

FONDATION VAINCRE ALZHEIMER

2023 GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Statement of Purpose:

In the European Grant Cycle, Fondation Vaincre Alzheimer (FVA) awards grants for basic, translational, and clinical research that studies the underlying mechanisms of, and possible therapeutic treatments for (specific) dementia(s). Projects are mainly evaluated on whether the proposed research is likely to improve our understanding of the pathophysiology and underlying mechanisms causing Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and/or is likely to effectively promote therapeutic strategies. Note that **applications involving groups that focus on Alzheimer's Disease related dementias (ADRD) are strongly encouraged**. However, all applications are reviewed together on a competitive peer review basis.

It is understood that more senior dementia investigators will have other funding in related areas of research, but the application to Fondation Vaincre Alzheimer should not be used to simply subsidize these other efforts or to compensate for grant cutbacks. **Therefore, the applicant is advised to focus on a specific project that can be addressed in terms of a clear and well-defined hypothesis and specific aims and completed within a reasonable time.** Please keep this in mind when preparing the research/work plan section of the application.

Terms and Restrictions for the grant application:

FVA grants are awarded to

- Public universities
- Public research Institutions (EPST and EPSCP only)
- The group to which the Principal Investigator (PI) is affiliated (not to individuals).

Funds cannot be used for

- Salary of the PI except for End of Thesis Grants
- Institutional overhead
- Large capital equipment
- Construction of buildings
- VAT
- Administrative overheads and other indirect costs

Board decision

To ensure that FVA is funding meritorious research proposals that have a high potential for success, the BOD bases its funding decisions on the results of a formal, rigorous peer-review process, taking program goals and the availability of funds into consideration. In line with this, the SAB and BOD will select only grants that have received a sufficient, pre-set high rank which guarantees the quality of the research. Applications that receive a low quality score, i.e. ranking below "good" get a low priority and will not be funded.

In addition FVA strives to maintain a good balance in funding between:

- (i) Experience level of investigators (established versus young/promising candidates)
- (ii) Topics/areas of study within the dementia research field
- (iii) Applications overlapping with research proposals funded by other organizations

Funding Overlap

If the FVA proposal overlaps, partially or completely, with any current or new research funded by other granting organizations, the BOD will not fund the project. Overlap can be scientific or financial and concerns the PI, co-PI, and other collaborators of the project. The BOD accepts to fund FVA proposals that are scientifically and financially complementary to grants from other organizations. To avoid any funding overlap, FVA asks candidates for their applications presented to other organizations and their research projects currently funded by other organizations. Failure to notify receipt of overlapping grants may result in reimbursement of the grant to FVA.

Overview of the available grants:

- [Research Grants](#) max. €100.000, duration between 1-2 years
- [PhD Fellowship Grants](#) max. €121.000, fixed duration of 3 years
- [Cross Border Grants](#) max. €200.000, fixed duration of 2 years
- [Early Career Grants](#) max. €50.000, duration between 1-2 years
- [End of Thesis Grants](#) max. €40.000, duration between 6 and 12 months

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Table 1: Grant applications submitted by tenured researchers: Research Grant, PhD Fellowship, and Cross Border Grant Specifications 2023

	Research Grant	PhD Fellowship	Cross Border Grant
Project duration	1 or 2 years	3 years (fixed)	2 years (fixed)
Maximum budget	€100.000 for 2 years €50.000 for 1 year	Up to € 121.000	€200.000, divided over the PI and co-PI
Budget distribution	Half-yearly payments up to €25.000 are made by FVA. This can potentially be increased, see the conditions down below*.	Half-yearly payments up to €21.000 are made by FVA. Only the exact amount of the PhD salary costs will be reimbursed.	Half-yearly payments up to €33.500 are made by FVA. This can potentially be increased, see the conditions down below *.
Funding specifications	<p>Cannot be used for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PI salary • Master M2 student salary • Part of a PhD student salary 	<p>Funding exclusively reserved to pay the salary of a PhD student during the first 3 years of thesis, not solely for the end of a thesis.</p> <p>You will be requested to submit the price list of your institution (<i>grille tarifaire</i>) as justification.</p> <p>Co-funding of the PhD fellowship with a regional department is allowed.</p>	<p>Cannot be used for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PI salary • Master M2 student salary
Eligibility criteria PI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works at a French University or research institution (EPST and EPSCP) • Holds the academic rank of tenured researcher, associate professor or higher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works at a French University or research institution (EPST and EPSCP) • Holds the academic rank of tenured researcher, associate professor or higher • Should be the supervisor of the thesis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works at a French University or research institution (EPST and EPSCP) • Holds the academic rank of tenured researcher, associate professor or higher

