**Advancing Workforce Analysis and Research for Dementia Network
Request for Applications for Pilot Awards**

Up to $25,000 total (direct + indirect) costs
Award period: June 1, 2025 to May 31, 2026
Deadline: Friday, February 28, 2025, 11:59pm Pacific time
Award announcements will be made by mid-April 2025

Program Overview & Purpose

The Advancing Workforce Analysis and Research for Dementia (AWARD) Network promotes research on the health care workforce that serves people living with dementia. Researchers from any discipline who are interested in building or advancing a research portfolio that considers the health care workforce and dementia care are invited to participate in the AWARD Network. The AWARD Network emphasizes the direct care workforce, which is the largest occupation serving people living with dementia, including personal care aides, home health aides, nursing assistants, and other occupations with similar roles and job titles. These workers are affected by a range of policies and programs that vary across states, payers, and health care organizations, including differing training requirements, state-level regulations regarding what services direct care workers are allowed to provide, and reimbursement strategies that may affect demand for and wages of direct care workers. There is little empirical evidence to guide the evaluation and refinement of policies that impact the dementia care workforce even as the importance of ensuring an adequately sized and well-prepared direct care workforce is growing. There also is an urgent need to identify effective approaches to support direct care workers in their interactions with an increasingly diverse population of people living with dementia and with other health care professionals.

The AWARD Network is based at the Philip R Lee Institute for Health Policy Studies (IHPS). The Network is a collaborative venture of investigators from IHPS, Healthforce Center at UCSF, School of Nursing at UCSF, the Center for Health Workforce Studies at University of Washington, and PHI. The Network is funded by the National Institute on Aging.

Types of Pilot Awards

There are two types of Pilot Awards supported by the AWARD Network:

- Mini-Awards (previously called Research Fellowships), which provide up to $5,000 to support data acquisition (i.e., purchasing a dataset, traveling to conduct interviews for qualitative research), traveling to collaborate with a research mentor, attending a workshop, purchasing analytical software, or similar activities.
- Full Awards, which provide up to $25,000 total costs; Applicants for the Full Awards are encouraged to apply for less than $25,000 if appropriate for their Aims.

Pilot Awards are intended to support early-stage research on the workforce that serves people living with dementia. This research can be qualitative, quantitative, or use mixed methods, can be national, regional, or local in scope, and can focus on any topic related to the workforce and care for people with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. For Full Awards, priority will be given to projects that focus on the direct care workforce and are designed to help the applicant collect the data and research skills needed to submit a strong NIH K-award or R-award application. Direct care workers include three occupational categories defined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics: Nursing Assistants, Home Health Aides, and Personal Care Aides. Direct care workers assist older adults and people with disabilities with daily tasks, such as dressing, bathing, and eating. For Mini-Awards, priority will be given to activities that advance the applicant's research and provide support that is otherwise unavailable to the applicant. We are particularly interested in applications from promising early-stage scholars. We encourage applicants from populations under-represented in the U.S. biomedical, clinical, behavioral, and social sciences research enterprise.

Examples of the types of projects for Full Awards include, but are not limited to:

- Completing a research project that will position the investigator to pursue extramural support for related research.
- Completing preparatory work for a grant application, such as gathering preliminary data, conducting a small-scale or preliminary study that builds relationships with community or practice partners, or completing pilot analyses that will contribute to the application.

Examples of the types of projects for Mini-Awards include, but are not limited to:

- Purchasing a dataset, such as data for a dissertation
- Support for travel to collect interview data
- Paying data access fees to a Federal Statistical Research Data Center

All Pilot Award recipients will be expected to present their work in progress during an AWARD Network webinar or at an annual AWARD Network meeting.

