



CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Deadline for submissions
19 December 2021



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1. A GLOBAL CHALLENGE FOR AGING SOCIETIES

As populations continue to age rapidly, Alzheimer's Disease (AD) has become one of the most pressing concerns for healthcare in the 21st century and a real societal burden. Effects of the disease on an individual and societal level are predicted to increase further, posing a vital challenge to our healthcare ecosystems.

AD is positioned broadly in the late-stage care setting, which needs to change urgently. Partly due to the stigma surrounding its symptoms, diagnosis currently takes place at an advanced stage. However, diagnosis at a very early stage of the disease is key to influence the course of AD in a positive way. Today, only a very low percentage of patients with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) - due to AD or early AD - are diagnosed. As soon as this is changed, the healthcare system will be in need of solutions for a nationwide, timely, flawless, and patient-centered diagnostic and treatment pathway.

2. A UNIQUE WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

As with certain fields of oncology, we are now at the turning point of a new era in healthcare: while no disease-modifying treatments for AD have been available for a long time, first such therapies are on the horizon. Such treatments could address the urgent medical need of numerous patients worldwide already diagnosed with MCI or early AD. At the same time, with the rise of deep & advanced digital technologies, we have access to unprecedented ways for solving the most pressing unmet needs.

These developments pave the way for entrepreneurs and innovators in Neurotech. As more specialized centers for AD treatment are being formed, the time is now to enhance & shape a patient journey that puts the patient at the center of a seamlessly operating ecosystem for AD. Now, with new technologies and an advanced ability to create data points, there is even a possibility to address AD, as a progressive and variable disease, by applying adaptive and personalized approaches.

3. CALLING INNOVATORS IN NEUROTECH: AREAS OF INTERVENTION

Through the neurotechprize, EIT Health and Biogen aim to rapidly accelerate maturity and/or market access of the most promising solutions and technologies addressing the challenge of Alzheimer's Disease in Germany.

We are searching for targeted solutions to address the need for a faster and individualized diagnostic pathway while improving the quality of life of patients. Help us to reshape and personalize the current patient journey and positively impact their lives in the initial stages of the AD continuum with the objective to be ready for potential treatment options on the horizon.

EIT Health and Biogen have identified four areas of intervention:

3.1. Accelerating the diagnostic pathway

Help provide tools that shorten the time-consuming diagnostic pathway. This area might, for example, focus on creating ways to connect all relevant stakeholders around the patient, or enable self-screening and “healthcare provider”-assisted screening through innovative technologies, which may also allow patients diagnosed in the past to reassess their disease stage. Further, important challenges are:

- High variability of the patient journey with a limited degree of standardization in practice
- Diagnostic & therapeutic steps are currently initiated too late
- Low levels of appropriate disease awareness among healthcare professionals
- Different needs in medical guidance and support for each patient

3.2. Improving disease monitoring

Put forward a solution to measure and analyze meaningful data which reflects the patients' individual disease progression. Aspects important to patients and caregivers (e.g., daily life activities) could be monitored more accurately, remotely, autonomously or continuously than today.

3.3. Easing burden on patients

Bring a patient-centered solution easing the burden for patients during the complex diagnosis and therapy pathway. The combination of procedures, different appointments along the way and early symptoms as well as uncertainty regarding disease progression creates high hurdles for the patients.

3.4. Maintaining quality of life

For Alzheimer's patients and their families, it is crucial to maintain their quality of life (for the individual, relevant areas) while living with the disease. Also, behavioral disturbances related to Alzheimer's (apathy, depression, anxiety, insomnia, etc.) pose an enormous challenge. Ideally, the disease progression should be positively affected by the overall social and emotional wellbeing of the patient.

4. THE PROGRAMME

The programme is aimed at health entrepreneurs in the NeuroTech space seeking support in the validation of their ideas and developing business goals in a supportive and enriching environment.

The programme offers participants:

- A tailored three-month journey focused on your team's objectives, established individually at the beginning of the programme
- Intensive mentoring from top experts in business and science
- Access to industry stakeholders
- €10,000 funding to support participation of founders and/or key team members in the journey

Teams admitted to the programme will follow a guided mentoring and coaching process. The programme will kick-off with an individual 2h meeting between the team and EIT Health and Biogen experts where the team's challenges and priorities will be discussed in detail. The meetings will take place between 7-15 February 2022.

