality and relevance of the project.

PhD studentships (To be included within a DRL Fellowship)

Funding is available for a four-year, full-time PhD project. The studentship can alternatively be taken part-time as fits with the fellowship length. Funding is not available for studentships that have already commenced.

- The DRL Fellow must be based at the host institution where the student will obtain their PhD. Co-supervisors may be based at different institutions.

- The host institution must be in the UK.
- Applications can be made with or without a named student. If applying with a named student, you will be required to include their CV as an attachment. Applicants should state why the named student is best placed to lead the project. If not applying with a named student, then the position must be competitively awarded through open advertisement.
- Students do not need to be from the UK, nor resident for any amount of time before the award begins. However, Alzheimer's Society will provide student fees up to the UK rate only

Where a potential student is named, the candidate should demonstrate:

- An interest in the proposed academic field (though previous full-time research experience is not necessary).
- Potential as a doctoral researcher.
- Understanding of how research can be translated into real world outcomes and benefit of people affected by dementia.
- Willingness to be an ambassador for Alzheimer's Society and for dementia research more generally.

Of equal importance, applications will be assessed on the richness of the training environment and quality and relevance of the project.

The supervisory team must have experience of supervising PhD students to completion, as well as dementia research experience. In your application you must:

- Indicate the extent of your track record to date in research supervision.
- Involve a co-supervisor within your institution (preferably same department) who would meet the definition of 'experienced' (supervised at least 2 PhD students to completion).
- Demonstrate how the co-supervisor will provide mentorship and support you as the lead supervisor as well as to the prospective student.

Supervisors must be employed at the host institution for the duration of the grant.

Grant specific cost guidance

The funding is available for five years full-time. Applicants may apply for direct research costs up to £550,000 to support their research. This can include:

- Salary for the fellow.
- £25,000 per annum for research costs.
- PhD studentship fees and stipend to support one studentship (for PhD studentship costs please see below).
- Research support staff salary.
- £3000 to cover stipend for a 10-week research intern (see page 7).
- £1,000 per annum Career development:
    - Fees, materials and travel for conference attendance

- Travel costs for lab visits
- Travel costs for UK secondments
- Training/courses

PhD studentship costs (within DRL Fellowship)

Where an application includes one PhD studentship, applicants may apply for up to **£575,000** in total. This reflects the inclusion of PhD studentship costs in addition to the Fellowship funding. Please note: if a DRL Fellowship application **does not** include a PhD studentship, the total direct research costs cannot exceed £550,000.

Costs to cover the stipend, fees, and career development of one PhD student. This can include:

- Student stipend as outlined below.

PhD Stipend guidance			
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
£22,500	£23,500	£24,500	£25,500
With London Weighting			
£24,500	£25,500	£26,500	£27,500

- University PhD fees at UK rates.
  - £1,000 per annum career development:
  - Fees, materials, and travel for conference attendance
  - Travel costs for lab visits
  - Travel costs for UK secondments
  - Training/courses

All costs must be justified.

We support researchers and their research teams to work flexibly to meet personal circumstances and are happy to discuss part-time working options. Please contact our grants team for enquiries.

Clinician and Healthcare Professionals Training Fellowship

Clinician and healthcare professionals training fellowships are for practising professionals working in dementia health and care services to undertake study towards a higher research degree (usually a PhD) and who wish to develop a dual career that combines research and practice.

- The award is open to all professions working in dementia clinical and health services.
- Applicants, including allied health professionals (AHPs), must have a clinical role and be registered to practise in the UK.
- Clinician applicants are required to have completed appropriate College Membership exams before taking up the award. If applicants have not completed membership

examinations owing to their specialty training pathway, they should explain on the application form why this is and when they plan to complete the membership.

- Allied health professionals (AHPs) and nurses should have completed their professional training and be registered with an appropriate membership body. AHPs and nurse applicants are expected to hold a master's degree or equivalent post-grad research orientated qualification or experience.
- Professions with doctoral-level training should have completed the relevant qualification. For example, clinical psychologists should have completed a DClinPsy.

The candidate should demonstrate:

- An interest in the proposed academic field (though previous full-time research experience is not necessary).
- Potential as a doctoral researcher.
- Understanding of how research can be used in practice.
- Willingness to be an ambassador for Alzheimer's Society and for dementia research more generally.

