

2026-27 READ and EC-READ FAQs

Can you provide recording of the informational webinars?

No, but this document contains Questions and Answers from potential applicants, and additional questions can be submitted at any time to: ADRD@nber.org.

Eligibility Questions:

Do applicants need to be faculty members? Do they need to be from educational institutions?

For the READ awards, applicants must hold a faculty or research scientist position or be otherwise eligible to serve as a Principal Investigator as determined by their institution. Graduate students are not eligible to serve as Principal Investigator for this mechanism.

For EC-READ awards, Applicants must be 1) within 10 years of post-doctoral training, 2) must not have previously served as the Principal Investigator of an NIH grant, and 3) hold a faculty position at the rank of associate professor or below or have a research scientist position at an academic institution. Graduate students are not eligible to serve as Principal Investigators. Applicants must be legally authorized to work for any employer in the US or be able to obtain authorization to work for the NBER. The NBER is able to sponsor Principal Investigators for concurrent H-1B visas.

Can a PhD student apply to the EC-READ award?

No, you must already have obtained your degree and hold either a faculty member or research scientist position.

Our research group is deciding between applying for a READ vs EC-READ award, do you have guidance?

EC-READ awards are meant to encourage and mentor individual junior investigators who are beginning to study the economics of AD/ADRD. EC-READ awards have a smaller budget than READ awards, which are more suitable for a group of investigators.

Can research be done outside the US? Can data from outside the US be used?

Research funds cannot be spent outside the US. All personnel receiving salary support must be in the US, and data cannot be purchased from foreign sources.

Do I have to attend an informational webinar in order to apply?

No

Can the same person or research team submit more than one proposal?

Individuals may serve as Principal Investigator or co-Principal Investigator once per award type in each funding cycle. Individuals may, however, participate as "Other Key Personnel" on additional applications, and investigators are allowed to submit both an EC-READ and READ application, if

desired.

Can a READ application have multiple Co-Principal Investigators?

Yes

Can an EC-READ application have multiple Co-Principal Investigators?

No, the EC-READ awards are intended to cover one early scholar, and perhaps a research assistant. A larger research team would be better suited to apply for the READ award.

Can a READ award support two investigators at different institutions?

Yes. This is a common occurrence. We recommend that the two researchers submit separate subaward budgets to NBER, with one from each of their institutions. Please keep in mind that for one award, the total of both budgets combined cannot exceed \$200,000 including indirect costs.

Are READ awards limited to 1-year projects, or are multi-year projects allowed?

READ projects must be designed for completion within one year. One-time extensions may be granted to awardees who experience unforeseen challenges such as data acquisition delays outside of their control.

Will the NBER be offering this grant program again next year?

Yes, we anticipate that a similar call will be released next year.

What prior funding makes someone *ineligible* to apply for the EC-READ award?

These awards are intended for researchers who are in situations similar to having New Investigator status with NIH. Those who have received NIH funding as the PI of a K-award or R01 are *not* eligible to apply for EC-READ awards.

Could someone be eligible to apply for the EC-READ award if it has been more than 10 years since they obtained their graduate degree?

Possibly. Applicants are eligible if they would qualify for an extension of New Investigator status (NIS) through the NIH. (Early Stage Investigator (ESI) is a form of NIS). If applicable, please include an ESI extension request that adheres to these [NIH Policies](#). If your application is provisionally recommended for funding during the review process, your ESI extension request will be reviewed by the EC-READ program directors and NIH program officers for final determination.

For the EC-READ award, may I request a mentor?

It is not necessary for EC-READ applicants to request a mentor. Upon receiving the award, the coordinating center leaders will pair the EC-READ awardee with a mentor affiliated with the Coordinating Center.

Can I submit a proposal as an investigator on a READ award if I am already an investigator on a currently-funded Consortium project?

Yes, you may. Being a PI or a co-PI on a currently-funded Consortium project does not preclude someone from being the PI or Co-PI on a new READ application.

I am applying to the EC-READ award and have an H-1B visa through my institution. How do concurrent visas through the NBER work?

NBER will apply for your concurrent visa on your behalf. The H1B application fee will need to be charged to the grant, and the cost is currently \$960. If you split your effort over two summers, we would do a second application for the next summer which would cost an additional \$460. We do not need to request premium processing for concurrent applications. They are covered under the portability provision, which means the beneficiary can begin working for the new employer during the requested validity period as long as USCIS has received the application. The approvals often come well after the fact.