* Max. 70% of the budget can be requested per year. However, since the payments are sent each half year, the institution to which the PI is affiliated will have to advance the amount should more funds be requested than the half-yearly €25.000 (Research Grants) or €33.500 (Cross Border Grants)

Table 2: Grant applications submitted by junior researchers: Early Career Grant and End of Thesis Grant Specifications 2023

	Early Career Grant	End of Thesis Grant
Project duration	1 or 2 years	Between 6 and 12 months
Maximum budget	€50.000 for 2 years €25.000 for 1 year	€40.000 for 12 months €30.000 for 9 months €20.000 for 6 months
Budget distribution	Half-yearly payments up to €12.500 are made by FVA. This can potentially be increased, see the conditions down below**.	Half-yearly payments up to €20.000 are made by FVA. Only the exact amount of the PhD salary costs will be reimbursed.
Funding specifications	<p><u>Cannot</u> be used for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PI salary - Master M2 student salary - Part of a PhD student salary <p>The PI must ensure that their salary is covered during the grant.</p>	<p>Funding <u>exclusively</u> reserved to pay the <u>salary</u> of a PhD student during the 4th year of their thesis.</p> <p>You will be requested to submit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the price list of your institution (<i>grille tarifaire</i>) as justification • doctoral contract of the student • if granted, a proof of registration in the 4th year of thesis at a French University
Eligibility criteria PI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works at a French University or research institution (EPST and EPSCP) • Post-doctoral level (ATER and IR are also eligible), maximum 10 years after obtaining the PhD, with some exceptions*** • A junior researcher who just obtained a tenure position (CR, IR or MCU) maximum 2 years after obtaining the position • If still a PhD student, the PI should obtain their PhD before the 31st of December of the year in which they apply for the Early Career Grant • Medical Doctors ≤40 years with MD and clinical research experience (publications as first or last author) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works at a French University or research institution (EPST and EPSCP) • PhD student in 2nd or 3rd year of their thesis, requesting support for a 4th year. The PhD student is the PI of the End of Thesis Grant and therefore submits the application. • Has scientific or medical training (medicine, pharmacy or veterinarian).

** Max. 70% of the budget can be requested per year. However, since the payments are sent each half year, the institution to which the PI is affiliated will have to advance the amount should more funds be requested than the half-yearly €25.000 (Research Grants) or €33.500 (Cross Border Grants)

***The 10 years are counted from the PhD date to the date of the beginning of the funding. For maternity leave(s), the effective elapsed time since the PhD defence will be reduced by 1 year per child. For paternity leave(s) the elapsed time will be shortened by the leave taken for each child born. For time taken off due to long-term illness, the elapsed time will be reduced by the duration of the absent period.

