



Request for Applications (RFA): USC ADRC Development Projects 2026-27

Two Funding Tracks

The USC Alzheimer's Disease Research Center is pleased to announce **two funding tracks** for the 2026–2027 Development Project cycle:

- **Track 1: Traditional Development Project (TDP)** – 1- year funding to support new, innovative research generating preliminary data toward future extramural funding.
- **Track 2A or 2B: REC Pipeline Development (RPD)** – 3 to 6-month funding to support NIH grant resubmissions needing additional data to close gaps identified in prior review (RPD-A) or new interdisciplinary collaborative initiatives (RPD-B).

Both tracks share the goal of helping investigators move toward independent, extramural funding and remain competitive during a difficult funding climate. When submitting your proposal, please clarify in your introduction which track you are applying for:

- #1 Traditional Development Project (TDP)
- #2A REC Pipeline Development (RPD-A): Scored, Not Funded NIH Grant Resubmission Support
- #2B REC Pipeline Development (RPD-B): Interdisciplinary Collaboration Development

Track 1: Traditional Development Project (TDP)

The USC Alzheimer Disease Research Center (ADRC) invites clinical and basic science investigators to submit applications for a 1-year development project (TDP) due Friday, **October 16, 2026**.

Research Themes:

In this RFA, we seek proposals for new basic, clinical and psychosocial approaches that inform pathogenesis, and advance prevention and treatment of early cognitive impairment in humans and animal models. We encourage the development of new approaches to intervention and translational research from preclinical to early phase human clinical trials.

The USC NIA-funded Center <https://adrc.usc.edu> has a research focus on factors that modify the effect of *APOE4* on cognitive decline and ATN(vi) biomarkers. However, applications which address the broader topic of Alzheimer disease and related disorders (ADRD) are welcome.

Criteria for Review: The following will be considered in evaluating the merit of a proposal:

- Soundness of scientific principles
- Novelty of the scientific approach
- Scientific merit
- Likelihood of providing new and valuable insights into possible causes or treatment of Alzheimer's disease and related disorders
- Synergy with USC ADRC themes
- Background and experience of the investigator(s)
- Adequacy of resources and environment
- Appropriateness of the budget for the proposed work
- Strong likelihood that the developmental project work will lead to subsequent extramural peer reviewed funding

Eligibility: The Traditional Development Project (TDP) is primarily designed for three categories of investigators: 1) junior faculty member – instructor or assistant professor or 2) post-doctoral students with an identified mentor. The mentor should have active funding and a plan to support the postdoc in career

development. A project may also be awarded to a 3) more senior investigator who has experience in areas other than AD research, but who wishes to work in the AD research field or to test a new hypothesis, method, or approach that is not an extension of ongoing AD research. Faculty members with questions about eligibility to submit a TDP application may contact Helena Chui MD (helena.chui@med.usc.edu) or Hussein Yassine MD (hyassine@usc.edu). Post-doctoral students should contact Hussein Yassine (hyassine@usc.edu) or Duke Han PhD (dukehan@usc.edu).

Pre-Submission Requirements

- Identify a USC ADRC Executive Committee member as collaborator/sponsor
- Consult ADRC Data Core statistician Xinhui Wang PhD (xinhuiwa@usc.edu) on study design/statistical rigor
- Identify ADRC data sets that align with project objectives

Review Process

- 3-page proposal + NIH biosketch → ADRC Executive Committee and external reviewers
- Administrative Committee selects final awards → submitted to NIA program office for approval

Budget

- Two 1-year awards, up to \$75,000 direct costs each
- At least one award goes to a junior investigator, designated an ADRC REC Scholar
- PI salary + fringe capped at 50% of total budget (\$37,500)
- Funding begins March 1, 2027

Application Components

1. 3-page proposal
2. NIH Biosketch
3. Budget
4. Budget Justification

Please contact Helena Chui MD (helena.chui@med.usc.edu), Hussein Yassine MD (hyassine@usc.edu), or Tiffany Kolchins (tiffany.kolchins@med.usc.edu) with questions regarding the application procedures including budget.

Track 2: REC Pipeline Development (RPD)

This track supports two categories of proposals, both evaluated on scientific merit and a project plan that culminates in a ready-to-submit NIH grant application:

A) Scored, Not Funded NIH Grant Resubmission Support

For teams whose NIH grant application received a favorable score but was not funded. Support is intended to generate the additional preliminary data or address the gaps needed to strengthen a competitive resubmission.

B) Interdisciplinary Collaboration Development

For new collaborations with the ADRC that build and deepen interdisciplinary expertise — bringing together investigators across disciplines to develop a research program not currently represented in existing ADRC-affiliated work. Support is intended to build the team, methodology, and preliminary data needed to culminate in a new NIH grant proposal submission.

