



## CALL FOR PROPOSALS

**Airalzh-Grants-for-Young-Researchers - AGYR 2021**

### **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 in the study and identification of early stages of disease the areas of interest on which to invest. The evidence that the symptoms of the disease appear when the histopathological feature is compromised, along with the fact that numerous clinical trials for the development of new drugs often administered in the overt phase of disease failed, is a further motivation to focus on prevention.

#### **Our Mission**

Airalzh raises funds for research on Alzheimer's disease and other dementias in Italy. With this Call we propose to contribute to the growth of deserving young researchers on dementias in Italy.

#### **Our Goals**

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 prevention and on the study of early stages of Alzheimer's disease. In particular, with the present AGYR 2021 call, Airalzh intends to finance

research projects on Alzheimer prevention, which could lead to a reduction in cases of disease or however to delay its onset, as it is estimated that about one third of Alzheimer's cases can be attributed to modifiable risk factors.

## **1. Eligibility criteria**

### Subjects

The PI must meet the following criteria on the deadline of the call: having not reached his/her 40st birthday yet, extended by documented career breaks, having at least three publications (even in press), one publication as first or last author (also as co-first or co-last) in peer-reviewed journals.

PhD, medical specialty (MD) awards and research experiences abroad, although not mandatory, will be also evaluated.

PIs are allowed to submit only one proposal 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 hosting institution 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 Letter of Intent (LOI, see paragraph 5) in the first phase of request submission.

## **2. The research project**

The project must be original, in English, and must refer to the following research area:

**Prevention: lifestyles and Alzheimer's disease**

## **3. Project funding**

Each project will be funded with a 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 hosting structure must have the possibility to accept this form and it must be declared in the LOI (see paragraph 5). Once the projects to be supported are selected, Airalz 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 a formal acceptance decision to Airalzh; after the transmission of the funds, the administrative management of the donation is entirely under the responsibility of the receiving administration.

At the end of the project, the hosting institution financed by the donation must send the final report to Airalzh; 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 in order to determine future funding requests to Airalzh.

#### **4. Eligible costs**

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

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

#### **5. Evaluation and admission to project financing**

PHASE I - The participants to the Call submit a Letter of Intent (LOI), to be drawn up on a form prepared by the association. These will be evaluated for the possession of the eligibility criteria by the Airalzh scientific secretariat, and also for the relevance of the project to the objectives of this Airalzh Call by the CTS (relevance to the research area, as described in paragraph 2). Finally, the LOIs that pass Phase I will be sent to anonymous reviewers. Based on the evaluation of external reviewers, a short list of proposals admitted to Phase II will be generated by the CTS.

PHASE II - The PIs of the LOIs included in the short list will then be invited to produce a Full Application Project, which will be submitted to the peer review process by at least two anonymous reviewers, a process that will allow an impartial and competent evaluation of their scientific quality.

Airalzh's CTS, 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 CD, 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 CTS and the CD. Throughout the evaluation process, the CTS and the CD will comply with the rules of transparency and in opposition to the conflict of interest, as established by the Airalzh regulations.

### **Phase II evaluation criteria (also applicable to LOI evaluation)**

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

#### **1. EXCELLENCE (weight 25%)**

- 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. FEASIBILITY and IMPLEMENTATION (weight 15%)**

- Presence of a feasible, logical, well-structured and appropriate experimental design with respect to the aims of the project

#### **3. OUTCOME (weight 15%)**

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

#### **4. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR, TEAM AND ORGANIZATION (weight 35%)**

- Adequacy of the skills expressed by the 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 PI.

#### **5. BUDGET and PROJECT DURATION (weight: 10%)**

- budget suitability, coherence and duration of the project.

## **6. Submission process**

PHASE I - The **LOI** form (see attached), together with the declaration signed by the Legal Representative of the Host Institution, must be **submitted by 5.00 p.m. on June 28th 2021** by e-mail to the address: [segreteria scientifica@airalzh.it](mailto:segreteria scientifica@airalzh.it), as indicated in attached form.

PHASE II - Only the LOIs that pass Phase I will be invited to submit a full project in Phase II. The notice will take place from July 26th. The final project must be **submitted by 5 p.m. on September 30th 2021** 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](http://www.airalzh.it)

Email: [segreteria scientifica@airalzh.it](mailto:segreteria scientifica@airalzh.it)

## Summary

<b>Call</b>	<b>Airalzh-Grants-for-Young-Researchers AGYR2020</b>
type	Two-step Call
Deadline	Phase I 28.6.2021 Phase II 30.9.2021
Budget	€ 300.000
Goals	Support basic and clinical research projects on the prevention and early stages of Alzheimer's disease. Giving young researchers the opportunity to develop and strengthen independent careers
Eligible subjects	Public or private non-profit institutions carrying out scientific research
Main funding limits	Maximum grant € 60.000
Contacts	Call on <a href="http://www.airalzh.it">www.airalzh.it</a> e-mail: <a href="mailto:segreteria scientifica@airalzh.it">segreteria scientifica@airalzh.it</a>