Additional information for Research Grants, PhD Fellowships, and Early Career Grants

- See Table 1 for general specifications of Research Grants and PhD Fellowships, see Table 2 for general specification for Early Career Grants.
- The call for Research Grants, PhD Fellowships and Early Career Grants opens once per year and has two tiers. The 2023 call will open on 3 January 2023 and the deadline for the Letter of Intent (LOI) is 1 February at 13:00.
- There are no limitations to the number of Research Grants, PhD Fellowships, and Early Career Grants you can apply for or receive throughout your career. However, applicants can apply for one grant only during the same grant cycle.
- A new FVA grant cannot overlap in funding or in topic with that of an active FVA grant or with a FVA grant that has been extended. A PI may receive funding from only one FVA grant simultaneously. Grantees can submit a grant application (new or renewal) at the earliest 1 year after the end of the last budget year of their former grant.
- The starting date of the projects applied for should be between 1 January 2024 and 1 July 2024. Projects cannot start before 1 January 2024 as the formal awarding only occurs at the end of the year in December (please also see Table 3).
- In the grant application, the scientific research plan should be hypothesis driven, coherent and focused. The research plan should be efficiently worked out and it should be described in a convincing manner that the proposed research can be completed within the time available.
- Investigators from the same lab can apply if there is no scientific/funding overlap.
- A PI cannot be included in the personnel section of another application submitted in the same cycle to AN, AFI, or FVA. They can be a consultant (time spent <5%) in other projects, which should be mentioned in the embedding section of the application.
- The PI should not include an AN, AFI, or FVA Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) member as collaborator of the study in the personnel section of their application. For ethical reasons a SAB member can be a consultant only (time spent <5%), which should be mentioned in the embedding section of the application. The SAB member will be excluded from the review of the project.
- Please note that FVA applicants and grantees can be requested to review future AN, FVA, or AFI applications that fit their expertise.

Grant Cycle Procedure – Review of Research Grants, PhD Fellowships, and Early Career Grants:

Awards are granted based on scientific merit and quality of the applicant's research proposal, and its relevance for improving our understanding of the etiology of Alzheimer's disease or other related dementias. Funding decisions are based on the results of a formal, rigorous peer-review process, taking program goals and the availability of funds into consideration.

FVA uses a two-tier peer-reviewed process in which applicants are first asked to submit a short summary of their project (LOI). The applicants that have submitted the best LOIs are subsequently asked to submit full applications.

In the first tier the LOIs are reviewed and selected based on feasibility of the research plan, the applicant's past performance, and relevance of the topic for Alzheimer's disease or other related dementias, as assessed by 3 members of the European SAB. **FVA will preselect a maximum of 2 investigators of the same laboratory.**

Upon selection, applicants are invited to submit a full proposal that will be peer reviewed by 3 members of the European SAB, as well as a 4th external expert. The scope and main aims of this full proposal should not differ significantly from the LOI submitted in the first tier. In October, the applications and evaluations are discussed and ranked in a joint meeting of the European SAB.

FVA will select a maximum of 1 investigator of the same laboratory.

For the submission of the proposals FVA uses an online grant application portal which can be found here: www.alzheimer-research.eu

Please see Table 3 below for more details on the Grant Cycle timelines for 2023.

Table 3: Time table European Grant Cycle 2023: Research Grants, PhD Fellowships, and Early Career Grants

Call for applications with LOI open	3 January
Deadline for LOI	1 February 13:00
Confirmation LOI was received and is eligible is sent to the applicant by the European Grant Manager	First half of February
Request for full application or denial letters are sent to the applicant by the European Grant Manager	Late April
Deadline for full applications	7 June 13:00
Final decision is communicated to the applicants by FVA	December
Research project start	Between 1 January and 1 July 2024

Applicants will be notified in writing of the FVA Board of Director's decision concerning their application **before December 31st**. FVA staff is not authorized to provide information on priority scores, ranking, or likelihood of funding of applications prior to written notification of applicants. Please do not telephone FVA or SAB members to request such information. Your application will be handled in a confidential way at all times.

