

Cure Alzheimer's Fund



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Mission

Cure Alzheimer's Fund's (CAF) core mission is to fund research with the highest probability of preventing, slowing, or reversing Alzheimer's disease (AD). The fund seeks out innovative research projects that seek to stop the disease before it even strikes with early prediction and prevention. It was founded by four visionaries who used their experience in venture capital, banking, and commercial real estate to create an innovative model for funding medical research.

Strategy/Approach

CAF characterizes its approach as "strategically targeted funding," based on a **Research Roadmap** that it drafted with the help of a consortium of AD experts. CAF focuses its resources on high-risk, innovative projects that advance a cure for Alzheimer's disease and align with the goals of the roadmap. These projects are often too risky to be funded by government or larger foundations.

Research Portfolio

CAF seeks out the highest caliber researchers in the industry to identify the best entrepreneurial talent and funds individual investigators, not institutions. It devotes much of its resources to finding the root cause of Alzheimer's disease. Funded projects fall into four categories:

- **Foundational** – find all genes that contribute to risk for or protection against Alzheimer's disease.
- **Translational** – discover what the previously known Alzheimer's genes can teach us about Alzheimer's disease pathology and identify the role of the newly identified genes.
- **Drug Discovery** – determine which existing drugs or novel chemical compounds most safely and effectively disrupt the Alzheimer's pathology generated by the highest priority genes.
- **Drug Development** – facilitate clinical trials of the most effective drugs by partnering with biotech firms or pharmaceutical companies to hasten drug development and approval.

Awards are typically made to the members of CAF's research consortium and to any recommendations they may have for scientists performing innovative research. The fund does not accept unsolicited research proposals.

Most of the grants CAF funds are \$100,000 and one year in duration, with the potential for annual renewal. Mid-year and final reports are required. With sufficient reason to continue, some projects may be funded beyond one year. Approval usually takes about two weeks, with funds delivered to the host institution within three weeks.

The Alzheimer's Genome Project™ is CAF's core funded research effort. Its objective is to identify all relevant Alzheimer's genes that have not yet been discovered, thereby identifying more targets for the development of therapeutic interventions. To date, this project has received more than \$9 million from the fund.

Partnership Practices

The fund partners with biotech and pharmaceutical companies. As a part of its "roadmap" strategy, CAF focuses some of its funding on drug development. In these efforts, the fund partners with pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies to advance clinical trials for Alzheimer's drugs. One example is the project funded by CAF that tests drugs in mice to see if any available drugs will reduce amyloid- β protein levels.

Financials

The fund is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. The most recent financial information available is from 2012.¹ One hundred percent of non-founder contributions goes directly to research.

Year ending 12/31/12:

- Revenue: \$6,773,706
- Assets: \$8,694,239
- Grants Paid: \$3,341,898
- Gifts received: \$6,632,710
- Expenditures: \$5,015,121

Key Accomplishments

- Discovered 120 genes that are linked with Alzheimer's disease.
- Funded more than \$20 million in Alzheimer's research for investigators at more than 24 institutions since its conception.
- In 2011, supported 19 unique **research projects**.
- The Alzheimer's Genome Project™, financed exclusively by the fund and completed in its first phase in 2008, continues to provide insights into the genetic cause of Alzheimer's. CAF scientists are currently focusing on the top 25 Alzheimer's disease genes and systematically piecing together the "mechanisms of action" that lead to defective genetic action.

¹ Information obtained from Foundation Center Directory, <http://fconline.foundationcenter.org>, and 2012 Financial Report, <http://curealzfund.org/about/documents>, July 2013.

- Presented the current state of Alzheimer’s research to leading healthcare policy officials at the White House in 2010.
- Demonstrated the connection between AD and lipid levels and establishment of an anticholesterol compound as a potential prevention tool for AD.
- The Mass General Institute for Neurodegenerative Disease Award for Philanthropic Innovation and Investment presented its inaugural award for venture philanthropy in medical research to Cure Alzheimer’s Fund in recognition of CAF’s fast, focused, strategic funding of high-impact research.

Leadership

Cure Alzheimer’s Fund is governed by a **Board of Directors** and guided scientifically by the **Research Consortium** and the **Scientific Advisory Board**.

- **President and CEO:** Timothy W. Armour, tarmour@curealz.org
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