**Arizona Alzheimer's Consortium and Its Pending Alzheimer's Disease Research Center (ADRC):**

**<u>Request for Developmental and Pilot Project Grant Proposals</u>**

**Important Dates**

Optional Pre-proposal Submission Deadline: **Feb 15, 2021**
Full Application Submission Deadline: **Mar 15, 2021**
Intended Grant Start Date: **July 1, 2021**

**Background**

Since 1998, the **Arizona Alzheimer's Consortium** has received funding from the state of Arizona and its participating organizations, brought together researchers from different disciplines and organizations to advance the study of AD, AD-related dementias (ADRD), and normal brain aging, supported numerous collaborative research projects, sought to make a profound difference in the "detection and prevention of AD" and become the nation's leading example of statewide collaboration in AD research.

Since 2001, the Consortium's has received continuous competitive grant support from the National Institute on Aging (NIA) for its **Arizona AD Research Center (ADRC, formerly known as the Arizona AD Core Center).** The ADRC continues to develop and provide shared resources for researchers inside and outside of Arizona through its Administrative, Clinical, Neuropathology, Biomarker, Data Management and Statistics (DMS), and Outreach, Recruitment and Engagement (ORE) Cores and a Research Education Component (REC) in support of our researchers, organizations, and shared goals.

Historically, the Consortium and its ADRC has administered an annual program for the solicitation, review and support of 12-month $30,000 NIA- and state-supported Pilot Projects for junior faculty and post-doctoral students who are new to AD/ADRD research and more senior investigators with experience in other fields but who are new to AD/ADRD research and who have are likely to generate important findings and publications, secure competitive research grants, and support their research career development in AD,ADRD and/or brain aging research.

In September 2020, the Consortium submitted its most recent grant application for five years of ADRC funding. The grant will be reviewed in early March. While there are no guarantees, we are hopeful about the chances to secure our proposed July 1, 2021-June 30, 2026 ADRC grant award from NIA and sufficient July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022 Consortium funds from the State to support our Developmental and Pilot Projects Program.

*We anticipate supporting a) one 24-month NIA-sponsored "Developmental Project Grant" (i.e., up to $60,000 per year in direct costs for up to 24 months), this award is designed for a junior investigator or senior post-doctoral fellow in the AD, ADRD field, but may be awarded to more senior investigators from another field who are new to AD, ADRD and/or brain aging research. The funding is intended to allow an investigator the opportunity to develop preliminary data sufficient to provide the basis for an application for independent research support, applicants should have an extremely high likelihood of generating additional competitive research grants in our field and b) at least two 12-month state-supported Pilot Projects for up to $30,000 in direct costs starting on July 1, 2021*.

**Our New NIA-Sponsored Developmental Project and State-Supported Pilot Project Program**

**ADRC Developmental and Pilot Project Review Program.** Dr. Carol Barnes, Regents' Professor of Psychology, Neurology and Neuroscience at the University of Arizona and Chair of the Arizona Alzheimer's Consortium's Internal Scientific Advisory Committee, will continue to oversee our program for the solicitation, competitive review, recommendation, and support of Developmental and Pilot Projects each year. NIA and state funds will be used to support basic or clinical biomedical, translational, epidemiological, caregiving, educational, behavioral , and other Developmental and Pilot Projects that are related to AD, ADRD and brain aging research.

**Proposal Purpose**

The Arizona ADRC invites applications for an NIA-supported Developmental Project and/or State-supported Pilot Projects studies to support basic or clinical biomedical, translational, epidemiological, caregiving, educational, or behavioral pilot studies in AD, ADRD or brain aging research.

Developmental and Pilot Project grants are intended to help establish the basis for applying for further research funding and further development of the applicant's career in these areas of research.

**Eligibility Requirements:**

The 24-month Developmental Project is intended for senior postdoctoral or junior faculty level investigators and, less commonly, for more senior investigator from other fields, who are interested in AD or ADRD research and who will have the highest chance of subsequent competitive grant funding.

