

2025 New Investigator Award Program FAQ

Updated: 10/24/2024

Letter of Intent (LOI) and Application

Q: Is the Letter of Intent required?

A: Yes, the Letter of Intent is required. If you are deemed eligible based on the LOI, then you will be invited to submit a full application by January 16, 2025.

Q: What information is needed to submit the Letter of Intent?

A: The required fields in [ProposalCentral](#) that you will complete when submitting the LOI form are:

- Name of the new investigator, academic rank, position title, and contact information; this should not include pending promotions and should be specific to your academic rank and position title at time of application.
- Name of Alzheimer's Disease Research Center – and the ADRC Director (applicant must be affiliated with an ADRC at the time of submission).
- Proposal Project Title, keywords, and 1-2 sentence brief description of the topic area.

There are no required documents to attach for the LOI.

Q: Do I need to submit any required documents or attachments with my Letter of Intent?

A: No, there are no required documents or attachments to submit for the LOI.

Q: When do I submit the ADRC Director Letter of Support?

A: You submit the ADRC Director Letter of Support with your **application** via [ProposalCentral](#). The Letter of Support must be submitted with your application by the January 16, 2025, deadline.

Q: Are the Letter of Intent requirements the same as the Alzheimer's Association Research Fellowship (AARF)?

A: No, they have different requirements. Refer to the “Letter of Intent” section of the RFA.

Q: Are the specific aims needed for the Letter of Intent?

A: No, the specific aims are only required for the full application/proposal. Refer to the RFA for more information on the specific aims and proposal requirements.

Q: How soon after submitting my LOI can I expect to get invited to submit the full application (assuming I am eligible)?

A: Most likely between 7-10 days after the LOI deadline of November 8, 2024.

Q: Do I submit the ADRC Director Letter of Support with my Letter of Intent?

A: No, you submit the ADRC Director Letter of Support with your **application**, not your LOI. The Letter of Support must be submitted with your application by the January 16, 2025, deadline. Download [ADRC Director Letter of Support Template](#).

(Note: Chrome will give you an error when you try to download a Word file, but you can override the error by selecting “download insecure file.” Or download it in another browser, like Firefox or Edge.)

Q: Where do I download the ADRC Director Letter of Support template?

A: Download the [ADRC Director Letter of Support Template](#) on the [NACC NIAP web page](#) (under Resources) or in [ProposalCentral](#) (during the application process).

(Note: Chrome will give you an error when you try to download a Word file, but you can override the error by selecting “download insecure file.” Or download it in another browser, like Firefox or Edge.)

Q: What is ProposalCentral?

A: The [ProposalCentral Application Portal](#) is an online proposal/grant submission and management platform used by Alzheimer’s Association and NACC for the NIAP. You will submit your LOI and entire proposal online via ProposalCentral. Here are [frequently asked questions](#) about ProposalCentral.

Q: Who do I list as the sponsor on the application?

A: The sponsors are the University of Washington/National Alzheimer’s Coordinating Center and the Alzheimer’s Association.

Q: Can I submit additional letters of support? Are these encouraged?

A: In addition to the required ADRC Director Letter of Support, you can submit other letters of support. These are optional and are neither encouraged nor discouraged. You are allowed to submit up to 3 additional letters of support (1 page max each).

- Mentor letter(s) may be included
- Letters confirming access to specific resources (e.g., data, lab materials, imaging) not funded by the NIAP are acceptable
- Letters supporting your academic achievements or character references, while nice, are not allowed for the New Investigator Award Program

Q: Is it acceptable to have multiple PIs in the application?

A: No, there should only be a single PI, because the purpose of the NIAP is to provide essentially “pre-K” or pre-R01 support for a single individual.

Q: Is it acceptable to include data collection in the project?

A: Data collection can be included in your project as long as it directly supports your primary research question. However, applications that only have the goal of “collecting data” would be regarded as non-responsive or, simply, low impact. Also, where data collection is included, it is the applicant's responsibility to describe methods of collection as well as database plans for those study-specific data.

Q: Are proposals required to use NACC data? Are proposals that use NACC data more attractive?

A: No, there is no requirement for, or priority given to, the use of NACC data.

Q: Are feasibility and pilot studies eligible for this program?

A: Yes.

Q: Do I need pilot data? Does it make my application more competitive if I present pilot data?

A: You're not required to have pilot data, but it does make your application more competitive if you give a strong scientific justification and demonstrate rigor by giving either a strong basis in the literature or your own preliminary data - so something that establishes that this is the right question at the right time.

