



SPIN-D
NETWORK+

Sustainable Prevention,
Innovation and Involvement
for Dementia

Welcome to the September 2026 edition of the SPIN-D Network+ Newsletter

Our newsletter this month shares some exciting events coming up in the SPIN-D calendar including our **annual review and flexible fund showcase on 6th October**, as well as reflections from our fellow networks+, BRIDGES and EQUADEM, on their recent events. We also share reflections from the members of our Core Lived Experience Group and news and events from across the dementia network plus initiative.

SPIN-D Network News

SPIN-D Highlighted by Minister of State for Social Care and Mental Health

We were pleased to see SPIN-D Network+ highlighted by Alison McGovern MP, Minister of State for Social Care and Mental Health, in her keynote speech at the Alzheimer's Society Conference 2026:

Read the full speech here: [**Minister of State for Social Care and Mental Health speech on dementia – GOV.UK**](#)

Speaking about current dementia research, the Minister highlighted SPIN-D's support for innovative projects, including an evaluation of a physical activity programme inspired by martial arts to explore whether it could help reduce dementia risk.

Flexible Funding Round 3 "Inclusion in Practice" Projects

Deadline: 31st October 2026

SPIN-D is excited to open our third call for Inclusion in Practice projects under the Flexible Funding initiative, designed specifically to support Early Career Researchers (ECRs). This initiative funds projects that deepen our understanding of dementia or build upon existing research to drive real-world impact.

Focus Areas for Round 3

While we continue to support research into dementia risk factors and disease progression, this round places a special focus on practical application.

We are particularly inviting projects that aim to translate research into practice around understanding brain health and reducing dementia risk.

Who can apply?

Early Career Researchers (at eligible organisations), in collaboration with practitioners and people with lived experience, looking to translate dementia and brain health insights into practical, real-world tools and care models.

Full application guidelines, eligibility criteria, and key deadlines are outlined on the **[SPIN-D funding web page](#)**.

SPIN-D Events

Registration closing soon: SPIN-D 2026

Flexible Fund Showcase

Tuesday, 6th October 2026

Milner Hotel, York

FLEXIBLE FUND SHOWCASE



SPIN-D: THE STORY SO FAR

REDUCING RISK OF DEMENTIA

UNDERSTANDING BRAIN HEALTH

STAYING WELL AFTER A DEMENTIA DIAGNOSIS



TUE, 6 OCT 2026

THE MILNER HOTEL, YORK
FROM 9AM – 4:30PM



FREE REGISTRATION



www.spindementianet.org
spindnetworkplus@live.ucl.ac.uk

How are we advancing brain health understanding, reducing dementia risk, and supporting people to live well after a diagnosis?

Join us in York this October for a full-day showcase of cutting-edge research, guest keynotes, and collaborative discussions across the dementia care landscape!

Location: The Milner Hotel, York

Date: Tuesday, 6th October 2026

Time: 9:00 AM – 4:30 PM (BST)

Cost: FREE (Registration required)

What's on the Agenda?

SPIN-D: The Story So Far

Showcasing findings and progress from our Flexible Funding projects focused on:

Understanding brain health

Reducing dementia risk

Staying well after a diagnosis

APPLETREE, GRACE & Secondary Dementia Prevention

Hear directly from expert guest speakers at Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) on next steps in dementia prevention and research initiatives.

The Good Life Project: Living with Dementia

A collaborative presentation from representatives across the NHS, University of York, and Innovations in Dementia, highlighting real-world insights on living with dementia.

Who should attend?

Researchers, healthcare professionals, community leaders, people with lived experience, policy makers, and anyone working in brain health and dementia care.

Spaces are limited — secure your free place today
. [Visit the Eventbrite page to register \(free of charge\).](#)

All events hosted, attended, or represented by members of the network are listed on the **[SPIN-D Network+ Calendar](#)** on our website.

[Follow SPIN-D Network Plus on LinkedIn](#) to stay up to date with events and activities.

Other Events

British Neuroscience Association: Communicating Science and Shaping Research: The role of PPIE

Wednesday, 30th September 2026

2pm – 5pm BST

Hosted by the British Neuroscience Association, with support from Alzheimer's Research UK, this online event will explore the importance of Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) in shaping research, improving communication, and building partnerships that lead to more impactful science. Whether you're a researcher, healthcare professional, student or public contributor, join us to discover how collaborative approaches can strengthen research from concept to impact.

This event is FREE for BNA members and ARUK affiliates, meaning anybody who is funded by, or works for ARUK. **[Find out more and register here.](#)**

EQUADEM Network+ Workshop: What is research and how to get involved?

**Thursday, 8th October 2026
Manchester**

EQUADEM Network Plus are hosting a free public workshop for people with dementia, carers, and health and social care professionals about research, public involvement and engagement, and funding opportunities for health and social care professionals. This will take place on Thursday, 8th October, at the People's History museum in Manchester, with lunch and time for networking. **[Registration is open here.](#)**

EMPOWER Dementia Network+: Co-producing Community-based Initiatives in Dementia Care

**Monday, 2nd November 2026
12pm – 4pm
Greenisland Golf Club, Belfast**

EMPOWER Dementia Network+ invite you to an upcoming partnership event between Greenisland Golf Club, the University of Worcester, and EMPOWER Dementia Network+ event on Co-producing Community-based Initiatives in Dementia Care. The event will be held on 2nd November 2026 (12-4) at Greenisland Golf Club in Belfast.

This is a free event, with lunch included, that will bring together people living with dementia, family carers, community organisations, researchers, practitioners, and members of the public to explore how co-production can support the development of meaningful, community-based dementia support.

