



Lewy Body Dementia Association

Request for Applications

Title: New Investigator Pilot Study Award

Date Issued: February 27, 2026

LOI Deadline: April 17, 2026

Application Deadline: June 15, 2026

Scientific review: June 19 through August 7, 2026

Notice of Award: Late August 2026

1. Introduction

The Lewy Body Dementia Association (LBDA), now in its 22nd year, is the sole national nonprofit in the United States dedicated exclusively to improving the lives of those affected by Lewy body dementia (LBD). LBDA's mission is to optimize the quality of life for those affected by Lewy body dementia, by accelerating awareness, advancing research for early diagnosis and improved care, and providing comprehensive education and compassionate support.

As part of our mission, LBDA is committed to supporting early-stage researchers and researchers new to LBD research. LBDA recognizes that larger grant proposals to agencies such as NIH are generally more likely to be funded if the proposal contains preliminary data. The New Investigator Pilot Study Award was developed to provide grant support to develop such data, thereby increasing the likelihood of larger LBD research projects being funded by NIH and other grant-making organizations.

Lewy body dementia is an umbrella term for two progressive disorders: dementia with Lewy bodies (DLB) and Parkinson's disease dementia (PDD). LBD symptoms include changes in cognition, movement, behavior, sleep and autonomic function. National

research priorities for LBD were first developed in 2013 at the Alzheimer's Disease-Related Dementias (ADRD) Summit organized by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Updated in [2025](#), the recommendations identified for Lewy body dementias were:

- Expand LBD clinical trial infrastructure and perform trials aimed to slow the clinical course, delay, and/or prevent the onset of symptoms, in addition to alleviating clinical symptoms.
- Expand and develop clinically, biologically, and/or genetically deeply phenotyped LBD cohorts, representative of the U.S. population with LBD, from pre-symptomatic disease to autopsy.
- Refine and validate existing diagnostic biomarkers and develop new biomarkers related to Lewy body pathology and identify biomarkers for mixed etiology dementia that includes Lewy body pathology.
- Develop and refine biomarkers of neuronal injury, neurotransmitters, pathophysiology, and neurodegeneration that are predictive and prognostic, provide monitoring to track progression, and identify therapeutic target engagement and biological response to therapeutic interventions.
- Integrate functional genomics of LBD by delineating genetic loci and their functions contributing to the onset and progression of LBD using multi-omic characterization analyses, to support drug discovery.
- Enhance and harmonize techniques for neuropathologic characterization of LBD, for use in well-characterized and representative LBD pathology cohorts.
- Develop models to understand the pathogenesis, mechanisms of toxicity, and normal molecular and cellular functions of α -synuclein, to support drug discovery.
- Identify multi-etiology mechanisms of selective vulnerability, disease heterogeneity, disease spread/propagation, and interaction with other age-related pathologies as therapeutic targets.

The 2023 Dementia Care Summit also identified gaps and opportunities to identify evidence-based programs, strategies, approaches, and other research that can be used to improve the care, services, and supports of persons with dementia and their caregivers (see [final report](#), Appendix 1). There is little known about the unique impact of LBD on individuals and family caregivers to inform tailored interventions to meet the unique needs of a population affected by cognitive, motor, behavioral, sleep and autonomic symptoms. Further, there is a paucity of data on the impact of LBD on individuals and family caregivers by race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, health disparities, gender identity, sexual orientation and geography.

2. Aims and Objectives

The **Aim** of the Lewy Body Dementia Association (LBDA) New Investigator Pilot Study Award is to support pilot translational or clinical studies for the purpose of developing preliminary data to be used in future grant applications. The program is open both to early-stage investigators, and to more established researchers from other fields, who have not yet received an NIH R01 in Lewy body dementia (LBD) research.

The **Objective** of the grant program is to enable pilot studies that address one or more of the national research recommendations for Lewy body dementia, as described in the Summit documents referenced above.

3. Project Funding and Period

LBDA intends to fund one or more grants under this program in 2026. Total budget per proposal may not exceed \$50,000, including up to \$5,000 in indirect costs.

The project period is one year.

4. Eligibility Criteria

This program is open to [Early Stage Investigators](#) and to more established researchers from other fields who have not yet received an NIH R01 (or equivalent) in LBD research (“new to LBD”). In either case, the applicant’s career stage should be no higher than assistant professor or equivalent, and the institution must be located within the United States.

Note: LBDA Research Centers of Excellence (RCOE) PIs and Lead PIs are not eligible, but RCOE Co-PIs may be. If you are unsure about your eligibility, please reach out to Glorieuse Norzea, PMP, Project Manager for Research at LBDA (gnorzea@lbda.org).

5. Application Process

Applicants must submit an LOI by the date listed at the top of the RFA. LOIs should include the name and institution of the PI, a title for the project, and a statement of the planned Specific Aims. After LOIs are reviewed, a subset of submitters will be invited to submit a full application.

LOIs and applications should be submitted through [ProposalCentral](#).

6. Review Criteria

Applications will be reviewed by members of the LBDA Advisory Council.

Applications will be scored and evaluated utilizing the [NIH Simplified Peer Review Framework](#).

7. Contact Information

For inquiries, please contact:

Keith Fargo, PhD

Director of Scientific Initiatives

Lewy Body Dementia Association

kfargo@lbda.org