The 12-month Pilot Projects are intended for senior postdoctoral or junior faculty level investigators and, less commonly, for more senior investigator from other fields, who are interested in AD, ADRD or brain aging research, have less preliminary data or propose higher risk studies, but still have a high chance of subsequent competitive grant funding.

Applicants who apply for a Developmental Project should note in the application cover letter whether or not a) they would like to be considered for a Pilot Project if their proposal is not recommended for funding and b) would be willing to amend their application for the Pilot Project Program within two weeks of notification. They should not submit an additional Pilot Project application until then.

All applications are expected to provide a provisional plan and timeline for the submission of a subsequent competitive grant application to NIA or another respected funding source.

We encourage applications by researchers from underrepresented groups.

We also encourage but do not require researchers to capitalize on ADRC resources (e.g., those related to its Administrative, Clinical, Neuropathology, Biomarker, Outreach Recruitment and Engagement [ORE] or Data Management and Statistics (DMSC) Cores, and we strongly recommend consultation with Kewei Chen, PhD, who oversees our Statistics Program, before or after a grant is funded.

The Program will consider proposals from researchers outside of Arizona if they meet our eligibility criteria, interact with members of our Consortium, their proposal is demonstrably stronger than those submitted by applicants within the Consortium, and they plan to interact with members of the Consortium as their work progresses.

**Mechanisms of Support**

We plan to recommend one NIA-sponsored 24-month Developmental Project grant ($60,000 direct costs per year [i.e., up to $120,000 over the 24-month period] plus indirect costs) when our ADRC grant is funded. The funding period is for two years (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023). Applications would be funded for one year with the option for second year of funding after the PI's progress is evaluated.

We plan to support at least two State-supported 12-month Pilot Projects ($30,000 direct costs and no indirect costs) if the Consortium receives sufficient funds for this purpose. The funding period is for one year (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022).

**Research Objectives**

The funding mechanism is intended to allow an investigator the opportunity to develop preliminary data sufficient to provide the basis for an application for independent research support.

*Examples of possible developmental projects are:*

- A study based on data in the NACC data set to determine the feasibility of conducting larger studies in the future.

- A study proposed by a new investigator, with an interest in research in AD, before the study has developed to the point of being suitable to apply for individual grant support.

- Functional, mechanistic, or pre-clinical activities designed to move a basic discovery towards a translational endpoint in the near future.

*Examples of unacceptable developmental projects are*:

- Clinical trials. Investigators interested in clinical trials should consider applying through the NIA Alzheimer's Disease Pilot Clinical Trials FOA.

Information obtained should allow subsequent submission of competitive grant support through the National Institutes of Health, or other extramural funding agencies. Proposals that utilize data available through the National Alzheimer's Coordinating Center (Minimum Data Set, Uniform Data Set, Neuropathology Data Set, etc. - see https://www.alz.washington.edu/WEB/data_descript.html); that are related to the disciplines of the ADRC Cores/Components (Clinical, Data Management and Statistics, Outreach & Recruitment, Neuropathology - see http://azalz.org/about-us/all-cores/); or that promote the study of Hispanic or Native Americans are encouraged, but not required. All proposals must include a preliminary plan and timeline for submission of a competitive grant application.

Additional awards may be made through Arizona Alzheimer's Consortium state funds, if available. Promising, but unsuccessful Developmental Project grant applications will be invited to resubmit as a one-year Pilot grant application to generate preliminary data.

**APPLICATION PROCEDURES:**

**Optional Pre-proposal/Letter of Intent:** If applicants desire feedback on their proposed application, a letter of intent (not to exceed one page) may be sent by February 15th to Carol A. Barnes, Ph.D. via email attachment care of Luann Snyder at luann@nsma.arizona.edu.

The letter of intent should include a descriptive title, brief abstract with specific aims, and list of study team members and may be in Word or PDF Format.

While pre-proposals are not required, it would permit applicants to receive initial feedback and suggestions that might help strengthen the full proposal. Pre-Proposals will be sent for rapid feedback. Constructive recommendations will be available to applicants within a few weeks.

**Full Application:** The PHS research grant application fillable forms must be used in applying for these funds (available at http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html). All components of the proposal, including appendices, should be sent to Dr. Carol Barnes by email attachment in a single file in PDF format c/o Luann Snyder at luann@nsma.arizona.edu.