It does not have to be your own pilot data or preliminary data. Ask your colleagues if they have preliminary data that will help justify what you're proposing. Figuring out how to present your question is a good mentoring opportunity and the next logical step in this line of research.

Q: Is there a limit to the number of proposals that can come from the same ADRC?

A: No, there is no limit to the number of applicants from an individual ADRC.

Q: If my proposal does not involve human subjects or data analysis, would it qualify for the NIAP?

A: Yes, the NIAP is an open call for any area of research in the AD/ADRD research spectrum. Basic science/ animal model proposals are eligible. There is no requirement to use NACC data. Refer to the RFA for the full list of eligible research areas.

Q: Can my NIAP proposal include a clinical trial?

A: No. Clinical trials are not allowed in NIAP proposals.

Q: If I submitted a NIAP proposal last year and got competitive scores, but was not an awardee, can I do a resubmission? Can I mention that this is a resubmission?

A: As stated in the RFA: It is up to the applicant as to whether or not they wish to declare their application a resubmission. Even if you are submitting an application that is similar to a prior submission to NIAP you do not need to declare it a resubmission. Resubmissions are granted a one-page summary for addressing comments raised by reviewers from a prior NIAP application review. Resubmissions are scored and ranked along with new submissions. No advantage or disadvantage is given to any application because it is a resubmission. Note that we do not guarantee that you will get the same reviewers. We also can't guarantee that you'd have the same mentor. But if you are planning to resubmit, when you fill out your Letter of Intent form, tell us the area of focus that you're interested in getting help with and let us know if you had a mentor that you really connected with that you want to have again. We'll do our best to match you.

Q: Do you have examples of previously funded grants so we can see what a successful application looks like?

A: No, we do not provide examples.

Q: Can I apply to use this grant for a project where I can learn a new technique (i.e., a training grant), or do I need to already have the necessary skills for the proposed project?

A: No, this is not a career development award, so do not submit a career development plan. The point is to have a strong research project with a hypothesis-driven approach to what you're doing. You may learn new techniques in order to achieve the aims of the study, but that shouldn't be the focus of your application. How you frame this in your application is a good conversation to have with your mentor.

Note that there are grants available specifically for training. Alzheimer's Association offers Research Fellowships and Clinical Science Fellowships and the ADRC Program offers REC Scholar Programs. If that's where you are in your career, we encourage you to look at the Alzheimer's Association [grants website](#) and search for REC Scholar Programs.

Q: Can I have Co-PIs on my application?

A: Yes, you can. You can list your collaborators and other key personnel in your application. However, the NIAP is meant to support the **new investigator's** advancement and development, so make sure it's clear that you have the exact skill set and the support you need from your institution to achieve the aims of the application. It is not the intent of this award for you to include a big name MPI - we want YOU to be highlighted and to be successful.

Q: I'm from a different field and hope to investigate this field, but I do not have publications in this field. Is prior experience preferred/required for this application?

A: It depends on the scientific question. You need to make it clear that the aims can be achieved, demonstrate that you have the necessary knowledge/expertise to do the work, and that you have a team in place who can support your work on the grant as it's described. (And biosketches are required for the application.) The reviewers would need to discuss the feasibility of your project, but we think bringing expertise or special skill sets from other areas of research is a good thing because AD/ADRD questions are really big. We need a big team at the table to solve these big problems. So if you come with a special skill set and you align

yourself within an ADRC and have the support to get the aims done, work with your mentor to make it really clear to your reviewers that you can do what you say you can.

Eligibility & Affiliation

Q: How do I know if I'm affiliated with my ADRC?

A: Please contact your ADRC Administrator and/or Director to determine if you are affiliated with your ADRC. Additionally, you must submit an ADRC Director Letter of Support that confirms your ADRC affiliation was established before October 2024 and is ongoing. For more details about the Letter of Support, please refer to the RFA. The Letter of Support template is available for download in ProposalCentral and on the [NACC Website](#).

Q: Can I apply for this award if I'm not affiliated with an ADRC?

A: No, as described in the RFA under “Eligibility,” you must be affiliated with an ADRC to be eligible for the NIAP. If you are not eligible for this award, we encourage you to apply for other funding mechanisms, such as an [RO3 Award](#) and other funding mechanisms of the Alzheimer’s Association (alz.org/grants).

Q: I am an assistant professor and an MPI of a R01 grant (not a corresponding PI), would this exclude me from applying to this award?