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Additional information for Cross Border Grants

- See Table 1 for general specifications of Cross Border Grants.
- Cross Border Grants (CBGs) are awarded to collaborative projects between France and Germany or between France and The Netherlands. These projects should benefit from this international collaboration, which should be highlighted in the project application. Articles resulting from this collaboration should also be published jointly.
- The maximum allowed split of the budget between the PI and co-PI is 67:33, with a maximum budget of €200.000. The researcher that requests the biggest share is seen as the PI and will be the submitting main applicant. The co-PI will not have to submit a separate application. In the event of a 50:50 split, the researchers decide who will be the PI (and thus submits the application) and who the co-PI. Both researchers will receive all communication regarding the application and funding decision.
- Each organization funds in its own country. In a French-German CBG the researcher in Germany is paid through AFI, in a French-Dutch CBG the researcher in The Netherlands is paid through AN. The co-PI working in Germany/The Netherlands will need to adhere to the AFI or AN Funding Guidelines, respectively. In addition, the co-PI cannot be a (co-)PI or collaborator on another project in the same grant cycle that year of AN, AFI, and FVA. The AFI and FVA guidelines can be found here:
 - AFI: [AFI Research Funding](#)
 - AN: [AN Call Biomedical Research](#)
- The call for Cross Borders grants opens once per year, in January, and has two tiers.
- There are no limitations to the number of Cross Border Grants you can apply for or receive throughout your career. However, you can apply for one grant only during the same grant cycle.
- A new FVA grant cannot overlap in funding or in topic with that of an active FVA grant or with a FVA grant that has been extended. A PI may receive funding from only one FVA grant simultaneously. Grantees can submit a grant application (new or renewal) at the earliest 1 year after the end of the last budget year of their former grant.
- In the grant application, the scientific research plan should be hypothesis driven, coherent and focused. The research plan should be efficiently worked out and it should be described in a convincing manner that the proposed research can be completed within the time available.
- Investigators from the same lab can apply if there is no scientific/funding overlap.
- A PI cannot be included in the personnel section of another application submitted in the same cycle to AN, AFI, or FVA. They can be a consultant (time spent <5%) in other projects, which should be mentioned in the embedding section of the application.
- The PI should not include an AN, AFI, or FVA Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) member as collaborator of the study in the personnel section of their application. For ethical reasons a SAB member can be a consultant only (time spent <5%), which should be mentioned in the application's embedding section. The SAB member will be excluded from that project's review.
- Please note that FVA applicants and grantees can be requested to review future AN, FVA, or AFI applications that fit their expertise.

Grant Cycle Procedure – Review of Cross Border applications:

Awards are granted based on scientific merit and quality of the applicant's research proposal, and its relevance for improving our understanding of the etiology of Alzheimer's disease or other related dementias. Funding decisions are based on the results of a formal, rigorous peer-review process, taking program goals and the availability of funds into consideration

AN, AFI, and FVA use a two-tier peer-reviewed process in which applicants are first asked to submit a short summary of their project: Letter of Intent (LOI). The applicants that have submitted the best LOIs are subsequently asked to submit full applications.

In the first tier the LOIs are reviewed and selected based on feasibility of the research plan, the applicant's past performance, and relevance of the topic for Alzheimer's disease or other related dementias, as assessed by 3 members of the European SAB. **FVA will preselect a maximum of 2 investigators of the same laboratory.**

Upon selection, applicants are invited to submit a full proposal that will be peer reviewed by 3 members of the European SAB, as well as a 4th external expert. The scope and main aims of this full proposal should not differ significantly from the LOI submitted in the first tier. In October, the applications and evaluations are discussed and ranked in a joint meeting of the European SAB. **FVA will select a maximum of 1 investigator of the same laboratory.**

Each organisation has a dedicated budget for the Cross Border Grants that allows them to fund at least 1 Cross Border project between their country and another one. Proposal will be funded in accordance with the final ranking order, starting with the highest ranked that is recommended for funding. When going down this ranking order, it will be verified for each proposal that is recommended for funding if sufficient budget is still available from the involved two organisations. In the case that the remaining budget is no longer sufficient, the organisations will decide if they increase the dedicated budget for the call. If this is not possible, the proposal will not be funded.

For the submission of the proposals FVA uses an online grant application portal which can be found here: www.alzheimer-research.eu.

Please see Table 4 below for more details on the Grant Cycle timelines for 2023.