Eligibility

To be eligible, principal applicants must:

- Be an AWARD Network member (you can join the Network here)
- Hold a doctoral degree or have advanced to candidacy for a doctoral degree
- Hold a faculty, research scientist, post-doctoral fellow, pre-doctoral candidate, or equivalent position at an eligible institution by the start date of the award. Applicants are not required to be U.S. citizens or permanent residents.
- Eligible institutions include U.S.-based colleges, universities, medical or nursing schools, or other fiscally responsible organizations. Prior to making an award, successful applicant organizations must be registered with System for Award Management (SAM) (https://www.sam.gov/SAM/) and have a Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering Systems (DUNS) number (http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform)

Selection criteria

A total of $50,000 is available for this funding cycle. The total number of awards will be based on the number of meritorious applications and request of each applicant. Each proposal can request up to $5,000 for Mini-Awards or $25,000 total costs for Full Awards.

For Full Awards, a review committee will use an approach similar to that conducted in the review of NIH proposals, with additional criteria suitable for this mechanism. Each proposal will be scored on a 9-point scale based on:

- Importance of the research (i.e., significance of the research, innovation)
- Rigor and feasibility of the project
- Expertise of the investigator relative to career stage and adequacy of resources available to complete the research
- Likelihood the project will lead to a large extramurally-funded study, such as an K-level career development award or R01.
- Alignment with priorities and funding opportunities at the National Institute on Aging, ideally identifying at least one NIA AD+ADRD Research Implementation Milestone.

For Mini-Awards, the review committee will score each proposal on a 5-point scale based on:

- Relevance of the applicant's research interests to the workforce that cares for people living with dementia
- Relevance of the proposed use of funding to advancing the applicant's research
- Expertise of the applicant relative to career stage
- Alignment with priorities and funding opportunities at the National Institute on Aging, ideally identifying at least one NIA AD+ADRD Research Implementation Milestone.

After scoring is complete, additional consideration and prioritization will be provided to early-stage investigators, researchers from under-represented and minoritized groups, and those whose research and career interests align with the goals of the AWARD Network.

Informational webinar

An informational webinar will be hosted to provide potential applicants with an overview of the program and application details. Potential applicants will have the opportunity to ask questions. Pre-registration is required.

Friday, January 24, 2025, 12:30-1:30pm PST

The webinar will also be recorded and posted online at: https://awardnetwork.ucsf.edu/pilot-grant-program

How to apply

Applications must be submitted as a single PDF via email to AWARDNetwork@ucsf.edu.

Applications must be submitted no later than Friday, February 28, 2025, 11:59pm Pacific time.

Full Award Applications

Applications for Full Awards must not exceed 4 single-spaced pages total, with one-inch margins, and be prepared in Arial Font 11 point or Times New Roman 12 point. The cover page, bibliography/references, biosketches, and budget are not counted in the page limit.

Cover page (not included in page limit):

- Project title
- Principal investigator's name and title (co-PIs are allowed; one must be designated as the contact PI)
- Principal investigator's email address and telephone number
- Organization/Institution name, address, city, state
- Names, titles, and institutions of co-investigators, mentors, collaborators, and consultant(s) on the project
- Indication of whether this is human subjects research and, if it is, the institution's Federal-Wide Assurance Number
- Total costs (direct + indirect). Please note that a subaward will be issued from a NIH grant, and your organization will likely expect you to use your organization's negotiated federal F&A rate. However, you are welcome to use a different rate if your organization allows you to do so.

Proposal body (4 pages maximum):

- Study aims: Describe the aims and objectives that will determine the scope, depth and overall direction of the study.
- Importance of the Research (Significance and Innovation): Describe the importance of the problem to be addressed and its relevance to the workforce that serves people living with dementia. Explain how the application addresses important gaps in knowledge or challenges and/or advances current shortcomings in research on the workforce that serves people living with dementia. This can include novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, or intervention(s) to be developed.) Please include how this research aligns with at least one NIA AD+ADRD Research Implementation Milestone.
- Approach: Describe the overall strategy, methodology, and planned analyses. If appropriate, include feasibility, preliminary studies, potential problems, and alternative strategies. For example, should data need to be acquired, applicants should describe any strategies that will be necessary to obtain project data and complete the project within the year.
- Future Aims: Describe how this work will lead to publications, future grants and investigator's career advancement. The applicant should describe how the results of the pilot will lead to an application to the National Institute on Aging or other large-scale funding opportunity and the timeline for that application.
- Research team: Describe the Principal Investigator's and team members' backgrounds and how their training, prior research, and/or interests have prepared them to successfully complete the proposed research.

