CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Airalzh-Grants-for-Young-Researchers - AGYR 2025

CALL FOR FUNDING OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE RESEARCH CARRIED OUT IN ITALY BY YOUNG RESEARCHERS

The background

Around 50 million people worldwide suffer of Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia. This estimate is set to increase dramatically to about 130 million by 2050, given the progressive ageing of the world population. The *Associazione Italiana Ricerca Alzheimer Onlus (Airalzh)* aims to face the challenge of the social and economic impact of dementias by financing scientific research. Airalzh's commitment is aimed primarily at young people to ensure a future in the development of research skills in this field. In particular, Airalzh identifies in the prevention and identification of early stages of disease the areas of interest on which to invest. This especially against the evidence that the symptoms of the disease appear when the histopathological feature is compromised, and considering the numerous failures of clinical trials for the development of new drugs that are often administered in the overt phase of disease.

Our Mission and Goals

Airalzh raises funds for research on Alzheimer's disease and other dementias in Italy. We propose with this call to contribute to the growth of deserving young researchers on dementias in Italy, also through possible partnerships between two proponents, while remaining the unique relationship between Airalzh and the Principal Investigator (PI).

For the next two years, Airalzh plans to invest a substantial part of the funds by financing young

researcher projects, aimed at basic and clinical research on the study of the early stages of disease, with the identification of diagnostic markers, possible pharmacological targets and new technological approaches. In addition, with the present call Airalzh intends to finance at least one project on Alzheimer prevention, as it is estimated that about one third of Alzheimer's cases can be attributed to modifiable risk factors. Prevention could lead to a reduction in cases of disease or however to delay its onset

1. Eligibility criteria

Subjects

The PI must meet the following criteria on the deadline of the call:

- has not reached yet his/her 40st birthday, at the time of the deadline to apply to the call, extended by documented career breaks,
- has at least three publications (even in press),
- has one publication as first or last author (also as co-first or co-last, published in the last 5 years and with content relating to the Call.) in peer-reviewed journals.
- Has obtained PhD, or medical specialty (MD)
- **There may be a co-PI, for which all the eligibility criteria required of the PI apply.** The presence of the co-PI must be motivated to achieve the objectives of the research.

Research experiences abroad, although not mandatory, will be also evaluated. Both PIs and co-PIs are allowed to submit one proposal only to this Call

Hosting institutions

The research project must be conducted in research centers, public or private, located in Italy and which have in their statute the indication of no-profit research institutions. The PI hosting institution is the only scientific and administrative contact for Airalzh, it must guarantee the independence and declare to support the proposer's research by providing spaces and tools, including administrative facilities, for its development.

In this regard, a declaration signed by the Legal Representative of the hosting institution is required, to be attached to the First Application Documents (FAD, see paragraph 6) in the first phase of request submission.

To notice that only one request will be funded for each hosting institution (see FAQ for details)

2. The research project

The project must be original, in English, and must refer to one of the following research areas which must be indicated at the submission of FAD:

A) Early stages of disease, with the identification of diagnostic markers, possibly pharmacological targets and new technological approaches

B) Prevention: lifestyles and Alzheimer's disease

N.B.: if the project requires the Ethics Committee approval, this may be requested following the possible assignment of the funding. In this case, a postponement of the beginning of the search may be accepted.

3. Project funding

Each project will be funded with maximum amount of 60,000 euros, to be used in the maximum period of 2 years from the allocation, that will take place as described below. Financing support will be in the form of a Liberal Donation; the host structure must have the possibility to accept this form and it must be declared in the FAD (see paragraph 6). Once the projects to be supported have been selected, Airalzh will issue a formal communication to the PI legal organization, declaring its willingness to provide a Liberal Donation; following this, the hosting institution will send to Airalzh a formal acceptance decision; after the transmission of the funds, the administrative management of the donation is entirely under responsibility of the receiving administration.

At the end of the project, the hosting institution financed by the donation must send to Airalzh the final report; the Body itself will also have to inform about what were the chapters in which the sum was spent (see paragraph 4, eligible costs).

The final scientific and administrative reports will be evaluated for the evaluation of future funding requests from Airalzh. The PIs of selected projects could be asked to participate to awareness/communication events that are part of the Airalzh mission. The funding by AGYR2024 must be present in publications related to the present call.

Airalzh reserves the possibility to provide further support for the researches admitted to AGYR 2024 financing, on the basis of a reasoned request and minimum selection criteria relating to the results obtained at the end of the two years:

• two publications related to AGYR 2024 research project, with PI as first or last author (also as co-first or co-last), in peer-reviewed Q1 journals (from JCR-Clarivate ranking).