Table 4: Time table European Grant Cycle 2023: Cross Border Grants

Call for applications with LOI open	3 January
Deadline for LOI	1 February 13:00
Confirmation LOI was received and is eligible is sent to the applicant by the European Grant Manager	First half of February
Request for full application or denial letters are sent to the applicant by the European Grant Manager	Late April
Deadline for full applications	7 June 13:00
Final decision is communicated to the applicants by FVA	December
Research project start	Between 1 January and 1 July 2024

Applicants will be notified in writing of the FVA Board of Director's decision concerning their application **before December 31st**. FVA staff is not authorized to provide information on priority scores, ranking, or likelihood of funding of applications prior to written notification of applicants. Please do not telephone FVA or SAB members to request such information. Your application will be handled in a confidential way at all times.

Additional information for End of Thesis Grants

- See Table 2 for general specifications of End of Thesis Grants.
- The call End of Thesis Grants opens once per year and has only 1 tier. The 2023 call will open on 3 January 2023 and the deadline for the Letter of Intent (LOI) application is 1 February at 13:00.
- There are no limitations to the number of End of Thesis Grants you can apply for or receive throughout your career. However, applicants can apply for one grant only during the same grant cycle.
- A new FVA grant cannot overlap in funding or in topic with that of an active FVA grant or with a FVA grant that has been extended. A PI may receive funding from only one FVA grant simultaneously. Grantees can submit a grant application (new or renewal) at the earliest 1 year after the end of the last budget year of their former grant.
- End of Thesis projects applied for can start between the date of the board decision until up to 1 year after the approval. Please also see Table 5.
- In the grant application, the scientific research plan should be hypothesis driven, coherent and focused. The research plan should be efficiently worked out and it should be described in a convincing manner that the proposed research can be completed within the time available.
- Investigators from the same lab can apply if there is no scientific/funding overlap.
- A PI cannot be included in the personnel section of another application submitted in the same cycle to AN, AFI, or FVA. They can be a consultant (time spent <5%) in other projects, which should be mentioned in the embedding section of the application.
- The PI should not include an AN, AFI, or FVA Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) member as collaborator of the study in the personnel section of their application. For ethical reasons a SAB member can be a consultant only (time spent <5%), which should be mentioned in the embedding section of the application. The SAB member will be excluded from the review of the project.
- Please note that FVA applicants and grantees can be requested to review future AN, FVA, or AFI applications that fit their expertise.

Grant Cycle Procedure – Review of End of Thesis applications:

Awards are granted based on scientific merit and quality of the applicant's research proposal, and its relevance for improving our understanding of the etiology of Alzheimer's disease or other related dementias. Funding decisions are based on the results of a formal, rigorous peer-review process, taking program goals and the availability of funds into consideration.

FVA uses a 1 tier peer-reviewed process for End of Thesis Grants in which applicants are asked to only submit a LOI proposal. This application will be peer reviewed by 3 members of the European SAB and scored based on the feasibility of the research plan, the applicant's past performance (in the PhD thesis) and relevance of the topic for Alzheimer's disease or other related dementias. **FVA will select a maximum of 1 investigator of the same laboratory**

For the submission of the proposals FVA uses an online grant application portal which can be found here: www.alzheimer-research.eu.

Please see Table 5 below for more details on the Grant Cycle timelines for 2023.

Table 5: Time table European Grant Cycle 2023: End of Thesis Grants

Call for applications with End of Thesis LOI open	3 January
Deadline for End of Thesis LOI	1 February 13:00
Confirmation LOI was received and is eligible is sent to the applicant by the European Grant Manager	First half of February
Final decision is communicated to the End of Thesis applicants	April – May
Research project start	Before 1 January 2024

FVA staff is not authorized to provide information on priority scores, ranking, or likelihood of funding of applications prior to written notification of applicants. Please do not telephone AN or SAB members to request such information. Your application will be handled in a confidential way at all times.



