

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

Office of the Director

Report to Congress:

Use of Funds Received for the Semipostal Stamp for Alzheimer's Disease Research
Fiscal Years 2023-2024

INTRODUCTION

The Alzheimer’s disease semipostal stamp was issued under the United States Postal Service’s (USPS) discretionary Semipostal Stamp Program on November 30, 2017. This program was authorized under the Semipostal Authorization Act (the “Act”), P.L. 106-253, which requires each agency that receives any funding in a year under the Act to submit a written report, with respect to such year, to the Congressional committees with jurisdiction over the USPS.¹ Each report must include the total amount of funding received by such agency under the Act during the year; an accounting of how any funds received by such agency under the Act were allocated or otherwise used by such agency in such year; and a description of any significant advances or accomplishments funded, in whole or in part, with such amounts during the year covered by the report. The following report, which has been prepared by the National Institutes of Health (NIH)/National Institute on Aging (NIA), is intended to fulfill this requirement and summarizes activities undertaken in fiscal years (FY) 2023-2024 and funded using proceeds from the semipostal stamp for Alzheimer’s disease research.

BACKGROUND

Alzheimer’s disease is a brain disorder that slowly destroys memory and thinking skills, and eventually, the ability to carry out the simplest tasks. It is the most common cause of dementia in older adults. While symptoms first appear later in life for most people with Alzheimer’s and related dementias, these disorders are not a normal part of aging. An estimated 6.9 million Americans are currently living with Alzheimer’s, and without intervention, this number is expected to increase significantly in the coming years.² If no preventive measures or effective treatments are identified, the number of individuals living with the disease is anticipated to nearly double to 13.8 million individuals by 2060.

The Alzheimer’s disease semipostal stamp was the first to be issued under the Act, which grants the USPS discretionary authority to issue and sell semipostal stamps to advance such causes as it considers to be “in the national public interest and appropriate.” In FY 2023 and FY 2024, NIA received a total of \$275,506 in Alzheimer’s disease stamp proceeds from the USPS (see Table 1). To date, Alzheimer’s semipostal stamp proceeds have been used to support several large research summits on Alzheimer’s and related dementias.

¹ P.L. 106-253.

² Rajan KB et al. 2021. Population estimate of people with clinical Alzheimer’s disease and mild cognitive impairment in the United States (2020–2060). *Alzheimer’s and Dementia* 17(12): 1966-1975.

USE OF FUNDS TO SUPPORT NATIONAL RESEARCH SUMMITS

Table 1: Alzheimer’s disease semipostal stamp funds collected, obligated, and recovered.³

FY	Collected	Obligated	Recoveries ⁴	Cumulative Available to Spend
2017	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
2018	\$280,486	\$0	\$0	\$280,486
2019	\$583,699	\$154,500	\$0	\$709,685
2020	\$197,592	\$6	\$0	\$907,271
2021	\$57,777	\$122,381	\$0	\$842,667
2022	\$150,779	\$49,540	\$0	\$943,906
2023	\$132,928	\$4,271	(\$26,266)	\$1,098,829
2024	\$142,578	\$214,863	\$0	\$1,026,544
Total	\$1,545,839	\$545,561	(\$26,266)	\$1,026,544

Broad scientific summits are critical for the advancement of the dementia research enterprise because they enable NIH to facilitate communication and collaboration across the research community; encourage diverse approaches to address the research gaps that remain; and move prevention, treatment, and care strategies forward. These summits involve hundreds of scientific experts across the continuum of dementia and other research areas as well as individuals living with dementia and their care partners, patient advocates, and others, and help facilitate NIH’s ability to nurture diverse multidisciplinary research efforts across the Alzheimer’s and related dementias landscape.

The overarching objectives of the summits are to review scientific progress, identify opportunities for dementia research, validate and pose key scientific questions that require attention, and promote an environment to foster the collaboration needed to effectively address the posed scientific questions. The summits operate on a three-year cycle, addressing the state of research for Alzheimer’s; Alzheimer’s disease-related dementias; and dementia care/caregiving, services, and supports (Table 2).

