

ALZHEIMER FORSCHUNG INITIATIVE e.V.

2017 GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Statement of Purpose

The Alzheimer Forschung Initiative e.V. (AFI) awards grants for basic, translational and clinical research into the underlying mechanisms of, and possible therapeutic treatments for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. The main criterion for the evaluation of the application is whether the proposed research is likely to improve our understanding of the pathophysiology and underlying mechanisms causing Alzheimer's disease and/or is likely to effectively promote therapeutic strategies.

It is understood that more senior Alzheimer's disease investigators will have other funding in related areas of research, but the application to AFI should not be used to simply subsidize these other efforts or to compensate for grant cutbacks. **Therefore, the applicant is advised to focus on a specific project that can be addressed in terms of a clear and well-defined hypothesis and specific aims, and completed within a reasonable time. Please keep this in mind when preparing the research/work plan section of the application.**

Terms and Restrictions

AFI grants are awarded to universities, medical centers, and independent non-profit research institutions. Standard and Pilot Awards are not made to individuals but to the group to whom the Principal Investigator (P.I.) is affiliated with.

Funds awarded are to be used solely for research. AFI does not fund institutional overhead, large capital equipment, construction of buildings or VAT. AFI will not fund the salary of the Principle Investigator of a Standard Award except under extraordinary circumstances. If salary for the P.I. is requested, it must be clearly and thoroughly justified. However, for Pilot Awards, junior Investigators may request up to € 20,000 per year in a contribution to their salary.

AFI will work with a first round of brief Letters of Intent (LoI) that will be subject to peer review. The best applications will then be invited to submit a full application a few months later.

Applications will be accepted for amounts up to a maximum of **€ 100,000** for 2 years (divided over a maximum of € 50.000 per year) for a **Standard Award**. Financial support up to a maximum of **€ 40,000** can be applied for a **Pilot Award** (with a maximum of € 20.000 per year). AFI also grants **Cross-border Awards** for collaborative projects between 2 countries: Germany-France or Germany-the Netherlands. **Standard** applications will be accepted for amounts up to a maximum of **€ 100,000** for 2 years & **Pilot** applications up to a maximum of **€ 40,000** for 2 years (amounts divided between both countries).

Applicants for **Standard Awards**, should fulfil the following criteria:

1) In order to be eligible for an AFI Standard Award, the Principal Investigator (P.I.) must be working at a German University or research institution and hold the academic rank of research associate with

PhD or MD assistant professor (or equivalent) or higher. Investigators of the same laboratory can apply for a grant provided that there is no scientific or financial overlap between the proposed research projects. A P.I. can be part of another application as consultant/advisor only (involved in 5 % max). The PI should not include in his project a European SAB member as collaborator of the study. For ethical reasons a SAB member should be requested as consultant only (time spent <5%).

2) The scientific research plan should be hypothesis driven, coherent and focused. The work plan should be efficiently planned and it should be illustrated in a convincing manner that the proposed research can be completed within the time available.

Applicants for Pilot Awards, should fulfil the following criteria:

In order to be eligible for grant funding from the AFI Pilot Award, the Principal Investigator (P.I.) must be working at a German University or research institution and the P.I. is generally expected to be of post-doctoral level (up to a maximum of six years after obtaining their PhD or MD) or the PI will obtain his PhD before October 31st. The 6 years period is counted from PhD date to the date of the beginning of funding.

Leaves: For maternity, the effective elapsed time since the award of the PhD will be reduced by 1 year for each child before or after the PhD award. For paternity, the effective elapsed time since the award of the PhD will be reduced by the amount of paternity leave actually taken for each child born before or after the PhD award.

Pilot Awards are designed to support the academic career of the P.I. Investigators of the same laboratory can apply for a grant provided that there is no scientific or financial overlap between the proposed research projects. A P.I. can be part of another application as consultant/advisor only (involved in 5% max). The PI should not include in his project a European SAB member as collaborator of the study. For ethical reasons a SAB member should be requested as consultant only (time spent <5%).

Applicants for Cross-border Awards, should fulfil the following criteria:

The application involves a real collaboration between German and French or Dutch group that focuses on Alzheimer research. The scientific research plan should be hypothesis driven, coherent and focused. The work plan should be efficiently planned and it should be illustrated in a convincing manner that the proposed research can be completed within the time available. Also the respective contributions from each country should be highlighted and it should be made clear what the added value of the collaboration is and why this collaboration is likely to facilitate the research questions involved. Potential articles should be published together with both groups. Applications must be sent to AFI (if the P.I. works in Germany) or to the French/Dutch partner organizations LECMA/ Alzheimer Nederland (if the P.I. works in France/The Netherlands). If the P.I. submits a cross-border project to one organization, the co-P.I. does not need to submit anything to the other organization. Each organization funds in its own country.

Review of Applications

Awards are granted on the basis of scientific merit of the applicants' research proposal, and its relevance to improving our understanding of Alzheimer's disease. AFI uses a two-tier review process. In the first tier, a brief Letter of Intent (LoI) is written. The LoI will be selected based on feasibility of the research plan, the applicant's past performance and relevance of the topic for Alzheimer's disease. Upon selection, applicants are invited to submit a full proposal that will be peer reviewed by members of the European Scientific Advisory Board (AFI, Alzheimer Nederland, LECMA-

Vaincre Alzheimer) as well as by external experts. In October the applications and evaluations will be discussed and ranked in a joint meeting of the European Scientific Advisory Board.