Additional information and rules after funding approval:

Shifting dates of the grant

After the approval of the grant the grantee should inform FVA immediately if the project is delayed (max. 6 months).

Budget

The project will receive funds **only when operational**.

Grant payments are made on a half-year basis.

If budget revisions are necessary, requests must be made in writing to FVA with a clear justification:

- A cost-neutral prolongation (6 months maximum)
- Transfers of more than € 2.000 from one budget category to another requires FVA approval

FVA prefers that grant funds be expended in a timely manner in accordance with the research plan presented in the grant application. If there is more than 15% of the total grant award remaining in the grant account at the end of the grant period, permission may be requested to extend the grant period with no increase in funding. A written requests/justification must be submitted for this.

Overlapping Grant Awards

FVA awards funds only that **FVA is the main financial supporter of the research project for which funding was requested. Co-funding of complementary, non-overlapping approaches are possible and should be clearly explained and justified in the application.** FVA does not allow its grants to be used for identical and/or overlapping research projects that are already funded by another source without written FVA permission and full knowledge.

In order to avoid funding overlap, FVA reserves the right to ask candidates for applications submitted to other organizations and for research project currently funded by other organizations.

Failure to report the receipt of overlapping grant funds during the grants period may require, as determined at the sole discretion of FVA, the return of all, or part of, the funding awarded by FVA to the grantee. Furthermore, the grantee is responsible for all costs of FVA in obtaining the return of the grant award funds including but not limited to reasonable attorney's fees incurred.

Human/Animal Research Subjects

FVA requires that research supported by FVA meets or exceeds national regulations regarding the use of human subjects or animals in research. Applicants must provide written certification of approval by the appropriate Ethic Commission before funding begins.

Concerning research involving animals, FVA requires that applicants follow the “Animal Research: Reporting In Vivo Experiments” (ARRIVE) guidelines.

Applicants who wish to use post-mortem human brain tissues are strongly encouraged to request samples from the national biobank [Neuro CEB](#). Your samples request will be evaluated by members of the FVA SAB (review period ~2 weeks).

Sharing of Reagents

FVA believes that biological reagents (e.g. recombinant DNA clones, cultured cell lines, hybridoma cell lines, mutant or unique organisms etc.) developed during the course of FVA-sponsored research must be made available to qualified investigators after the publication of reports using or describing the reagents. These materials represent a valuable resource for the scientific community at large, paid for by the generous contributions of FVA’s donors. The availability of these reagents directly affects the ability of the members of the scientific community to replicate the experiments of others and the pace and cost of future research. Therefore, FVA requires that the PI and the grantee institution accept the responsibility of providing biological reagents developed during the course of FVA-sponsored research to investigators who request them.

Public Education and Acknowledgement

FVA is a publicly supported charitable organization funded by donor contributions and has an active public education program that informs donors and other interested individuals about the research we sponsor. Information provided to the public by FVA may include the title of the project, the name and institutional affiliation of the PI, the amount of the award, and the non-technical project description provided by the applicant. Therefore, the non-technical description should not contain confidential information. The submission of this application shall be deemed consent of the applicant to the publication of this information should a grant be awarded. Awardees are aware that they may be asked by FVA to assist in the information of the general audience, e.g. by providing information on new developments in their research field or by giving an interview, a presentation or lecture at meetings and events, lab tours or workshops supported by FVA. Photos of the PI and his/her team must be made available without restrictions.

All publications, papers, book chapters or presentations, resulting from research sponsored by FVA must be acknowledged as follows: “Funding was provided by Fondation Vaincre Alzheimer”, followed by the grant application number.

Open Access Publication

FVA supports open access and follows the national French law (Loi n° 2016-1321 du 7 octobre 2016 pour une République numérique). We strongly encourage researchers to publish in open access journals or to publish in a repository that is freely accessible.

Discontinuation of Grant Funding

Although FVA has committed grant funding for the stated term of the grant, it reserves the right to discontinue the grant at any time in the event the work performed is in breach of the terms and obligations stated herein.