³ Fund amounts are rounded to the nearest dollar.

⁴ Recoveries consist of funds that had been obligated but ultimately were not spent. These funds were subsequently de-obligated and have become available again for use.

Table 2: Recent/Upcoming Alzheimer’s and Related Dementias National Research Summits.

Fiscal Year	Topic
2021	Alzheimer’s disease
2022	Alzheimer’s disease-related dementias
2023	Dementia care, services, and supports
2024	Alzheimer’s disease
2025	Alzheimer’s disease-related dementias
2026	Dementia care, services, and supports

A portion of FY 2023 and FY 2024 funds were used to help support two summits: the 2023 National Research Summit on Care, Services, and Supports for Persons Living with Dementia and their Care Partners/Caregivers and the 2024 Alzheimer’s Disease Research Summit.

2023 National Research Summit on Care, Services, and Supports for Persons Living with Dementia and Their Care Partners/Caregivers

The 2023 National Research Summit on Care, Services, and Supports for Persons Living with Dementia and Their Care Partners/Caregivers, held virtually March 20-22, 2023, reviewed progress, highlighted innovative and promising research, and identified remaining unmet research needs with input from the wider dementia community including persons living with dementia and their care partners, those who provide healthcare or services and supports to persons living with dementia, and researchers. Key research themes throughout the three-day event included but were not limited to understanding what matters most to people living with dementia; exploring research opportunities to enhance support for care partners and caregivers; identifying dementia care workforce gaps and opportunities, including economic impacts, implications, and approaches; and examining approaches to participatory research and diverse recruitment and retention. A report summarizing the 2023 National Research Summit on Care, Services, and Support was published shortly after the conclusions of the Summit.⁵ Additionally, NIH used input from the Care Summit and other sources to help inform the development of eight new Alzheimer’s and related dementias research implementation milestones.⁶ These new milestones include identifying outcomes that matter most to people living with dementia and their care partners, enhancing caregiver resilience and wellbeing, and expanding community-engaged care and caregiving research, among other key research areas.

2024 Alzheimer’s Disease Research Summit

The 2024 Alzheimer’s Disease Research Summit was held September 23-25, 2024. This summit was organized around nine major themes aimed at the development of an integrated multidisciplinary research agenda necessary to enable precision medicine for Alzheimer’s treatment and risk reduction strategies. These themes included but were not limited to including participants as partners in research; expanding therapeutic modalities; bridging the preclinical to clinical translational gap; and diversifying available disease biomarkers. The summit also showcased progress towards achieving the Alzheimer’s disease research implementation

⁵ <https://www.nia.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2023-07/caregiving-dementia-summit.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.nia.nih.gov/2023-dementia-care-summit#milestones>

milestones. Research gaps and opportunities identified using input from the summit and other sources will be shared with the National Advisory Council on Aging for review and consideration.

Future Research Summits

NIA anticipates using the remaining funds collected through the Semipostal Stamp Program on future research summits and other programs that further the development of an integrated, multidisciplinary research agenda necessary to develop effective treatments and risk reduction strategies for Alzheimer's and related dementias.

For example, the 2025 Alzheimer's Disease-Related Dementias Summit will address research priorities for Alzheimer's disease-related dementias, including frontotemporal degeneration, Lewy body dementia, multiple etiology dementias, and vascular contributions to cognitive impairment and dementia, along with broader cross-cutting areas. Input received at the summit and elsewhere will help inform the development of research recommendations, which will be subsequently presented to the National Advisory Neurological Disorders and Stroke Council for consideration. Approved recommendations will become research milestones in the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease.

CONCLUSION

Research on Alzheimer's and related dementias has benefitted greatly from the innovative funding source that Congress established in the Act. Funding received in FY 2023 and FY 2024 has created enhanced opportunities for NIH to strengthen major research summits and welcome leading experts in the field, as well as people living with dementia and their care partners, to further the research agenda for Alzheimer's and related dementias research. The ideas emerging from these summits have been and will continue to be important catalysts for discovery leading to effective risk reduction, care and caregiving, and treatment interventions and strategies for these complex diseases and disorders.