

## **Alzheimer's Research UK Position Statement for researchers**

We can reassure our dementia research community that we are acutely aware of the challenges that the COVID-19 situation presents. Recent developments have resulted in the closure of most research organisations, with researchers increasingly working remotely. Meetings and conferences have been cancelled. We are also mindful that clinical colleagues are now focused on responding to developments in the healthcare system.

The current COVID-19 situation will also have serious financial implications for many sectors, and it is very sensible for us to fully consider and understand what the short to medium term implications are likely to be for Alzheimer's Research UK.

For these reasons, we are looking across our portfolio to delay the start of any new funding or partnerships until the full implications of COVID-19 are better understood.

We have made the difficult decision to postpone our response-mode funding programme until the Autumn. This means that:

- The Grant Review Board meeting planned for June will be cancelled.
- All applications currently under review will be discussed at the Grant Review Board meeting in January 2021.
- We currently plan to open new rounds for funding in the Autumn.
- Any disruptions to research funding activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic will be taken into consideration by our Board to make appropriate adjustments when assessing your record of outputs, research achievements, and career progression.

### **Information for grant holders**

We would like to take this opportunity to reassure our grant holders that we will continue to be flexible across our grant schemes, to help support our scientists and minimise the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the pioneering dementia research that is being conducted across the UK and internationally. We recognise that in these uncertain times there may need to be significant changes to the way in which projects are carried out due to restrictions on travel, work, recruitment etc and we would like to reassure you that you have our full support should you need to request any of the following measures:

- We will respond positively to requests for no-cost extensions.
- We will continue to be flexible with budget virements to ensure that any underspend can be fully utilised to cover unexpected additional costs caused by the COVID-19 situation. For major budget rearrangements, please do seek further advice from a member of the team.
- We will consider requests to temporarily suspend grants for a period of up to three months in the first instance. This may be applied in cases where all grant activity/spend has been temporarily halted due to the COVID-19 situation.
- Please note, all requests must be sent to us in writing at [research@alzheimersresearchuk.org](mailto:research@alzheimersresearchuk.org)

We are aware of the fact that researchers have been asked to help government authorities during the crisis. We are fully supportive of Alzheimer's Research UK-funded equipment and staff contributing to this effort.

**If you are a newly-funded grant holder:**

- If you are a newly-funded grant holder, we can offer the option to delay the grant start date for a period of up to six months.
- If you have not yet signed your contract and are unable to return a signed contract by the stated deadline due to institution closures, we can offer deadline extensions.

**If your salary or stipend is paid for by an Alzheimer's Research UK grant:**

If a researcher whose salary is paid through an Alzheimer's Research UK grant is ill, we will defer to the policy of the employing organisation.

In the event that a researcher whose salary is paid through an Alzheimer's Research UK grant is in self-isolation due to government advice, we expect them to be able to work from home even if the activities undertaken change. Where self-isolation undermines a researcher's ability to complete the project within the funded period, we would expect an extension of salary costs to be covered by any underspend on the grant. If this is not possible, Alzheimer's Research UK will aim to meet the salary costs for up to three months at the end of the grant.

If you are a clinical academic who is seconded back to the NHS to support the front-line coronavirus response, we will continue to pay your salary, however, we expect you to recover these costs from the NHS when it is possible to do so. ARUK will not be able to pay for later salary extensions in such cases.

**Alzheimer's Research UK funded meetings/conferences**

If you are due to receive Alzheimer's Research UK support towards a meeting/conference that now needs to be postponed due to the government-induced restrictions regarding COVID-19, we will honour these payments provided your event is rescheduled within 12 months of the original date, and the programme remains essentially the same. If this is not possible, or for any other queries, please do get in touch with the team for further advice.

**Finally, as the COVID-19 situation is evolving rapidly at this stage, it may be necessary for us to update our guidance in the coming days and weeks. We will communicate any changes as soon as we can. Please check our website regularly to keep up to date.**

**The Alzheimer's Research UK Office**

Following the recent government advice, our office is now closed, and staff are working remotely. The Research team remains fully contactable by email and phone and will continue to provide support to grant holders and prospective applicants. If you have any queries at all, please do get in touch at [research@alzheimersresearchuk.org](mailto:research@alzheimersresearchuk.org) and we will get back to you as quickly as possible.