Criteria for Review: The following will be considered in evaluating the merit of a proposal:

- Soundness of scientific principles
- Novelty of the scientific approach
- Scientific merit
- Likelihood of providing new and valuable insights into possible causes or treatment of Alzheimer's disease and related disorders
- Synergy with USC ADRC themes
- Background and experience of the investigator(s), including prior NIH review history where relevant
- Adequacy of resources and environment,
- Appropriateness of the budget for the proposed work
- Probability of successful extramural funding, weighing scientific merit alongside competitiveness of the resulting NIH grant proposal in the current funding environment

Category A

- Clarity and credibility of the path to NIH grant submission, including a defined project plan and timeline for resubmission or new submission
- Responsiveness to prior review feedback (Category A: how directly the proposed work addresses the gaps or critiques identified in the prior scored application)

Category B

- Value proposition of the collaboration (Category B: the added scientific and translational value created by bringing together clinical, translational, and health-economics disciplines into collaborative research teams)
- Resources and environment, including strength of the proposed interdisciplinary team (Category B)

Eligibility

- *Category A:* Teams with a recently scored-but-unfunded NIH grant application. Proposal project plan must include the deliverable of a revised NIH grant proposal ready for submission.
- *Category B:* Interdisciplinary /multicenter (ADRC + Schaeffer Center/Other Center/Other Dept, etc.) investigators proposing a new collaboration with the ADRC. Proposal project plan must include the deliverable of an NIH grant proposal ready for submission.

Questions: Hussein Yassine MD (hyassine@usc.edu); Duke Han (dukehan@usc.edu); Helena Chui MD (helena.chui@med.usc.edu)

Pre-Submission

Identify a USC ADRC Executive Committee member as collaborator/sponsor.

Review Process

- 3-page proposal + NIH biosketch → ADRC Executive Committee and external reviewers
- Administrative Committee selects final awards → submitted to NIA program office for approval

Budget

- Awards up to \$50,000 direct costs over 3-6 months
- Several awards available; the number funded and award size depend on the alignment of proposed research with ADRC goals and objectives, and the needs to advance a competitive NIH grant proposal.

Application Components

1. 3-page proposal

2. NIH Biosketch
3. Budget
4. Budget Justification

Timetable- Both Tracks

- **Before Mon, Oct 13, 2026** – Consult ADRC Data Core statistician Xinhui Wang PhD (xinhuiwa@usc.edu) on study design/statistical rigor. For Track 1 proposals, identify the datasets that align with your project objectives.
- **Mon, Oct 26, 2026** – Applications due to helena.chui@med.usc.edu and tiffany.kolchins@med.usc.edu:
 - NIH biosketch
 - 3-page proposal: title, investigator(s), ADRC collaborator/sponsor, scientific rationale, specific aims, methodology, study duration/ project plan, proposed budget/justification.
 - For Track 1 (TDP), postdocs must include a mentor letter with the mentor's active funding info and a brief postdoc career development plan.
- **Mon, Nov 16, 2026** – Finalists announced
- **Mon, Dec 14, 2026** – Finalists' final proposal due to helena.chui@med.usc.edu and tiffany.kolchins@med.usc.edu
- **Mon, Jan 4, 2027** – TRACK 2: First tranche awarded; second tranche contingent on satisfactory progress report at an approximate project midpoint.
- **Mon, March 1, 2027** – TRACK 1: First tranche awarded; second tranche on contingent on satisfactory progress report at an approximate project midpoint.

ADRC Executive Committee: Contact any of the following for collaboration/ sponsorship.

Core	Core	Email
Admin Core	Helena Chui, MD	helena.chui@med.usc.edu
	Arthur Toga, PhD	toga@usc.edu
	Hussein Yassine, MD	hyassine@usc.edu
<i>ADRC Sr Administrator – Program Mgt</i>	Tiffany Kolchins	tiffany.Kolchins@med.usc.edu
<i>ADRC Administrator – Programs Mgt & Grant Support</i>	Lucy Montoya	lucy.montoya@med.usc.edu
Clinical Core	Lon Schneider, MD	lschneid@usc.edu
	Elizabeth Joe, MD	elizabeth.joe@med.usc.edu
Data Core	Arthur Toga, PhD	toga@usc.edu
	Xinhui Wang, PhD	xinhuiwa@usc.edu
	Daniel Nation, PhD	danation@usc.edu
Pathology Core	Annie Hiniker, MD, PhD	anne.Hiniker@med.usc.edu
	Deborah Hawes, MD	dhawes@chla.usc.edu

Outreach Recruitment Education (ORE) Core	Maria Aranda PhD, MSW	aranda@usc.edu
	John Ringman MD, MS	john.ringman@med.usc.edu
Biomarker Core	Robert Rissman, PhD	r.rissman@usc.edu
Imaging Core	Arthur Toga, PhD	toga@usc.edu
	Kirsten Lynch, PhD	Kirsten.lynch@loni.usc.edu
Research Education Component (REC)	Hussein Yassine, MD	hyassine@usc.edu
	Duke Han, PhD	dukehan@usc.edu