Provisional timetable of Call for Proposals 2017:

Open call for proposals	January 2 nd , 2017
Submission deadline for Letters of Intent	March 6, 2017
Preselection of Letters of Intent	Mid of May, 2017
Deadline for Full Applications	End of June, 2017
Full applications review	July-September 2017
Selection of Full Applications	October 2017
Final decision	October 31 st , 2017
Grant provision	November 1 st , 2017

The Board of Directors makes decisions on funding in the end of October and grants are intended to start in the beginning of November. To ensure that AFI is funding meritorious research proposals that have a high potential for success, the Board of Directors bases its funding decisions on the results of a formal, rigorous peer-review process, taking program goals and the availability of funds into consideration.

Within the constraints of the peer review system, AFI will seek to maintain a good balance of funding between:

- a. experienced, established investigators and young, promising investigators
- b. applications from scientists never before funded by AFI and applications from scientists seeking to renew funding from AFI
- c. topics or areas of study within the field of Alzheimer's disease research, so that AFI is not funding an unusually high proportion of grants in any one particular area

According to these criteria, the SAB and BOD will select only grants that have received a sufficient, pre-set high rank which guarantees the quality of the research. Applications that receive a low quality score, i.e. ranking below "good" (numerical score 2,5-3), get a low priority and will not be funded.

Applicants normally will be notified in writing of the Board of Director's decision concerning their application the week following **October 31st**. AFI staff is not authorized to provide information on priority scores, ranking, or likelihood of funding of applications prior to written notification of applicants. Please do not telephone AFI, or SAB members, to request such information.

Please note that applicants and grantees (after the end of their grant) could be committed to review future AFI, Alzheimer Nederland or LECMA-Vaincre Alzheimer applications.

Shifting dates of the grant

The Principal Investigator, after notification he will receive the grant, should inform AFI about:

- A possible delayed start of the project (6 months maximum)
- A request of cost-neutral prolongation (6 months maximum)

New grant application & Competitive Renewals

AFI will not limit the total number of years of funding that an individual researcher may receive. Although each project may be funded at any one time for a maximum of two years, a researcher may submit an application for competitive renewal. However, for Pilot Awards, projects may only be competitively renewed once. Competitive renewal applications will undergo peer review in the same manner as new applications. Progress made during the previous funding period will be considered during review of the competitive renewal application.

A new grant cannot overlap in funding or in topic with that of an active grant, or with a grant that has been extended. This implies that current grantees can submit a new grant application only in the last budget year of their active grant.

No P.I. may receive more than one AFI grant. No P.I. may submit more than one grant application in the same grant cycle.

Overlapping Grant Awards

AFI awards funds with the express understanding that AFI is the main financial supporter of the research project for which grant monies were requested. Although combinations of complementary, non-overlapping approaches are possible, AFI does not allow AFI grant funds to be used for identical and/or overlapping research projects that are already funded by another source without written AFI permission and full knowledge. Failure to report the receipt of overlapping grant funds may require, as determined at the sole discretion of AFI, the return of all, or part of, the monies awarded by AFI to the grantee. Furthermore, the grantee is responsible for all costs expended by AFI in obtaining the return of the grant award funds including but not limited to reasonable attorney's fees incurred.

Human/Animal Research Subjects

AFI requires that research supported by AFI meets or exceeds national regulations regarding the use of human subjects or animals in research. Applicants must provide written certification of approval by the appropriate Ethic Commission before funding begins.

Public Education

AFI is a publicly supported charitable organization funded by donor contributions, and has an active public education program that informs donors and other interested individuals about the research we sponsor. Information provided to the public by AFI may include the title of the project, the name and institutional affiliation of the Principal Investigator, the amount of the award, and the non-technical project description provided by the applicant. Therefore, the non-technical description should not contain confidential information. The submission of this application shall be deemed consent of the applicant to the publication of this information should a grant be awarded. Awardees may be asked by AFI to assist AFI in other ways to inform the general audience, e.g. by providing

information on new developments in their research field or give a presentation, lecture at meetings, lab tours or workshops supported by AFI. Several different photos of the Principal Investigator and his/her team must be made available without restrictions.

Publication Acknowledgement

All publications, papers, book chapters or presentations, resulting from research sponsored by AFI must be acknowledged as follows: "Funding was provided by Alzheimer Forschung Initiative e.V. (AFI)", followed by the number of grant application.

Sharing of Reagents

AFI believes that biological reagents (e.g. recombinant DNA clones, cultured cell lines, hybridoma cell lines, mutant or unique organisms etc.) developed during the course of AFI-sponsored research must be made available to qualified investigators after the publication of reports using or describing the reagents. These materials represent a valuable resource for the scientific community at large, paid for by the generous contributions of AFI's donors. The availability of these reagents directly affects the ability of the members of the scientific community to replicate the experiments of others and the pace and cost of future research. Therefore, AFI requires that the Principal Investigator and the grantee institution accept the responsibility of providing biological reagents developed during the course of AFI-sponsored research to investigators who request them.

Discontinuation of Grant Funding

Although AFI has committed grant funding for the stated term of the grant, it reserves the right to discontinue the grant at any time in the event the work performed is in breach of the terms and obligations stated herein. AFI reserves the right to discontinue or reclaim the grant in case of incomplete reports and/or reports being received by AFI later than the deadline.