Of equal importance, applications will be assessed on the richness of the training environment and quality and relevance of the project.

The supervisory team must have experience of supervising PhD students to completion, as well as dementia research experience. Please refer to our PhD studentship guidance below for further details on the eligibility of the supervisory team.

Grant specific cost guidance

Applicants may apply for direct research costs to cover their annual salary and consumables to support their research. This can include:

- Salary for the fellow and University PhD fees at UK rates.
- Up to £25k per annum (maximum of £75k per fellowship) to cover:
  - Materials and consumables
  - Part-time technician/ administrative support
  - Visits to collaborators
- £1,000per annum career development:
  - Fees, materials, and travel for conference attendance
  - Travel costs for lab visits
  - Travel costs for UK secondments
  - Training/courses

The award is available for three years full-time. The fellowship can alternatively be taken part-time up to four years duration.

Career Development Grant

Alzheimer's Society Career Development Grants provide a year of salary and research funding for promising dementia researchers from both clinical and non-clinical backgrounds who require dedicated time to develop their own research idea.

Funding is available for one year. The grant can alternatively be completed part-time for up to 18 months.

- The host institution must be in the UK.
- Applicants must be early career researchers not already in open-ended, university-funded biomedical, care or clinical research posts
- Applicants must be in the final year of their PhD or later and must have submitted their thesis and passed their viva voce examination at the commencement of the grant - no later than 12 months after the grant award.
- It is recognised that in some non-biomedical fields of research, a PhD has not been commonly supported. In exceptional circumstances, applicants without a PhD but with an equivalent track record, duration of research and other qualifications should contact the grants team to discuss their eligibility.
- We expect the ECR to be the lead applicant on this grant with a supervisor within the same institution as the co-applicant.

The candidate should demonstrate:

- A clear, attainable career plan and demonstrate how this grant will enable them to pursue a career in dementia research.
- How their project contributes to the dementia field within these themes as alignment to our strategy is incorporated into our scoring system at review

For supervisors:

- Supervisors must apply as a co-applicant and must hold an independent research position within the host institution for the duration of the grant. Other co-supervisors may be based at different institutions.
- Supervisors must provide the facilities and support the ECR requires to develop their independent research vision.
- Supervisors and host institutions should support the applicant with their plan for their next career stage and anticipate that the ECR will be a future Fellowship applicant.

Grant specific cost guidance

Applicants may apply for direct research costs to cover their annual salary and consumables to support their research. This can include:

- £73,000 to cover salary and research costs.
- Optional £3,000 for a 10-week research intern.
- Optional £3,000 to assist with travel, healthcare, relocation, or other costs associated with an overseas secondment.
- £1,000 per annum towards career development including:
  - Fees, materials, and travel for conference attendance
  - Travel costs for lab visits
  - Travel costs for UK secondments
  - Training/courses

All costs must be justified.

Post-CCT Career Development Grant

Alzheimer's Society Career Development Grants provide a year of salary and research funding for promising dementia researchers who require dedicated time to develop their own research idea.

Funding is available for up to 18 months part time.

- The host institution must be in the UK.
- Applicants must be early career researchers not already be in open-ended, university-funded posts and have received their certificate of completion of training (CCT) in their medical specialism.
- Applicants must have been awarded their PhD or have equivalent experience at time of application.
- It is recognised that in some non-biomedical fields of research, a PhD has not been commonly supported. In exceptional circumstances, applicants without a PhD but with an equivalent track record, duration of research and other qualifications should contact the grants team to discuss their eligibility.
- We expect the ECR to be the lead applicant on this grant with a supervisor within the same institution as the co-applicant.

For supervisors:

- Supervisors must apply as a co-applicant and must hold an independent research position within the host institution for the duration of the grant. Other co-supervisors may be based at different institutions.
- Supervisors must provide the facilities and support the ECR requires to develop their independent research vision.
- Supervisors and host institutions should support the applicant with their plan for their next career stage and anticipate that the ECR will be a future Fellowship applicant.

Grant specific cost guidance

Applicants may apply for direct research costs to cover their annual salary and consumables to support their research. This can include:

- Reasonable salary for the applicant.
- £18,000 research costs.
- £1,000per annum towards career development including:
    - Fees, materials and travel for conference attendance
    - Travel costs for lab visits
    - Travel costs for UK secondments
    - Travel, healthcare and relocation cost support for overseas secondments (if applicable)
    - Training/courses

All costs must be justified.

