The Edward N. & Della L. Thome Memorial Foundation
Awards Program in Alzheimer's Disease Drug Discovery Research
Bank of America, N.A. Trustee

Invited Full Proposal Guidelines   **Grant Cycle 2021**

> Invited Full Proposal Deadline:
> **Wednesday, October 6, 2021**
> 12:00 Noon, U.S. ET

AWARD PERIOD
February 1, 2022 – January 31, 2024

AWARD AMOUNT
Up to ten $500,000 two-year grants will be made to independent investigators working in academic, medical or research institutions within the United States. Awards do not cover indirect costs.

RESEARCH FOCUS
The goal of the 2021 Awards Program in Alzheimer's Disease Drug Discovery Research is to support innovative drug discovery research that will lead to improved therapies for individuals suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

Researchers dedicated to the validation and testing of target compounds and therapeutic agents including biologics and small molecules, are encouraged to apply. **Consideration will be given to research focused on pathogenic mechanisms including inflammatory response, synaptic toxicity, neuronal toxicity, and endosomal/lysosomal trafficking defects**.

Basic research or new target discovery, genetic studies, biomarker research, neuro-imaging and clinical studies are currently outside the scope of this Program.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND
The Edward N. & Della L. Thome Memorial Foundation was created in 2002 to advance the health of older adults through the support of direct service projects and medical research on diseases and disorders affecting older adults.

As steward of the Thome Memorial Foundation, Bank of America, N.A., works with The Medical Foundation (TMF) to decide on the most qualified candidates. The Medical Foundation at Health Resources in Action (HRiA), a nonprofit organization in Boston, MA that advances public health and medical research.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Receive an invitation to submit a Full Proposal.
- Hold a faculty appointment at a non-profit, academic, medical, or research institution in the United States.
- Applicants may not have funding support for a similar project.
- Applicants may only submit one application as a PI.
- Applicants do not need to be nominated by their institutions.
- United States citizenship is not required; visa documentation is not required.

Eligibility is not limited to those investigators currently working in Alzheimer's Disease research. In addition, investigators from other fields are encouraged to apply with drug discovery and development research proposals directly relevant to Alzheimer's Disease.

REVIEW CRITERIA

The Scientific Review Committee uses the following criteria to evaluate proposals:

- Hypothesis and Research Aims that are clearly stated, and supported by relevant literature and preliminary data (if applicable)
- Objectives that are strong premise, and technically feasible
- Rigorous research methodology, data collection, and data analyses
- Qualifications of the applicant and prior experience in conducting innovative research
- Potential of the research project contributing to the effective treatment of Alzheimer's Disease
- Preference will be given to originality of ideas, regardless of faculty seniority

APPLICATION PROCESS AND NOTIFICATION SCHEDULE

The Alzheimer's Disease Drug Discovery Research Program is a two-stage proposal process. Only invited applicants may submit Full Proposals. Funding begins February 1.

TERMS OF THE AWARD

Please review the Terms of the Award (available for download: hria.org/tmf/ThomeAD) for information regarding use of the grant funds, indirect costs, reporting schedules and other Grantee and Institutional requirements.

Frequently Asked Questions are available for download: hria.org/tmf/ThomeAD

Instructions for Full Proposal

The application process requires completion of an Online Application and upload of a PDF and an Excel document.

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SECTION I: Online Application
NOTE: Invited applicants to the Full Proposal received an email with a link to access the online application.

Please review and update the following in the online form:
- Applicant Data: Institution, Contact, and Educational background information
- Research Project: Project Title, Keywords, Project Summary, Non-technical Summary

SECTION II: Attachment Instructions for PDF
Download templates for items A-C and D at hria.org/tmf/ThomeAD. All Items below other than Item D must be combined into ONE PDF for upload to the Online Application. Please number all pages prior to upload. Item D should be uploaded as an Excel file.

A. **Face Sheet:** The Face Sheet must be completed and signed by the Applicant and the Authorized Institutional Representative administratively responsible for the oversight of the project. Once all signatures have been obtained, the Face Sheet should be scanned and used as page 1 of the PDF. Download the Face Sheet Template here: hria.org/tmf/ThomeAD.