Research Questions

Is the use of data from the long-term care data cooperative required? Is the use of Medicare data preferred?

There are no requirements for research projects to use particular data sets. Proposals for innovative research that utilize any dataset are welcome.

Are the priority research areas different for the READ and EC-READ awards?

No, the priority research areas are the same for both awards, and are listed on pages 3-4 on the [READ RFA](#) and on page 4 of the [EC-READ RFA](#). However, the READ RFA also lists the following topics of particular interest in addition to the priority research areas:

- **Valuing interventions and innovations in care and treatment:** Studies of the economic value of timely and accurate diagnosis, emerging diagnostic tools, newly approved and anticipated AD drug treatments, secondary prevention strategies (e.g., hearing aids, nutrition, physical activity), and the potential role of AI assistive tools in extending home residence, reducing caregiver burden, and enhancing prevention, treatment, and care.
- **Policy, financing, and system-level drivers of cost and access:** Studies assessing variation and experimentation in Medicare Advantage, Medicaid, and private insurance; the infrastructure needs and economic value of innovations in skilled nursing and assisted living; and the implications of limited long-term care awareness and coverage under Medicare.
- **Heterogeneity in disease experience and risk:** Studies examining the economic implications of heterogeneity in disease progression, longevity with AD/ADRD, individual-specific risk prediction, treatment and care burden in the absence of family support, and the effects of actual declines in age-specific dementia rates on projections and planning.

What are acceptable outcomes for study? Must the project focus on a health outcome?

Outcomes must relate to economic issues associated with AD/ADRD. Please refer to the research focus areas listed in both the [READ](#) and [EC-READ](#) RFAs for more information on acceptable outcomes related to ADRD treatment, care, and prevention that are suitable for study. Please note that the READ RFA also has a list of topics of particular interest for this funding round that you may find helpful.

Must projects be focused on diagnosed ADRD?

No. Projects may focus on the trajectory of cognitive impairment across the life course, as well as on caregiving for individuals who have cognitive impairment severe enough to affect function.

Can projects compare those with and without ADRD?

Yes, when this is relevant for assessing an outcome of interest.

Am I required to get an IRB exemption letter from my university before the project is funded?

The coordinating center is subject to the Single IRB policy, so researchers will need to apply to the NBER IRB for approval if they are funded, and the NBER IRB would work with the university IRB on a reliance agreement.

Application Component Questions

Is there a template for the research proposal portion of the application? Does it need to include an aims page?

No, but proposals must include the content specified in the READ and EC-READ RFAs. A Specific Aims page is required for both opportunities..

Do you have a sample COI statement?

NBER's sample COI statement is as follows:

The NBER's Research Financial Conflict of Interest Policy applies to all investigators undertaking externally sponsored research at the NBER. The policy complies with the requirements of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services final rule of 2011, which amends the Public Health Service (PHS) regulations on Responsibility of Applicants for Promoting Objectivity in Research for which PHS Funding is Sought (42 C.F.R. Part 50, Subpart F).

For EC-READ applicants, and READ applicants who are NBER affiliates, a link will be sent through the NBER system for completion of a conflict of interest certification.

For READ applicants who are applying for funding via a subaward to their institution, a statement such as the following can be used:

Subrecipient Organization/Institution certifies that it has an active and enforced conflict of interest policy that is consistent with the provision of 42 CFR Part 50, Subpart F "Responsibility of Applicant for Promoting Objectivity in Research": and 45 CFR Part 94 "Responsible Prospective Contractors." Subrecipient also certifies that, to the best of its knowledge, (1) all financial disclosures will be made related to the activities that may be funded by or through a resulting agreement, and required by its conflict of interest policy, and (2) all identified conflicts of interest have or will have been satisfactorily managed, reduced, or eliminated in accordance with

subrecipient's conflict of interest policy prior to the expenditures of any funds under any resultant agreement and within a timely manner sufficient to enable timely FCOI reporting.

Budget Questions

Can indirect costs be requested when applying for the EC-READ award?