Contents of Application Form

	Outline Proposal
Proposal summary	This section includes: • Scientific abstract (250 words) • Lay abstract (250 words) • Total Research Cost • Funding stream • Project duration (months) • Confirm submission elsewhere/ previous application with AS
Lead applicant/Lead supervisor details	This section must be completed in as much detail as possible: • Personal information • Previous posts held • Education & training • Research Grants (if applicable) • Up to 10 most relevant publications (if applicable)
Co-applicant/Co-supervisor details	Please add details of the co-applicants to this proposal with the same information as the lead application. A co-applicant is considered to be an individual who will have intellectual input into, and part ownership of, the research if the application is successful. They are expected to be actively involved in the project. If a DRL fellowship application includes funding for a student, the second and/or third supervisor/s must be included as co-applicants and their role as student supervisor stated. Co-applicants are required to login to update their own CV.
Collaborators	Please add details of any collaborators to the project. A collaborator is considered to be any individual named in the body of the application but will not be involved in the day-to-day execution of the project. A letter of support or email correspondence should be attached from any collaborator indicating their support for the project.
Proposal outline	This section must be a maximum of three (3) pages (excluding references). Pages one and two should provide a summary of the proposed project, including relevant background information, aims of the project, how the project contributes to our understanding of dementia and how the project benefits people affected by dementia. Page three must only contain a breakdown of costs associated with the proposed project, using the costings table provided.
Lay outline	You are required to include a one-page lay summary for our Research Network, outlining the project's aims and relevant background information in language accessible to non-researchers. Please include a glossary if needed. Where a glossary is included, the lay outline may be up to two (2) pages in total.
Research Career & Development	Only for fellowship and career development applicants. This section is intended for applicants to outline their research career to date and articulate how this fellowship or career development grant will support their development.

Authorised signatory	<u>Your authorised signatory must sign off your application before the submission deadline for your application to be officially submitted.</u> Ensure an appropriate member of your institutions finance department is ready to authorise your application at the submission stage. This section should include their name and contact details.
Referees	Please provide the name and contact details of researchers in the same field who could potentially review your application. These referees must not be from your institution, and you must not have a working relationship with them. In certain circumstances it may be appropriate to notify the Society of any researchers that you wish to be excluded from reviewing your application, for example competitors. The Society will try to accommodate these requests where possible.
Attachments	Attachments can include: ▪ Gantt chart/project plan ▪ Animal licenses ▪ Letters of endorsements/support from institution and collaborators ▪ PhD student CV (where relevant for DRL fellowship applications) All attachments must be converted to pdf when uploaded. Attachments that are over five pages in length may be removed by the Society to ensure the application forms are manageable for reviewers.

Full Proposal	
Proposal summary	This section includes: ▪ Scientific abstract (250 words) ▪ Lay abstract (250 words) ▪ Total Research Cost ▪ Funding stream ▪ Project duration (months) ▪ Confirm submission elsewhere/ previous application with AS
Lead applicant/Lead supervisor details	This section must be completed in as much detail as possible: ▪ Personal information ▪ Previous posts held ▪ Education & training ▪ Research Grants (if applicable) ▪ Up to 10 most relevant publications (if applicable)
Co-applicant/Co-supervisor details	Please add details of the co-applicants to this proposal with the same information as the lead application. A co-applicant is considered to be an individual who will have intellectual input into, and part ownership of, the research if the application is successful. They are expected to be actively involved in the project. If a DRL fellowship application includes funding for a student, the second and/or third supervisor/s must be included as co-applicants and their role as student supervisor stated.