B. **Table of Contents**: Follow the Table of Contents template and number all pages sequentially.

C. **Project Summary**: Copy the Project Summary from the Online Form into the Project Summary template. The 300-word summary should state the project's broad, long-term objectives and specific aims.

D. **Thome Budget Template Section D**: Complete each tab in the Excel spreadsheet template. Total support from the Thome Foundation is $500,000 (total funding across two years must equal $500,000). Please note that overhead (indirect costs) may not be covered by the award.

E. **Research Proposal (maximum of ten pages, excluding references cited):**
Outline succinctly how the proposed research project may lead to significant improvements in current therapeutic strategies or create new approaches to treating Alzheimer's disease. In addition, be sure to describe how the proposal fits into the drug development pipeline.

Within the page limit, include these sections:
1) Background and Significance;
2) Specific Aims;
3) Preliminary data (if available);

4) Research Design, Experimental Methods and Analytical Plan;
5) Research Limitations and Contingencies;
6) Projected Timeline of Proposed Research Project
7) References Cited (*excluded from page count*)

<u>Proposal Format</u>:
- Arial 11 font and size must be used in the text of the research proposal section.
- Any figures, graphs, tables or pictures must be included within the 10 pages. For these visuals, the minimum is an 8 point-font size.
- Use single spacing within paragraphs, double spacing between paragraphs, and at least ½ inch margins on all four sides.
- Appendices are not permitted, however References Cited should be added to the Proposal (not included in the 10 page count)

F. Biosketch of PI/Applicant (use the current NIH biosketch, max 5 pages)
- Applicants must disclose all current (active) and pending (not closed) grants and clearly indicate any potential research or budgetary overlap with the Thome proposal. **In cases of potential overlap, a detailed explanation of project aims must be added to the biosketch, exclusive of the biosketch page limit, to address any apparent overlap or lack thereof.**
- If applicable, please also include Co-Investigator Biographical Sketch(es) to the upload. It is not necessary to include a Collaborators biosketch unless they are key personnel.

G. Department or Division Chair's Letter: This letter (forwarded to the Applicant for upload) must address the applicant's qualifications to conduct the proposed research independently as well as note the space and equipment available for the completion of the project. If the applicant is Chair of his/her department, a letter of recommendation from the Dean should be submitted.

H. Letter(s) of Collaboration (if applicable): When applicable, letters confirming the availability of resources outside the Applicant's institution or letters confirming any significant collaboration may be included (forwarded to the Applicant for upload). These are not additional letters of recommendation.

Out of fairness to applicants who adhere to the Guidelines, applications that do not conform to the stated application procedures or that contain more than the specified number of pages or materials will be rejected.

Frequently Asked Questions are available for download: hria.org/tmf/ThomeAD

Contact Information:
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Senior Grants Officer
The Medical Foundation

Guidance for Letters of Support/Collaboration/Recommendation

We are all working to reduce bias, and letters are sometimes biased in ways that systematically disadvantage people based on race and/or gender. As letters are being prepared, we have provided a table that provides suggestions for letter writing to help avoid bias as modeled after the University of Arizona's guidance on this topic.

Mention research & publications	Letters of reference for men are more likely to mention publications and to have multiple references to research. Put these critical accomplishments in every letter.
Don't stop too soon	On average, letters for women are shorter and more likely to make a minimal assurance ('she can do the job') rather than a ringing endorsement ('she is the best for the job').
We all share bias	Unconscious gender bias isn't exclusively a male problem. Research shows that women are as susceptible to these common pitfalls as men.
Keep it professional	Avoid gratuitous references to personal life and make sure you use formal titles and surnames for both men and women.
Stay away from stereotypes	Do not invoke negative stereotypes even indirectly ('she is not emotional'). Be careful evoking even positive gender stereotypes ('caring', 'compassionate', 'helpful'), as even these can potentially hurt a candidate.
Be careful raising doubt	Honest letters are crucial, but negative or irrelevant comments, such as 'challenging personality' or 'I have confidence that she will become better than average' are twice as common in letters for female applicants. Don't add doubt unless it is strictly necessary.