

**ARIZONA ALZHEIMER'S CONSORTIUM (AAC)
BIOMARKER MEASUREMENT SUPPORT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

APPLICATION RECEIPT DATE:

Mandatory Letter of Intent (LOI) Deadline: October 16, 2026 (Friday; midnight MT)

Full Proposal Deadline: December 1, 2026 (Tuesday; midnight MT)

PURPOSE: The Arizona Alzheimer's Consortium (AAC) invites applications for biomarker analysis to advance the understanding of Alzheimer's disease and related disorders (ADRD). These biomarker analyses will be conducted at the Fluid Biomarker Program at Banner Sun Health Research Institute.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY:

This call is open to applicants at any career stage – including students, trainees, postdoctoral fellows, clinicians, and faculty – who are affiliated with an AAC member institution. Prior experience in biomarker assay use or development is not required. We particularly encourage collaborative proposals involving two or more AAC researchers and/or institutions.

Applicants whose Letters of Intent (LOIs) are selected for a full proposal will be paired with an internal advisor from the Banner Fluid Biomarker Program. The advisor will provide guidance on assay selection, technical feasibility, study design, and costing as the project plan is developed.

Unlike in previous years, applications may include any human or nonhuman biofluid, cell lysate or tissue, provided that the primary aim is to advance understanding of neurodegenerative disease.

Samples must be received by the Banner Sun Health Research Institute Fluid Biomarker Lab by March 15, 2027 to allow biomarker analyses to be completed by June 30, 2027.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES:

Stage 1 – Letter of Intent (LOI), due October 16, 2026: A concise, one-page LOI comprising:

- Applicant Background: Name, career stage, and institutional affiliation
- Descriptive Title: A clear title reflecting the primary focus of the proposed study
- Brief Rationale and Specific Aim(s): A short summary of the research question and its significance
- Proposed Biofluid Sample: Type (plasma, serum, or CSF) and anticipated availability/timeline

LOIs will be reviewed internally by the Banner Fluid Biomarker Program for scientific merit, alignment with the call's objectives, and technical feasibility. Applicants with selected LOIs will be invited to develop and submit a full proposal.

Stage 2 – Full Proposal, due December 1, 2026: A concise three-page proposal comprising the following elements:

- Descriptive Title: A clear, impactful title that reflects the primary focus of the study
- Abstract and Specific Aims: A brief abstract outlining the study's objectives, with clearly defined specific aims
- Study Team: Key study team members and their relevant expertise
- Study Plan: The novelty of the proposed research and its potential impact on the field in the context of data already in the public domain. Summary level demographic details of the proposed sample should be provided
- The biomarker analysis to be performed and the rationale for the assay choice

- **Feasibility:** Special attention should be given to the feasibility of acquiring and providing biofluid samples to Banner Sun Health Research Institute **before March 15, 2027**, including procurement of necessary Material Transfer Agreements and Institutional Review Board (IRB) approvals
- **Publication Plan**

MECHANISMS OF SUPPORT: This program does not provide direct financial support to the applicant. Instead, it offers support by covering the costs associated with generating biomarker measurements. The program will sponsor **three** biomarker projects, up to \$33,000 each (up to \$100,000 total). This mechanism will only fund direct biomarker assay costs and will not cover other research expenses (e.g., sample shipment or IRB costs).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES: This cycle welcomes proposals addressing a broad range of biomarker research questions relevant to Alzheimer's disease and related neurodegenerative disorders. Studies may use any human or nonhuman biofluid or tissue, provided that the primary objective is to advance understanding of neurodegenerative disease. Areas of interest include, but are not limited to:

- Real-world implementation of established biomarkers with demonstrated clinical or research utility, including their use in diagnosis, prognosis, treatment selection, or monitoring
- Mechanistic studies using novel patient cohorts, longitudinal samples, neuropathologically characterized tissue, or experimental models to improve understanding of disease biology
- Evaluation of novel or underexplored biofluids and tissues as sources of biomarkers of neurodegeneration
- Discovery and validation of novel analytes, cross-platform comparisons, assay harmonization, or other high-impact biomarker questions relevant to the AAC community

APPLICATION PROCEDURES: LOIs and full applications may be emailed to the Banner Fluid Biomarker Lab (Fluid.Biomarker@bannerhealth.com). The LOI will only evaluate the feasibility of the project (e.g., costs, assay choice, and timing) and will not provide formal feedback on the scientific aims of the proposed project.

APPLICATION REVIEW CRITERIA: Full proposals will be reviewed internally by the Banner Fluid Biomarker Program for cost, timing, and feasibility, and externally by a panel of experts for scientific content. Applications will be rated based on the following criteria:

- **Novelty:** The uniqueness and originality of the proposed research
- **Study sample:** Is the selected cohort appropriate for addressing the study question?
- **Feasibility:** Is the study within budget and can it meet the timelines?
- **Immediate Impact:** The potential of the project to make a meaningful and immediate contribution to the field
- **Future potential:** The likelihood that the project will lead to successful future grant applications or a high-impact publication

Applicants will be notified of funding decisions by **December 21, 2026**.

INQUIRIES: Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact the program to discuss the feasibility of their project within the scope of available funding and reagent costs.

For questions and more information, please contact:

Banner Sun Health Research Institute Fluid Biomarker Lab

Email: Fluid.Biomarker@bannerhealth.com