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	Co-applicants are required to login to update their own CV.
Collaborators	Please add details of any collaborators to the project. A collaborator is considered to be any individual named in the body of the application but will not be involved in the day-to-day execution of the project. A letter of support or email correspondence should be attached from any collaborator indicating their support for the project.
Finance	Please see the finance guidelines for allowed costs. In this section provide a detailed costing and justified budget in as much detail as possible. Outline any additional sources of funding or any grants in a similar area.
Impact of COVID-19 Statement	500 words to ensure applicants have an opportunity to inform reviewers and Panel members of the impact of COVID-19 to their: Research, Publications, Funding, Research time, institutional support, and any other impacts. Applicants are asked not to: 1. name any third-party individuals; 2. identify the relationship with any third parties; 3. otherwise include anything which might identify the third party. We encourage Applicants to use phrases such as 'a close relative had COVID19 and required significant support in order to recover' or 'I had to carry out caring responsibilities in addition to my research and admin workload, which had an impact on the amount of time I could dedicate to my research'.
Career Development Plan	If applicable, 500 words outlining the career goals of the applicant for ECR targeted grants and how the grant will contribute to achievement of those goals. Applicants must also outline how their supervisory team and host institution will support them in achieving their career plan.
Host institution letter of support	Host institutions of Dementia Research Leader Fellows must provide a letter of support alongside the career development plan outlining their commitment to the career support and progression of the applicant.
Case for support	You will be required to attach a six (6) page (excluding references) scientific case for support. Please see the 'case for support' section for more details.
Lay case for support	You will be required to attach a five (5) page lay case for support to be reviewed by Alzheimer's Society Research Network volunteers. Please see the 'lay case for support' section for more details.
Ethics and R&D approvals	If relevant, please include information on human participants in your study including all ethics and NHS R&D approvals you have/will need to obtain. Also include information on the use of animals under the Animals Act 1986.
Equality, diversity, and inclusion	Addressing health inequalities across the entire dementia journey, from bench to bedside, is of strategic importance to Alzheimer's Society. Applicants are asked to outline the steps taken by their team to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are taken into account within the research project. (E.g., consideration of health inequalities, large-scale population cohort studies and clinical trials with diverse populations)

	Sex and gender considerations are not required in this section, as these will be specifically addressed in the next question.

Sex and gender considerations	Accounting for sex and gender dimensions is essential to ensuring that dementia research is rigorous, reproducible, and beneficial to all. Alzheimer's Society is committed to adopting the MESSAGE policy framework as a funder, promoting its integration into research practices. We aim to ensure that researchers incorporate these considerations into their studies and that our expert reviewers apply this framework when evaluating applications. We expect applicants to consider and include the following aspects in their proposals:
	
	1. Sex and/or gender characteristics:
	   • Identify which sex and/or gender characteristic(s) will be addressed and justify their inclusion in your study.
	   • Specify how research participants or subjects will be recruited to reflect these characteristics.
	2. Participant distribution:
	   • Describe the target sex and/or gender distribution of participants or subjects and explain why this distribution is appropriate for answering your research question.
	3. Recruitment and retention strategies:
	   • For clinical and population health research involving primary data collection, outline how you will recruit and retain participants to achieve the desired distribution.
	   • For secondary data analysis, describe the sex and/or gender distribution in the original dataset.
	4. Analysis and reporting:
	   • Provide an analysis plan that includes any sex- and/or gender-disaggregated analysis. If not planning to conduct such analysis, provide a strong, evidence-based justification.
	   • Commit to reporting the sex and/or gender distribution and disaggregated findings in all published outputs.
	
	In cases where these aspects are not addressed, applications must provide an evidence-based justification. For more detailed guidance, refer to Section 3 of the MESSAGE policy framework.

Data and power calculations	If applicable, applicants must provide details of the data sets that will be used in the proposed research. This includes whether the data is publicly available, requires access approval, or is generated as part of the study. Please describe the size and characteristics of the data set(s), including key variables relevant to your research question.

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	You must also include power calculations or justification of sample size to demonstrate the feasibility and statistical robustness of your proposed analyses. Where power calculations are not possible, a clear rationale should be provided.

Scientific case for support

The case for support will be peer reviewed and considered by our Grant Advisory Boards. This section is limited to **six** (6) pages (excluding references) and should not use a font smaller than Arial 11pt with a minimum 2cm margin. We recommend you titling this attachment 'Case for support: project title' and include page numbers on your document.

You must attach a one-page GANTT chart/project plan to your application. All other figures should be included within the six-page limit and **cannot** be attached separately.

At the end of your case for support, please provide references in full (including title, all authors, journal, year, volume, and page numbers). This does not count towards your six pages.

Advice from our Grant Advisory Board

- **Be realistic about outcomes:** Avoid over-emphasising the likely impact of your research. Statements such as *"This work will lead to a treatment for Alzheimer's disease"* may be interpreted literally by reviewers, including lay members of the panel. Instead, clearly articulate how your research will contribute to the wider understanding of dementia and its potential future implications, without overpromising.
- **Use clear and consistent language:** Be clear and consistent when referring to people involved in your research. For example, use *"patients"* only when referring to individuals receiving care (i.e. those with a dementia diagnosis) and *"participants"* when referring to individuals actively taking part in your research. Inconsistent use of terms can cause confusion and affect how your proposal is interpreted by both scientific and lay reviewers.

Biomedical-based research suggested case for support headings:

Aims of the project and significance of the research
- Outline the hypothesis to be tested.
- Describe how the proposed research question fit into the broader picture of human dementia.

Work which has led up to the project
- Place this proposal in the context of relevant work in the field.
- Include any preliminary or feasibility data.

Experimental design and methods to be used
- Include any power calculations and statistical methods.
- Model systems and cellular pathways should be put in the context of the contribution they are likely to make to dementia in humans.
- Add recruitment strategies and inclusion criteria for studies.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Outline what proportion of people with dementia and which groups may be impacted by the research proposed.
- Describe any steps taken to increase the diversity of study populations and broaden relevance of findings (including gender-based issues in preclinical research).
- Justify any exclusion criteria.

Patient and public involvement
- Outline your plans for public and patient/user and carer involvement, including Research Network volunteers.
- Describe how you will engage with the necessary stakeholders throughout the project.

How will the results from this research be used?
- If the project is successful, what do you foresee as the next steps for this work?
- Outline your dissemination and engagement plans.

For Fellowship applications: Training and educational environment
- Describe the skills needed to deliver the proposal.
- Outline the support and supervisory arrangements to support the fellow.
- Outline the training package provided to support the fellow.

DRL Fellowship applications including funding for a PhD student must provide a detailed project outline for the student within their case for support. Include details requested of the PhD Studentships in your application. Postdoctoral fellows must provide a short example project for the intern if funding is requested to support one.

Clinical and care-based research case for support headings:

Aims of the project and significance of the research
- Describe the end goal of your research.
- Outline the problem your work is addressing, how we know it is a problem and what change do you want to see through your research.
- Be specific about the population your work is relevant to and how this research will meet their needs.

Work that has led up to the project
- Place this proposal in the context of relevant work in the field, including other known research grants.
- Include/refer to any preliminary or feasibility data.
- If implementation, outline the rationale for the intervention being implemented, including evidence about its effectiveness and how it is expected to achieve its effects for the benefit of people affected by dementia.

Research design and methods to be used
- Describe the underlying theories or frameworks that underpin the proposal.
- Include any power calculations and statistical methods where appropriate. Otherwise, describe data analysis approaches to be used.
- Methodological considerations to increase the implementation, adoption or usability of the results of the research.
- Recruitment strategies.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Outline what group or groups will be included in and impacted by your study.
- Details of any steps taken to reduce inequalities in the participation of research

- Justify any exclusion criteria.

Involvement of people affected by dementia and other stakeholders.
- Describe how people affected by dementia and other relevant stakeholders were involved in the development of the proposal.
- Outline your plans for public and patient/user and carer involvement at different stages of the proposal.
- Describe plans for engaging any other non-academic stakeholders in the development and delivery of your research. This should include the audiences who your research is relevant to, for example, health and social care professionals, care providers, commissioners, policy makers or industry partners.

Pathways to impact
- Outline your plans to disseminate findings to relevant stakeholders and how this will fit into the pathways to impact.
- If the project is successful describe how findings will it be taken up/adopted in policy and/or practice. Explain how this has been considered in your approach to this project.
- If implementation, outline how you will ensure the sustainability of the intervention beyond the life of this grant.

Project team
- Outline who will be involved in designing, delivering, and supporting the research.
- Describe the roles of the individuals involved in the research.
- Clearly indicate the supervisory team for any students employed on a DRL fellowship application

For Fellowship applications: Training and educational environment
- Describe the skills needed to deliver the proposal.
- Outline the support and supervisory arrangements to support the fellow.
- Outline the training package provided to support the fellow.

Lay case for support

The lay case for support will be reviewed by Alzheimer's Society Research Network volunteers. It is the **only** part of the application that they will see therefore it is important that it is not only comprehensible to such readers but also comprehensive. The lay case for support should be clearly written in language that people without a scientific background can understand.