All are welcome – researchers, community groups, people living with dementia and their friends, family, and carers, health practitioners, local businesses, and anybody passionate about or interested in dementia care. To help us plan catering and understand any accessibility requirements, please register via our Eventbrite page. Places are limited, so we encourage you to **[register as soon as possible.](#)**

If you have any questions about the event, please don't hesitate to get in contact with Dr Shirley Evans: shirley.evans@worc.ac.uk or the EMPOWER Dementia Network+: EMPOWER_Dementia_Network@kcl.ac.uk.

2026 UK Ageing Research Funders' Forum

Early Career Researchers Event

Monday, 23rd November 2026
Central London

The UK Ageing Research Funders' Forum (UKARFF) is pleased to announce its next Early Career Researcher (ECR) event, taking place on 23 November 2026 at the [Health Foundation](#) in Central London. Bringing together early-career researchers working across ageing-related fields, the event will offer a valuable opportunity to connect with peers and explore how research can help support people to age well. This event, co-organised by the [Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council \(BBSRC\)](#), [Economic and Social Research Council \(ESRC\)](#), [Health Foundation](#) and [Vivensa Foundation](#), will bring together ECRs working across the ageing field.

The programme will include a funders' panel discussion, a keynote speaker, research talks and poster presentations, alongside dedicated opportunities for networking and discussion. View the full agenda and register your interest on the [Eventbrite page](#).

Caribbean Brain Health Summit (CBHS)

16–22 November 2026
Hybrid



Register your interest [short form here](#) (individuals and organisations)

If you/your organisation would like to attend, stay informed, or explore involvement.

[Partner sign-up form here](#) (organisations / initiatives)

If your organisation or initiative is interested in partnering as an ally or endorser, flagship day host, activity host (including a Brain Health Relay activity), or coordinating organisation.

[Brain Health Relay sign-up form here](#)

Please complete this form if your organisation is interested in participating in a country-specific Brain Health Relay or a region-wide/diaspora-wide Brain Health Relay. This helps us align one-hour slots, avoid clashes, and ensure that

Relay activities are clearly identified as part of CBHS week while still reflecting your own focus and style. Please be sure to also complete the Partner Sign Up form above.

Completing these forms does *not* lock you into a fixed plan; rather, it opens up a channel for us to work with you as your CBHS-week activities evolve, and to provide **templates, branding guidance, and communications support** so that your work is clearly recognised as part of the wider Summit.

I also particularly welcome **direct conversations** with anyone interested in taking on a **Diaspora / Ally Organisations Coordinating role** for a collective group of UK-based or other diaspora organisations during Summit week. If that might be you or your organisation, please feel free to reach out by email to: IshtarGovia@AmagiBrainHealth.org or WhatsApp (@IshtarGovia) and we can explore together.

Further information on the [CBHS 2026 website](#).

SPIN-D CLEG Highlights

Pete Middleton on writing Plain English Summaries for grant applications



"I'd gladly turn up for a custard cream and a natter, but "synergistic engagement" makes me feel like I need a hard hat and a degree in astrophysics."

[Read the blog here.](#)

Steve Kennedy's campaigning work has inspired articles in the Northern Irish Press this summer



As a new Health Minister took up his post in Northern Ireland this summer, Steve Kennedy renewed calls for action on dementia care. Steve has spent years campaigning to improve life for people who receive a dementia diagnosis. Steve speaks openly about his own diagnosis and how frightening it was to hear words such

as ‘get your affairs in order’ at the start of the process. “For someone who has just been told they have dementia, such language can feel as though their future has been taken from them before they have had the chance to understand the diagnosis.” He highlights the importance of people needing information, practical help, emotional support and financial security from the beginning. “People need to know what will happen next, where they can turn and how they can continue to live meaningful lives.”

Articles reporting Steve’s campaign calls are here:

[April 2026, Fermanagh dementia campaigner calls for urgent action](#)

[August 2028, Fermanagh dementia campaigners call for greater support](#)

Other News and Resources

BRIDGES N+ Conference: Research Highlights & Academic Insights

Following our annual conference on September 14th at the VOCO in Sheffield, the BRIDGES for Dementia Network+ showcased how cross-disciplinary research and co-design are shaping the future of dementia technology. Led by the University of Sheffield and funded by UKRI, Alzheimer’s Society, and NIHR, the conference brought together academics, healthcare practitioners, industry partners, and people with lived experience.

Academic & Research Focus Areas

Co-Design Frameworks & Inclusive Methodology: Research teams from the University of Lancaster (Roger Whitham & Joseph Lindley) demonstrated how involving people with lived experience directly influences hardware and software design, ensuring high translational value and end-user adoption.

Emerging Technologies & Applied AI: Specialised sessions explored cutting-edge applications, including natural language processing for social robotics (University of Kent), conversational AI for community support

(University of Sheffield), remote delivery of creative interventions via the Culture Box project (University of Surrey), and AI-driven early detection of dementia in

Motor Neuron Disease (CognoMND project).

Early Career Researcher (ECR) Mentorship: In a dedicated masterclass chaired by Innovations in Dementia, ECRs presented innovative project proposals directly to a panel of individuals living with dementia, receiving critical lived-experience feedback to refine research methodologies for upcoming grant applications

Here's what Early Career Researchers had to say:

"The main thing is that it improved my confidence and my excitement about my project. Meeting people my research would impact reminds you what it's all for!"

"Brilliant comments received"

Future Funding Calls & Impact

Director Dr. