ALZHEIMER FORSCHUNG INITIATIVE e.V. (AFI)

2027 CARE RESEARCH GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Statement of Purpose:

The Alzheimer Forschung Initiative e.V. (AFI) awards with its **Care Research Grant** research on the direct support of people with Alzheimer's disease or another type of dementia living **at home** and their caring relatives. The projects are mainly evaluated on whether the proposed research is likely to **directly improve the quality of life of the people with dementia and their caring relatives** by supporting psychologically, sociologically, by introducing technical devices, or other. Interdisciplinary collaboration is highly appreciated, but a **care researcher** must be part of the research team. The hypothesized project results should serve as **direct guidance for recommended action irrespective of political decisions**. In the study, the people with dementia must be in the centre of focus (**involvement**). Collaboration between researchers and the people with dementia or caregivers and participation of these is mandatory. The funding needs to be used for research to improve performance and outcomes.

To emphasize the importance of participation and involvement, a meeting between the researchers and the stakeholders must take place and the outcome has to be presented in the application.

Letters of intent/ support/ confirmation by stakeholders are welcome.

The applicant is advised to focus on a project with a clear, well-defined hypothesis and specific aims. Moreover, the project should be completed within a period of three years. Please keep this in mind when preparing the research/work plan section of the application.

Terms and Restrictions for AFI grant applications:

AFI grants are awarded to:

- The research group to which the Principal Investigator (PI) is affiliated (not to individuals)

The PI has to be employed at a:

- Public state Universities
- State Medical Centres
- Non-profit research institutions

There is only one PI in one project.

Funding can be used for salary of personnel, compensation of expenses of people with dementia, laboratory supply, contractual services, travel costs and other to successfully conduct the project.

AFI funding cannot be used for:

- Salary of the PI
- Salary or financial reimbursement of international collaborators
- Institutional overhead
- Large capital equipment
- Construction of buildings
- Tax-free scholarships
- "Vollkostenrechnung"

Grant Overview: See table 1.

Table 1: Care Research Grant Specifications

	Research Grant
Project duration	3 years
Maximum budget	€200,000
Budget distribution	Be aware of AFI's quarterly payments. Budget from one year can be carried over to another.
Funding specifications	Funding goes to the group/institute to which the PI is affiliated. Funding cannot be requested for the salary of the PI**.**
Eligibility criteria PI	- Works at a German public state University, a state medical centre or a non-profit research institution - Academic rank: PhD or MD, assistant professor (or equivalent) or higher

Grant Cycle Procedure:

Funding decisions are based on the results of a formal, rigorous peer-review process, taking program goals and the availability of funds into consideration. The importance of participation of people with dementia will be ranked by 20% in the evaluation process to highlight the importance.

AFI uses a one-tier peer-reviewed process in which applicants are asked to submit a full proposal. The proposals are reviewed and selected based on feasibility of the research plan, and the applicant's past performance, as assessed by members of AFI's Care Research SAB and external reviewer(s) between March and May 2027. The awardee will be informed in June 2027.

There are no limitations to the number of Care Research Grants applicants can apply for or receive throughout their career. However, applicants can apply for **1 AFI grant only** during the same grant cycle

(including the basic research call). Furthermore, a PI cannot be included in the personnel section of another application submitted in the same cycle to AFI (including the basic research call). They can be a consultant (time spent <5%) in other projects, which should be mentioned in the embedding section of the application.

The PI should not include an AFI Care Research Grant Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) member as collaborator of the study in the personnel section of their application or as a potential external reviewer. For ethical reasons a SAB member can be a consultant only (time spent <5%), which should be mentioned in the embedding section of the application. The SAB member will be excluded from the review of the project.

Investigators from the same department can apply if there is no scientific overlap.

The application template can be found at www.alzheimer-forschung.de/careresearchgrant
The filled application form is sent to AFI's Director of Scientific Affairs Dr. Anne Pfitzer-Bilsing via email: a.pfitzer-bilsing@alzheimer-forschung.de.

The application must be in English.

Please see Table 2 below for more details on the Grant Cycle timelines for 2027.

Table 2: Timetable Care Research Grant Cycle 2027

Call for applications	01 February 2027
Deadline full proposals	08 March 2027, 1 pm
Confirmation by AFI full proposal has been received and is eligible	12 March 2027
Final decision is communicated to the applicants	June 2027
Earliest start of the research project	July 2027
Award ceremony	Early Summer 2028

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 contact AFI or SAB members to request such information.

Your application will be always handled in a confidential way.



Additional information and rules after funding approval:

Shifting Dates of the Grant

After the approval of the grant, the grantee should inform AFI immediately if the project is delayed. In this case, the grantee can request a project start-shift (max. 6 months). The project cannot start earlier than July 2027.

Budget

The project will receive funds only when operational.
Grant payments are made on a quarterly basis.
If budget revisions are necessary, requests must be made in writing to AFI with clear justification in written form on the official paper of the institution:

- A request of cost-neutral prolongation for max. 12 months
- Transfer of more than € 2.000 from one budget category to another

Please let AFI know if there will be maternity/paternity leaves.

Reports

The awardee is obliged to hand in one financial report and one progress report per year after AFI has sent an invitation. The project will also be described shortly as a lay version. The progress reports will not be used to decide on whether to further fund the grant, but to communicate with the donors. Additionally to the progress report, a yearly mandatory online meeting with the Director of Scientific Affairs at AFI is to be joined.

Human Research Subjects

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

Public Education and Acknowledgement

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 it sponsors. Information provided to the public by AFI may include the title of the project, the name and institutional affiliation of the Principal Investigator, the total budget of the award, and the non-technical project description provided by the applicant. Therefore, the non-technical description (lay version) 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. Non-confidential information is also shared on social media after approval by the awardee.

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 giving a presentation, lecture at meetings, lab/department tours or workshops supported by AFI. Photos of the PI and his/her team must be made available without restrictions.

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 the grant application.

Open Access Publication

AFI supports open access publications: https://www.alzheimer-forschung.de/forschung/forschungsfoerderung/publication-grants/

We strongly encourage researchers to publish in open access journals or to publish in a repository that is freely accessible.

Press Releases

If press releases on research results sponsored by AFI are planned, the scientists must contact AFI before. In the press releases AFI should be mentioned as a sponsor with the name Alzheimer Forschung Initiative e.V.

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. The applicant is therefore asked to report if they have submitted the same project to another funding organization.

Failure to report the submission or 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.

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.