EC-READ awards must be directly paid by the NBER - subawards are not possible, and thus no indirect costs are allowed. Awardees will receive up to \$50K in direct costs; investigators and research assistants must be eligible to be employed by NBER. Expenses other than wages and salaries will be reimbursed by the NBER.

Whom do I contact to formulate a budget / How do I start the process of formulating a budget? Do you have a budget template that you prefer?

EC-READ applicants, and READ applicants who are NBER affiliates, should contact ADRD@nber.org with a list of anticipated costs, which will enable NBER grants staff to assist them in developing a budget. READ applicants who are not NBER affiliates should work with their institutions to develop a budget, and send any questions not answered in the [calls for proposals](#) or this Q&A document to ADRD@nber.org.

Will the NBER make sub-awards in connection with READ awards?

Yes, READ awards may be structured as subawards to one or more institutions. Faculty members who are NBER affiliates would receive support directly through NBER, and the NBER grants team will assist them in budget preparation (see above).

What travel funding should/can we include in budgets?

NBER will cover travel costs for up to 2 researchers per project for meetings associated with the Coordinating Center during the budget period of the awardee's project. The Center has both an annual meeting in DC each spring and in Cambridge each fall that will be covered. Thus, budgets need only include travel for additional researchers to travel to these meetings, or travel to present at other meetings, if desired, during the budget period of the awardee's project.

Are there restrictions on what can be budgeted for or reimbursed on READ and EC-READ awards?

READ and EC-READ awards can only cover expenses that are allowed under [NIH](#) guidelines. In particular, expenditures for computers/equipment are not allowed as direct costs unless they can be documented as essential and allocable to the project, and all investigators and research assistants must carry out their work in the US and be eligible to be employed in the US. The NIH salary cap should be used.

Are there any limits on indirect costs for the READ awards?

There is no specific indirect cost cap, just a total award cap of \$200K. Please budget with your institution's federally negotiated indirect cost rate. If your institution does not have an federally negotiated indirect cost rate, you may elect to charge a de minimis rate of up to 15 percent of

modified total direct costs (MTDC) as allowed under 2 CFR 200.414.

Are no-cost extensions (NCE) allowed?

READ project proposals should convey a credible plan for delivering results and preparing a manuscript for potential publication over the course of a 12-month period. It is expected that the project will yield a publication ready for submission to a journal at the end of the year. However, one-time extensions may be granted to awardees who experience unforeseen challenges such as data acquisition delays outside of their control.

Submission questions:

How/where do I submit my proposal?

Please submit your proposal through the applicable form: [READ Proposal Submission Form](#) or [EC-READ Proposal Submission Form](#). A Google account is required for this. Those whose institutions have a firewall that does not enable them to submit Google forms can contact ADRD@nber.org for help with submitting their proposal.*

Can a PI submit the application, or should someone within the institution's grant office submit on the PI's behalf?

Applications can be submitted by anyone from the individual's institution, however the researcher must be part of writing the COI statement. It is expected that applications submitted by non-NBER affiliated researchers have been reviewed and approved by an institutional official.

***Please note these instructions given in the Google submission form for the READ:**

Please submit your proposal as **one pdf** with the following documents **in this order**:

- 1.) cover page (1 page)
- 2.) general audience summary (max 500 words)
- 3.) specific aims (max 1 page)
- 4.) research plan (4 pages)
- 5.) bibliography and references cited (max 2 pages)
- 6.) biosketches
- 7.) budget and budget justification
- 8.) conflict of interest statement

The full details for formatting can be found in the [READ RFA](#). Please review this in its entirety before submitting

Please include one of your PI's last names and the award type (READ) in the file name. E.g. Schumann_Proposal_READ_2026

and the EC-READ:

Please submit your proposal as **one pdf** with the following documents **in this order**:

- 1.) cover page (1 page)
- 2.) general audience summary (max 500 words)
- 3.) specific aims (max 1 page)

- 4.) career development plan (1 page)
- 5.) research plan (4 pages)
- 6.) bibliography and references cited (max 2 pages)
- 7.) biosketch
- 8.) budget and budget justification
- 9.) conflict-of-interest statement.

The full details for formatting can be found in the [EC-READ RFA](#). Please review this in its entirety before submitting.

**Please include your last name and the award type (EC-READ) in the file name. E.g.
Schumann_Proposal_EC-READ_2026**