Budget (does not count in page limit):

- Budgets should prepared using the PHS 398 form, page 4
- Please use June 1, 2025, as the proposed start date. The actual start date may differ, depending on the length of time required to establish a subaward with your institution.
- Funds can be used for personnel, data collection and/or purchases, research-related supplies, travel, and publication fees
- A budget justification must be included, which explains the roles of individuals who will be supported and justifies all other expenses
- Awards are for 12 months and up to $25,000 in total costs. Pilot award recipients may use their federally-negotiated indirect cost rates; however, they may use a different rate if allowed by their organization. Please work with your local grants management office

early in the process of preparing your budget to clarify budgeting of direct and indirect dollars.

Additional Documents (does not count toward the page limit):

- Bibliography and references
- NIH-style biosketches (standard non-fellowship format) for the PI, any co-investigators or consultants who would be paid by the Pilot Award, and any other key personnel the PI wants to highlight as part of the proposal. Please ensure that each biosketch includes position/title, education/training, personal statement, positions/honors, and contributions to science. Please indicate if investigators are from populations under-represented in the U.S. biomedical, clinical, behavioral, and social sciences research enterprise.

NOTE: Protection of Human Subjects Documentation – documentation of IRB approval will be required before funds are dispersed for any projects involving human subjects.

Mini-Award Applications

Applications for Mini-Awards must not exceed 2 single-spaced pages total, with one-inch margins, and be prepared in Arial Font 11 point or Times New Roman 12 point. The cover page, bibliography/references, biosketches, and budget are not counted in the page limit.

Cover page (not included in page limit):

- Project title
- Applicant's name and title
- Applicant's email address and telephone number
- Organization/Institution name, address, city, state
- Names, titles, and institutions of co-investigators, mentors, collaborators, and consultant(s) on the project
- Indication of whether this is human subjects research and, if it is, the institution's Federal-Wide Assurance Number
- Costs requested

Proposal body (2 pages maximum):

- Purpose of Request: Briefly describe the aims and objectives for which the funds will be used.
- Importance of the Research: Describe the research project for which the funds will be used and how the funds will fill an important gap in resources available for the research. Please include how this research aligns with at least one NIA AD+ADRD Research Implementation Milestone.
- Applicant Qualifications: Describe the Applicant's (and any collaborators' or mentors') backgrounds and how their training, prior research, and/or interests have prepared them to successfully complete the proposed research. Describe the relevance of the Applicant's research to the workforce that cares for people living with dementia.
- Future Aims: Describe how this work will support the long-term goals of the Applicant.

Budget (does not count in page limit):

- Provide a general budget and justification of the budget. This must include specific information about the proposed use of funds. Budgets may be prepared using the PHS

[398 form, page 4](#), but this format is not required. Ensure enough detail is provided to explain and justify the request.

- Funds can be used for personnel, data collection and/or purchases, research-related supplies, travel, and publication fees
- Funds must be used within a 12-month period.

Additional Documents (does not count toward the page limit):

- [NIH-style biosketches](#) for the Applicant and any collaborators or mentors. Please ensure that each biosketch includes position/title, education/training, personal statement, positions/honors, and contributions to science. Please indicate if Applicant is from [populations under-represented in the U.S. biomedical, clinical, behavioral, and social sciences research enterprise](#).

NOTE: Protection of Human Subjects Documentation – documentation of IRB approval will be required before funds are dispersed for any projects involving human subjects.

Questions?

For eligibility, program, and budget-related questions, please contact AWARDNetwork@ucsf.edu.

For general information on the AWARD Network, please visit https://awardnetwork.ucsf.edu/