A: Applicants who hold significant leadership roles in R01 grants, such as Principal Investigator (PI), Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI), or a Multiple Principal Investigator (MPI), are not eligible to apply for the NIAP. However, individuals who contribute to R01 projects in non-leadership capacities, such as co-investigators or key personnel, maintain their eligibility.

Q: Do I need to have an affiliation with a specific ADRC Director or just an ADRC?

A: Your affiliation is with the ADRC, not a specific ADRC Director.

Q: If I start at an ADRC Program site and then transfer to a non-affiliated site, does the award funding carry over?

A: You would need to contact your ADRC Administrator and/or Director to confirm you are still affiliated with your ADRC.

Q: If I am a faculty member affiliated with the ADRC, but with a paid appointment at a different institution, am I eligible?

A: Yes, if you are considered an affiliated faculty member, you are eligible. This is a great thing to discuss with your mentor. And we recommend you get in touch with the ADRC Director and Administrators and let them know your plans as soon as possible so they have time to write a letter for you and get it to you on time.

Q: Does the NIAP honor the NIH 12-month extension within the 10 year-of-terminal degree eligibility for parental leave or other qualified reason for absence?

A: Yes, the NIH 12-month leave extension applies to the NIAP funding as well. As stated in the RFA: Exceptions to this 10-year limit may be considered for applicants who have experienced career disruptions. Such disruptions may include, but are not limited to, family care responsibilities, military service, severe illness or medical conditions, disability, or clinical training. Applicants requesting consideration under this exception must clearly explain the circumstances in their application.

Q: My position is classified as "Research Associate," which is consistent with that of a mentored, postdoctoral training position. Am I eligible to apply for this award?

A: Yes, the intent of the NIAP is to provide funding for early career and new investigators who have not received an R01 or similar type funding, and who are not classified as Senior Investigators.

Q: Is an investigator from a subaward institution eligible to apply? Do they need to apply through the primary institution that has the ADRC award?

A: Yes, they are eligible and can apply through the primary institution if they have a Letter of Support from the ADRC Director confirming their affiliation with the ADRC. The Letter of Support template is available for download in ProposalCentral and on the [NACC Website](#).

Q: Are investigators from Exploratory ADRCs eligible to apply?

A: Yes.

Q: Is a clinician (e.g., cardiologist) working closely with an ADRC eligible to apply?

A: New investigators must have a pre-existing affiliation with an ADRC and must submit a Letter of Support from the ADRC Director confirming their ADRC affiliation. Refer to the RFA for details about affiliation. The Letter of Support template is available for download in ProposalCentral and on the [NACC Website](#).

If you are not eligible for this award, we encourage you to apply for other funding mechanisms, such as an [RO3 Award](#) and other funding mechanisms of the Alzheimer's Association (alz.org/grants).

Q: My ADRC is a non-academic institute, so our investigator titles do not follow the academic ranking system (e.g., faculty ranks). If my position is equivalent to an assistant professor, am I eligible to apply? Do I need to include any documentation confirming such equivalency?

A: Yes, if your positions are equivalent, you are eligible to apply for the NIAP. Please include a 1-2 sentence note about the equivalency in your final application.

Q: Can investigators outside my organization be consultants? Do they need to be affiliated with an ADRC?

A: There is no specific restriction on consultants. However, the investigator must be primarily involved and doing the work. As stated in the RFA, the investigator is expected to have a minimum of 10-20% of their position dedicated to the proposed research project. The investigator should benefit from the educational experience that comes from completing a project. The consultants must also meet the ADRC Director's approval to ensure alignment with the project.

Q: Regarding the 10-20% time commitment: if we have a 9-month appointment, can we budget for summer salary and use our summertime to work on the project?

A: We are flexible and willing to work with you on this. You do need to make sure that it is clear in your budget justification that you have the FTE time and resources you need to do the work that you're committing to. Talk to your mentor about how to clearly present how you are going to achieve the aims in your timeline.

Q: Do you have to have a PhD or MD to apply for this program?

A: Yes, you must have one of these degrees to qualify for the NIAP.

Q: Does “terminal degree” mean MD or the end of residency?

A: In the case of an MD, it means the end of residency.

Q: Are assistant professors eligible for this award?

A: Yes, if you meet the following criteria stated in the RFA:

- Postdoctoral fellow, resident, or junior faculty member who has not yet received an R01 grant from the National Institutes of Health.
- Have not been promoted beyond assistant professor rank (MD or PhD). Researchers with academic ranks higher or lower than those specified are not eligible to apply.
- Are within 10 years of their terminal degree.

Q: If I received an MD more than 10 years ago and just received a PhD this year, am I eligible to apply?