From there on, each participating team will follow an individual milestone plan throughout the programme to maximize offered support to project's advantage. Teams will be followed by assigned mentors supporting them in both aspects of business and solution development.

Weekly check-ins with the full faculty/mentors will provide the opportunity to gain additional feedback and learn from other teams.

The programme will require a part-time commitment of the founders/participants over February - April 2022. It is expected that 40-50h per team member in a two (2) person team should be sufficient to follow the programme.

5. APPLICATION

5.1. Who is eligible to apply

On or before the deadline (19 December 2021, 23:59 CET) applicants submit their entries via the online system, ensuring their application is complete.

Teams of minimum two (2) people, incorporated start-ups and non-incorporated teams, are eligible to submit their entry to the programme. Solutions must target the Challenge of Alzheimer's Disease and be aimed at entering the German market.

5.2. Scope of application

The entry consists of team members' CVs, solution description and team's motivation to participate in the programme.

Submitted entry can be edited before the deadline, but no amendments shall be accepted after the deadline. All documents must be formulated in English.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

All entries will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Team

- **Composition:** Level of skills and knowledge within the relevant areas
- **Track Record:** Level of previous experience and achievements
- **Entrepreneurial Mindset:** Demonstration of a clear motivation and ability to bring the product/technology to market and scale it

Solution

- **Unmet clinical need:** Solution clearly targets one of the challenge's unmet needs.
- **Solution Innovativeness:** The solution constitutes a new, different and better way to tackle the need than the current standard of care.
- **Solution Feasibility:** The outlined plan demonstrates that the proposed solution can be appropriately implemented.
- **Maturity Level:** Prototype should exist with experiments to show essential efficiency

Business

- **Business Maturity:**
 - a convincing value proposition
 - understands the competitive landscape & USP
 - clear business model
 - sound go-to-market or growth strategy
- **Financial Status & Runway:** Financial roadmap, fundings and ability to dedicate enough efforts to the programme

Technology & Science

- **Competitive Advantage:** The team possesses defendable assets that will ensure the competitive position of the company
- **Scientific Excellence:** The proposed solution is based on sound scientific breakthrough or novel technological advance, recognized by publications or through backing by recognized experts
- **Clinical Impact:** Prospective impact that the solution would accomplish when reaching patient care

7. ADMISSION PROCESS

7.1. Triage (eligibility)

After the submission deadline, EIT Health staff performs a formal eligibility check of all submitted entries for completeness and informs the applicants of the outcome by email. Entries that do not fulfil the eligibility criteria are rejected from the selection process. EIT Health staff will inform applicants by email about the status of their entry (e.g. eligible and sent for review; ineligible).

7.2. Remote review

The evaluation is conducted with the support of qualified, independent experts from within and outside EIT Health partnership. EIT Health control checks for conflicts of interest and treats information confidentially.

7.3. Interview and programme admission

Shortlisted teams will be invited for an online interview directly by EIT Health staff and Biogen experts. The interviews will take place between 20-26 January 2022. Shortlisted teams will be able to book the time for the interview via link provided in the invitation.

The application score and the result of the online interview will be combined to draw up a list of teams selected to pitch live in front of the Jury.

Up to 15 shortlisted teams (Semi-Finalists) will be invited to pitch their solution in front of the Jury on 1 February 2022 to secure their spot in the programme. The Jury will select up-to 10 teams (Finalists) who will be invited to enter the programme (Finalists).

7.4. Pitch Day

Up to 10 teams, following the 10 weeks work with mentors and experts will present their solutions in a pitch competition in front of the same Jury on 3 May 2022.

8. THE PRIZE

8.1. Prizes

The Jury will be able to give away up-to two prizes:

- 1st Prize of 100,000€ for the winning solution
- 2nd Prize of 50,000€ for the runner-up

8.2. Selection criteria

In addition to the evaluation criteria listed in Section 6 in the Final presentation the Jury will be able to assess progress the team has made over the program, team's commitment, and performance.

9. LIST OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES

9.1. Terms and Conditions

Link to Terms and Conditions [here](#).

9.2. Contact

For questions, please contact neurotechprize.biogen@eithealth.eu.