- **The lay case for support should be a maximum of five (5) pages and should use the headings below. Do not use print smaller than Arial 12 pt.** This section does not require referencing.
- Please name this attachment 'Lay case for support: [project title]'.
- Hear from our volunteers about how to write a lay case for support.
- Presentation, spelling, and grammar are important. You may wish to use pictures and diagrams if this improves comprehension and readability, but these must be included within the page limit.
- Use plain, non-technical language and avoid using unexplained abbreviations or acronyms. We recommend including a glossary for unavoidable scientific terminology.

Advice from our Grant Advisory Board

- **Be realistic about outcomes:** Avoid over-emphasising the likely impact of your research, as outlined above. This is particularly relevant for our lay reviewers.
- **Lay proposal development:** The involvement team organises lay proposal development for applicants who wish to receive feedback on their draft lay proposal ahead of the submission deadline. Please do reach out to researchnetwork@alzheimers.org.uk if you want to hear more details about this.

Mandatory headings for lay case for support (with suggested content):

Glossary
- The general consensus among Research Network Volunteers is that it would be useful to see a glossary included in all proposals that use technical and scientific terms as well as acronyms.
- If your proposal includes unavoidable scientific terminology, please include a glossary to ensure clarity for all readers.

Introduction of the research area and your project
- What is already known about the problem that the project will address.
- What you hope to find out.
- How the results of your study could benefit the lives of people affected by dementia today or in the future – be as specific as possible.
- How your project complements national/international research in the area.
- Explain why the Society should invest in this project and how it offers value for money.
- Describe any involvement of people affected by dementia in the preparation of your proposal.

Methods and techniques
- Describe the methods and techniques used in the proposal.
- Outline any advice given from any specialists about the proposal, e.g., statisticians.

- If you are including people as participants in your project, describe and justify the number of people you plan to recruit and how you aim to do this.

Dissemination and implementation
- Dissemination plans for the outcomes of your project – be as specific as possible.
- How your findings could be put into practice or developed after completion of the project.
- Outline any plans to involve the three Research Network volunteers (monitors) who will be assigned to support the project.

For Fellowship applications: Training and educational environment
- Outline the training that the fellow/student will undertake and support that will be available during the project.

Conclusion summary
- **The lay case for support can contain an overwhelming amount of information for lay reviewers. We highly recommend that you summarise the key points and main takeaways of the research project and what it aims to accomplish.**

Alzheimer's Society Research Network Volunteers are happy to comment on lay proposals prior to submission through the lay summary development scheme. If you would like a member of the network to comment on your application, please contact researchnetwork@alzheimers.org.uk

Lay review questions:

Below are the questions provided to lay reviewers to guide their evaluation of each application. This section has been included in the guidance for this year to help applicants understand the specific aspects lay reviewers will assess. By outlining these areas in the lay proposal, applicants can ensure their submission is clear, comprehensive, and aligned with the review criteria.

- Thinking about the lay summary. How easy did you find it to understand? Was there anything you didn't understand?
- What are your thoughts and comments about the researchers' plan to involve people affected by dementia within this project? Is there anything else the researcher should consider? (For example, do you feel they have sufficient plans to involve a diverse group of people? Is it clear how people will be involved?)
- Using your own experience of dementia; what are your thoughts about the potential impact this research could have on people affected by dementia?
- What are your thoughts and comments on the plans for the research to be implemented and results disseminated? (For example, are the plans realistic? Will the results reach a wide audience including the general public?)
- Do you have any other comments about this research proposal? (optional)

Pre-submission checklist

To help make sure you've completed the steps needed to submit your application please go through the list of questions below:

- Is your host institution a University, Hospital or Research Institution based in the UK?

- Is your CV up-to-date and fully complete?

- Have your co-applicants confirmed their participation and approved the application?

- Have they fully completed their CVs?

- Are your costs eligible and appropriately justified?

- Are your cases for support within the page limits?

- Does your lay summary use the appropriate language and writing style for a lay audience? Have you used the recommended headings?

- Are your attachments suitable and in the correct file format?

- Have you included a realistic project start date? (at least 2 months after the award date in March)

- Is your authorised signatory at your host institution ready to sign off your proposal to complete submission?

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