A: Yes, if you meet the following criteria stated in the RFA:

- Postdoctoral fellow, resident, or junior faculty member who has not yet received an R01 grant from the National Institutes of Health.
- Have not been promoted beyond assistant professor rank (MD or PhD). Researchers with academic ranks higher or lower than those specified are not eligible to apply.

- Are within 10 years of their terminal degree.

Q: I was promoted to Associate Professor this year. Am I still eligible for the NIAP?

A: No, Associate Professors are not eligible to apply for the NIAP. Refer to the RFA for details on eligibility.

Q: Would previous REC scholars be considered eligible?

A: Yes, as long as you meet the other eligibility criteria.

Q: How does R01 grant involvement impact eligibility for the NIAP for assistant professors and other researchers, co-investigators, multiple PIs, and leadership positions?

A: Applicants who hold significant leadership roles in R01 grants, such as Principal Investigator (PI), Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI), or a Multiple Principal Investigator (MPI), are not eligible to apply for the NIAP. However, individuals who contribute to R01 projects in non-leadership capacities, such as co-investigators or key personnel, maintain their eligibility.

Q: If I previously received an Alzheimer's Supplement through the NIA (e.g., a R21 through the NIDCD), do I still qualify as a new investigator?

A: If you didn't receive a R01 and meet the other eligibility criteria, you are eligible.

Q: Do investigators in SCAN who are funded under the SCAN supplement to the Stanford ADRC meet the ADRC affiliation requirement?

A: Please contact your ADRC Administrator and/or Director to determine if you are affiliated with your ADRC. Additionally, you must submit an ADRC Director Letter of Support that confirms your ADRC affiliation was established before October 2024 and is ongoing. For more details about the Letter of Support, please refer to the RFA. The Letter of Support template is available for download in ProposalCentral and on the [NACC Website](#).

Q: I recently submitted my first R01 grant application and have received the review score but am not yet sure it's fundable. Am I eligible to apply for the NIAP?

A: Yes, you are eligible to apply for the NIAP until you are funded or notified that your R01 will be funded.

Q: Are investigators with an NIH K23 award where the PI does not require salary compensation due to this complementary award allowed to apply for the NIAP?

A: Yes, new investigators who have NIH “K” awards are allowed to apply to the NIAP, if they meet eligibility criteria outlined in the RFA.

Q: Are senior scientists eligible?

A: The NIAP is geared towards early career researchers, not senior scientists or established investigators. However, we recognize that titles and roles vary by institution. Some institutions have a senior scientist role that is the equivalent of an instructor role at another institution. So it's very dependent on your institution. Review the eligibility guidelines in the RFA for more details.

Budget & Funding

Q: Is this award compatible with having other sources of funding, such as fellowships from the Alzheimer’s Association?

A: Yes, you can have other sources of funding in addition to receiving a New Investigator Program Award.

Q: Would this award conflict with my current T32 or other fellowships?

A: This should be OK, but we encourage you to have a conversation with your Grants office to make sure they don’t have any concerns with you applying for the NIAP. Likewise, if you have a T32 or another training program, make sure you also talk to your program director. Also note

that the NIAP requires that you commit at least 10% to 20% of your effort to the NIAP project, i.e., you shouldn't be spread so thin that you wouldn't be able to commit that level of effort.

Q: Are current Alzheimer's Association Research Fellowship (AARF) awardees eligible?

A: Yes, AARF awardees are eligible.

Q: Should we use our ADRC's full federally negotiated F&A rate on our budget?

A: The indirect rate should be set at 10% on the application as published in the RFA. If awarded funding from NACC, your award will include the ADRC's federally negotiated F&A rate. Upon being selected to receive funding from NACC, the applicant will be required to submit an updated budget and F&A rate.

Q: Does the NIAP require a minimum effort?

A: The principal investigator is expected to have a minimum of 10-20% of their position dedicated to the proposed research project each funding year. Note this is minimum time committed to research; and not necessary time to this project or equivalent to salary % allocated.

Q: How are the funds administered in the event of an award? What is the pass-through entity (PTE)?

A: NACC will distribute one NIAP award and Alzheimer's Association will distribute the other nine NIAP awards. The PTE will be determined at the time of the award.

Q: Are indirect costs limited to 10%? What if our federally negotiated rate is higher than that? Is the IDC rate for total costs, total direct costs, or modified total direct costs?

