

# SUPPORTING EARLY CAREER DEMENTIA RESEARCHERS:

Identifying needs for support and ways forward  
via an international mixed-methods study

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## BACKGROUND

Progress in dementia research is driven by researchers working in various fields. However, concerns exist about the needs of **early career dementia researchers (ECDRs)** and how to support them. This study aimed, therefore, to (i) **investigate current needs**, (ii) **determine ECDR-driven recommendations for practice**, and (iii) **set the agenda for organisations supporting ECDRs**.

## METHODS

This study used an iterative, explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. First, ECDRs' needs were quantified via an online survey based on the **Researcher Development Framework**. The most mentioned needs were discussed with ECDRs in two workshops applying the **World Café methodology**.

## RESULTS

65 ECDRs participated in the survey.

The most prominent needs were:

- **funding and career opportunities**
- **social well-being support**
- **the dissemination of research findings**

To support these needs the following was mentioned by ECDR in the workshops:

- **"transition funding"** for after the PhD
- personalized assistance from professional and peer coaches to **navigate the PhD journey**
- **Guidance on effective communication with lay people** could help in sharing research outcomes

## RECOMMENDATIONS

		Support organisations	Funding bodies	Universities
<b>Funding and career support</b>	Centralised overview of research funding	X		X
	Create long-term for more job security			X
	Create "transition funding" for after the PhD		X	X
<b>Social wellbeing</b>	Emphasise mental well-being and health			X
	Offer coaching programmes			X
	Provide experience in working outside academia	X		X
<b>Mentoring and training</b>	Offer training in supervision skills for supervisors	X		X
	Enhance informal communication	X		X
<b>Dissemination</b>	Provide templates for dissemination with broader audiences	X	X	X

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