4. Eligible costs

The sum paid, managed administratively as mentioned above by the hosting structure, can be used to finance:

- Research personnel coasts: fellowship / research grant / contract for personnel including PI (up to a maximum of 80%)
- Consumables
- Laboratory equipment
- Publications / participation in Congresses
- Overheads (cannot exceed 5%)

5. Evaluation process and admission to project financing

Throughout the evaluation process, the Scientific Committee (SC) and the Board will comply with the rules of transparency and in opposition to the conflict of interest, as established by the Airalzh regulations.

PHASE I – The participants to the call submit all documents indicated as FAD (First Application Documents, see paragraph 6). These will be evaluated for the possession of the eligibility criteria by the Airalzh scientific secretariat. The proposals admitted to Phase II will be selected for the relevance of the project to one of the research areas of the call and to the objectives of Airalzh by a commission nominated ad hoc by the Board.

PHASE II - The PIs of the selected proposals will then be invited to produce a Full Application Project, which will be submitted to the peer review process by at least two/three SC members.
SC may avail of the opinion of anonymous reviewers. This review process will allow an impartial and competent scientific evaluation of proposals. CS members, in compliance with the rules of procedure, will examine the evaluations of the reviewers, draw up the merit ranking and assess the adequacy of the financial contributions requested.
The merit ranking will then be submitted to the attention of the Board which will establish the number of projects eligible for funding on the basis of the budget available for this call. The final ranking of the projects admitted to funding will be signed by both the CS and the Board.
All PIs will receive notification of the final decision from the Airalzh scientific secretariat, with the reviewers' comments attached. The final judgment cannot be appealed.

Phase II evaluation criteria

Full projects' evaluation will be performed on the basis of the following criteria:

1. EXCELLENCE (weight 30%)

- clarity of the project aims
- quality of research strategies
- originality and innovation of the project
- contextualization with respect to the state of the art
- preliminary data significance

2. OUTCOMES (weight 20%)

- Expected results and their impact on the scientific community
- potential benefits for human health

3. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR, TEAM AND ORGANIZATION (weight 40%)

- Adequacy of the skills expressed by the PI, co-PI and by any unit and members of the team involved in the research project.
- Impact of the project in terms of scientific and professional development of the proponents.

4. BUDGET and PROJECT DURATION (weight: 10%)

- Budget suitability, coherence and duration of the project.

6. Submission process

PHASE I – **First Application Documents (FAD)**

All documents must be submitted, as one PDF (named FAD- name-surname-AGYR2025), by 5 p.m. on April 28th 2025, by e-mail to the address: segreteriascientifica@airalzh.it

The Application should include:

Both for PI and co-PI

(1) Curriculum Vitae

(2) Copy of a valid identity document

(3) Full copy of a selected paper: a paper of your choice where PI is first/ last author. (see par. 1.), published in the last 5 years and with content relating to the Call.

(4) List of Grants received and published papers of the last 5 years.

Only one copy:

(4) Synopsis. Description of the previous research experience and an abstract of the proposed project (the Synopsis should not exceed one, double-spaced page with a one-inch margin on each side, excluding bibliography), indicating the research area.

(5) Budget: a detailed description of the costs justified by their relationship to the project including: personnel, equipment, consumables, meeting and publishing costs, overhead.

(6) Letter from Host Institute (see par. 1 for details)

PHASE II – Only PI that pass Phase I will be invited to submit a full project in Phase II. The notice will take place by May 30th 2025. The final project must be **submitted by 5 p.m. on July 20th 2025** on the Airalzh website in the reserved area with the access methods that will be transmitted to the interested PIs.

7. AVAILABLE BUDGET

The budget available for this call is 300,000 Euros.

Contacts: Call available on the website www.airalzh.it

Email: segreteriascientifica@airalzh.it

Summary

Call	**Airalzh-Grants-for-Young-Reasearchers AGYR2025**
type	Two-step call
Deadline	Phase I April 28th 2025 Phase II July 20th 2025
Budget	€ 300.000
Goals	Support basic and clinical research projects on the prevention and early stages of Alzheimer's disease.
Eligible subjects	Giving young researchers the opportunity to develop and strengthen independent careers Public or private non-profit institutions carrying out scientific research
Main funding limits	Maximum grant € 60.000
Contacts	Call on www.airalzh.ite-mail: segreteriascientifica@airalzh.it