A: If the award is supported by the Alzheimer's Association, the IDC is 10%, the F&A base is the Total Direct Cost (TDC). If the award is funded by NACC, the IDC rate is the institution's federally negotiated rate, and the F&A base is the Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC). The 10% or the ADRC's federally negotiated rate only applies to indirect costs, which will be

added to the total direct cost budget and determined at the time of the award. Refer to the RFA for more details.

Q: What is the start date for funding and budget/salary support considerations for someone who may be transitioning from postdoc to faculty after the NIAP application is submitted?

A: If funded the awardee has 6 months from the date of the Notice of Award (NoA) to activate the award.

Q: What was the competition rate for the 2024 awards?

A: During the 2024 cycle, we received 153 applications and funded 13. In 2025, we are committed to funding 10.

Q: How does funding work for multi-institutional ADRCs? Is there any consideration in funding given to applications from the non-prime site which will be required to have a subaward and subaward indirect costs?

A: It is OK for the funding from one of the non-prime sites to receive that subcontract, assuming that there is a relationship in place between the ADRC that has the prime contract and your institution, and that you are considered an affiliated faculty of that ADRC. Note that the subcontract must accept that indirect rate. There is absolutely no exception to this as the Alzheimer's Association does not allow more than a total cap of 10%, regardless of what that relationship is between the institutions.

Mentorship Program

Q: Is an ADRC mentor required?

A: No, you are not required to have a REC mentor. It's available for those who would like to take advantage of it and it is not a mark against you or your application if you don't opt in. But it is highly recommended as mentors can give you valuable feedback and guidance to strengthen your proposal.

Q: Do I need to have a REC mentor, or can I select my own mentor?

A: You are not required to have a REC mentor. You are welcome to work with your own mentor or mentors.

Q: How do I propose a mentor during the LOI process? There's only a yes/no question for mentorship.

A: We cannot guarantee that you are matched with a specific mentor in the program. There are too many variables in terms of availability and applications. If you have a targeted specific area of research, put that in your Letter of Intent and we will do our best to match you with a mentor who can help you.

Q: When will I get assigned a mentor to work with on my application?

A: If you requested a mentor when you submitted your LOI, REC will notify and connect you with your mentor by late-November 2024.

Q: How is matching done? Does the mentor have to be an expert in the proposed project or is any established faculty with experience in grant writing sufficient?

A: The match to a Mentor is done using the project keywords and subject area.

Q: As a postdoc, can I decline the REC Mentor and use my own postdoc mentor?

A: Yes, you are not required to sign up for a REC Mentor. You can use your existing mentor. Having said that, it never hurts to have other opinions. The REC Mentorship program can offer another set of eyes and another perspective, which can be helpful for strengthening your application.

Q: Does NACC have a REC Scholar program? Or is it associated with the ADRC Program?

A: The REC Scholar program is associated with the ADRC Program, not NACC.

Citizenship Status and Location

Q: Do applicants have to be US citizens? Are there any specific requirements for US residency? If I have a temporary visa status (F1-OPT), am I eligible to apply for the NIAP?

A: Non-US residents are eligible to apply for a New Investigator Award if they are 1) affiliated with an ADRC, and 2) have a US visa that is valid at the time of the application and is valid during the entire project and award funding period, which ends May 31, 2027. Note that New Investigator Award Program funding is **not transferable outside the US** (in the event that the investigator transfers out of the US).

Q: Can I use the NIAP to fund non-US work?

A: No, NIAP funds are not transferable outside the US.

General

Q: How many applications are typically submitted for this funding opportunity?

Award Year	Applications Received	Awards Funded
2024	154	13
2023	31	2
2022	51	3

Q: Can an ADRC give out a subaward from the same funding stream as the NIAP?

A: No, the ADRC is not allowed to give out a subaward from the same funding stream. NIAP does not honor third-party tier contracts.

Q: How do I contact Proposal Central Customer Support?

A: The grants team from the Alzheimer’s Association is happy to answer your questions via grantsapp@alz.org, but for help with updating an institution, the applicant profile, or EIN number, please contact Proposal Central Customer Service: (800) 875-2562 (toll-free in US and Canada) or by e-mail at pcsupport@altum.com.

Q: What is the EIN/TIN number and how do I get one?

A: All US-based organizations, including Alzheimer’s Association and NACC, need to report grant funding details to the United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS). This requires each grant recipient to have an EIN (Employer ID Number) or TIN (Taxpayer Identification Number). Learn more at the [Employer ID Numbers page](#) on the IRS website.

Your institution shouldn’t need to do any reporting to the IRS, but if it does need an EIN, go to the [Employer ID Numbers page](#) on the IRS website. You will likely need to complete a [SS4 Form](#).