News Media Contacts
• Mike Campea, Alzheimer’s Association, mcampea@alz.org, 312.604.1659
  Alzheimer’s Association media line, media@alz.org, 312.335.4078
• Maggie McGuire, The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research,
  mmcguire@michaeljfox.org, 212.509.0995, ext. 295
• Julija Hunter, Weston Brain Institute, Canada, julijahunter@gmail.com, 416.721.8790
• Kirsty Marais, Alzheimer’s Research UK, press@alzheimersresearchuk.org, 0300 111 5 666 or
  07826 559233

LEADING RESEARCH FUNDERS BUILD ON GLOBAL INITIATIVE WITH NEW
NEARLY $2 MILLION COMMITMENT TO STUDY COMMONALITIES OF
NEURODEGENERATIVE DISEASES

(CHICAGO, NEW YORK, TORONTO & LONDON) March 5, 2015 – Together, leading
funders of research in the U.S., Canada and U.K. are advancing a global funding initiative aimed at better
understanding the similarities and differences between progressive brain-deteriorating diseases, such as
Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s, with an expanded partnership and increased funding.

The program, Biomarkers Across Neurodegenerative Diseases (BAND), is a joint initiative of the
Alzheimer’s Association and The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research in the U.S., the
Weston Brain Institute in Canada, and Alzheimer’s Research UK, which joins the collaboration as the
program makes available a second round of research grant awards.

The new funding cycle will offer nearly $2 million USD (£1.3m/$2.5m CDN) for projects investigating
the overlap in the biology and clinical symptoms of Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s, frontotemporal dementia
(FTD) and other brain-deteriorating diseases, which together affect tens of millions of people worldwide.
Projects supported by BAND will compare data across these diseases, including genetic information, brain
changes detected through imaging tools including PET and MRI scans, and measures of symptoms such as
memory problems or physical tremors.

Each BAND-funded project must include a clear focus on Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s, or one of the two
plus another neurodegenerative disease, such as FTD. BAND encourages the use of specific existing data
sets on Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s and frontotemporal dementia, as well as collaboration among researchers
with diverse expertise.

“This type of cross-disease analysis may uncover new biological targets for tracking risk, onset or
progression of these diseases,” said Maria Carrillo, Ph.D., Chief Science Officer for the Alzheimer’s
Association. “In this way, BAND may help advance discovery of vital new clues for developing
treatments.”
“Our ongoing participation in the dynamic BAND program reflects our unwavering commitment to filling the gaps and accelerating funding for novel approaches to targeted research into these progressive and debilitating brain diseases, which have now reached global epidemic proportions,” said Alexandra Stewart, Executive Director, Weston Brain Institute. “Our hope is that by better understanding how these diseases overlap, we can guide the development of therapies that are effective in treating not only one, but multiple conditions.” The Institute’s funding will go to grants awarded to Canadian researchers.

“A collaboration such as BAND promotes research efficiency,” said Mark Frasier, Ph.D., Senior Vice President of Research Programs at The Michael J. Fox Foundation. “Expanding investigation beyond a single diagnosis opens the door to new discoveries, which can only benefit drug development and thereby the millions of patients who need new therapies.”

“Alzheimer’s Research UK is pleased to be joining the initiative, which we hope provides a vital new understanding of Alzheimer’s and other brain diseases,” said Simon Ridley, Ph.D., Head of Research at Alzheimer’s Research UK. “With growing numbers of people affected by neurodegenerative diseases, investment in research is crucial if we are to transform people’s lives. Charities have an important role to play in this fight and we are proud to be part of this collaborative effort to boost global research.”

BAND is open to applications from scientists around the globe. The new round of funding will provide up to $150,000 USD (£98,000/$188,225 CDN) for each two-year research project; it is anticipated that awards will be made in October 2015. More information about how and when to apply for funding through this program is available at www.alz.org/BAND.

The program’s inaugural round of $1.3 million USD (£85,000/$1.6m CDN) in funding was granted in September 2014 and supports nine projects:

1) Genetics, Biomarkers and Mendelian Randomization to Identify Common Pathway
   Carlos Cruchaga, Ph.D., Washington University in St. Louis

2) Degeneration of the Human Connectome: Brain Networks in ADNI and PPMI
   Gautam Prasad, Ph.D., University of Southern California in Los Angeles

3) Subcortical Shape Analysis for Joint Biomarker Discovery
   Boris Gutman, Ph.D., University of Southern California in Los Angeles

4) Cortical and Functional Distinctions in Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s Disease
   Swati Rane, Ph.D., Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, TN

5) Variations in Brain Functional Complexity Across Neurodegeneration
   Norbert Schuff, Ph.D., University of California, San Francisco

6) Estimating Long-Term Disease Trajectories
   Michael Donohue, Ph.D., University of California, San Diego

7) Biomarkers for Personalized Treatment of Neurodegenerative Spectrum Disease
   Corey McMillan, Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia

8) Brain Networks as Targets of Neurodegeneration in Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s
   Alain Dagher, M.D., McGill University in Montreal

9) Interpreting Disease Heterogeneity in Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s Disease
   Mallar Chakravarty, Ph.D., Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto
**About the Alzheimer’s Association**
The Alzheimer’s Association is the world’s leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer’s care, support and research. It is the largest nonprofit funder of Alzheimer’s research. The Association’s mission is to eliminate Alzheimer’s disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Its vision is a world without Alzheimer’s. Visit www.alz.org or call 800.272.3900.

**About The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research**
As the world’s largest nonprofit funder of Parkinson’s research, The Michael J. Fox Foundation is dedicated to accelerating a cure for Parkinson’s disease and improved therapies for those living with the condition today. The Foundation pursues its goals through an aggressively funded, highly targeted research program coupled with active global engagement of scientists, Parkinson’s patients, business leaders, clinical trial participants, donors and volunteers. In addition to funding more than $450 million in research to date, the Foundation has fundamentally altered the trajectory of progress toward a cure. Operating at the hub of worldwide Parkinson’s research, the Foundation forges groundbreaking collaborations with industry leaders, academic scientists and government research funders; increases the flow of participants into Parkinson’s disease clinical trials with its online tool, Fox Trial Finder; promotes Parkinson’s awareness through high-profile advocacy, events and outreach; and coordinates the grassroots involvement of thousands of Team Fox members around the world. For more information, visit www.michaeljfox.org.

**About the Weston Brain Institute**
The Weston Brain Institute is Canada’s largest privately funded national initiative aimed at accelerating breakthrough discoveries for the treatment of neurodegenerative diseases of aging, including Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). The Institute directly supports Canada’s world-class neuroscience research community and focuses on high-risk, high-reward projects, independent of commercial potential, that address the existing translational gap in neurodegenerative research using an innovative fast-track granting model. The Institute is supported by The W. Garfield Weston Foundation. www.westonbraininstitute.com; twitter: @westonbrain; facebook: WestonBrainInstitute

**About Alzheimer’s Research UK**
Alzheimer’s Research UK is the UK’s leading charity specialising in finding preventions, treatments and a cure for dementia. We rely on donations to fund our vital dementia research. To help us defeat dementia, donate today by visiting www.alzheimersresearchuk.org or calling 0300 111 5555. We are currently supporting dementia research projects worth over £23 million in leading Universities across the UK. Our Defeat Dementia campaign, a pledge to raise £100 million in five years to grow the research field and accelerate progress towards new treatments and preventions, was announced by the Prime Minister at the G8 legacy event on 19 June 2014.

###