Applications must include:

- A cover letter with the names and contact information for 3-4 potential qualified reviewers and whether or not a) they would like to be considered for a Pilot Project if their proposal is not recommended for funding and b) would be willing to amend their application for the Pilot Project Program within two weeks of notification.
- Face page (form page 1)
- Summary, Relevance, Project/Performance Sites, Senior/Key Personnel, etc. (form page 2)
- Detailed Budget (form page 4) – Year 1 Budget limited to $60,000 direct costs (plus applicable indirect costs)
- Budget for Entire Proposed Project Period (form page 5) – Limit 2 years, $60,000 direct costs/year
- Budget Justification
- Biographical Sketch(es) for Key Personnel: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm
- Resources
- Research Plan - limited to 5 pages and should include:
    a. Specific Aims
    b. Research Strategy (Significance, Innovation, Approach)
    c. Timeline and Plan for Submission of Competitive Grant Application
- Bibliography and References Cited
- Protection of Human Subjects (if applicable)
- PHS Inclusion Enrollment Report -Planned Enrollment (if applicable: https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/readonly/PHS_Inclusion_Enrollment_Report-V1.0.pdf )
- Vertebrate Animals (if applicable)
- Checklist Form Page (including your institutional indirect cost calculation)

Appendices are limited to three publications, manuscripts, abstracts, patents or other printed materials directly relevant to the proposal.

Applicants may also wish to identify a mentor, collaborator, or consultant to advise or assist them on the project. Potential mentors, collaborators, consultants should be listed in the grant cover letter. Applicants who would like suggestions for appropriate matches should speak to Dr. Eric Reiman (Director, Arizona Alzheimer's Consortium), or Dr. Carol Barnes (Director, Ad Hoc Review Program). Contact information is listed below.

**APPLICATION REVIEW CRITERIA:**

Applications will be reviewed for scientific and technical merit by two relevant outside experts. Applications will be rated based on 1) significance, 2) quality, innovation and feasibility, 3) use of NACC, NCRAD and/or Core facilities, 4) potential of applicant to develop a successful research program in the field, 5) likelihood of leading to a successful grant application, and 6) sound experimental design and statistical approach. If the grant was reviewed previously, the applicant may include a summary of the substantive changes made to the proposal in their cover letter.

Award recommendations will be made by the Executive Committee of the ADRC in late April 2021. Notification of Developmental awards recommended for NIH funding will be sent in late April 2021. Notification of awards recommended for State funding will invited to revise and resubmit in April 2021. The anticipated funding start date of successful applications is July 1, 2021 pending availability of funding.

**INQUIRIES:** Inquiries are encouraged. Inquiries regarding ADRC core resources or expertise related to the applicant's field of interest can be directed to:

> Eric M. Reiman, M.D., Director, Arizona Alzheimer's Consortium
> Phone: (602) 839-6999
> Email: eric.reiman@bannerhealth.com

Inquiries regarding application and review procedures can be directed to:

> Carol A. Barnes, Ph.D., Director, Ad Hoc Review Program
> Phone: (520) 626-2096
> Email: carol@nsma.arizona.edu

Inquiries regarding statistical approach can be directed to:
> Kewei Chen, Ph.D., Data Management & Statistics Core Director
> Phone: (480) 358-7921 (mobile)
> Email: Kewei.Chen@bannerhealth.com

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*The Arizona Alzheimer's Consortium (AAC) is the nation's leading model of statewide collaboration in Alzheimer's disease research. Established in 1998, it includes more than 150 researchers from seven principal organization including ASU, BAI, BSHRI, BNI, Mayo, TGen, UArizona and from four affiliated organizations, including UA COM—Phoenix, Midwestern University, NAU, C-Path. In 2001, the Arizona Alzheimer's Disease Core (ADCC) became the National Institute on Aging's (NIA's) first statewide Alzheimer's Center (P30AG019610). The ADCC has applied for renewed funding as an Alzheimer's Diseases Research Center (ADRC) in 2021 (P30AG072980).*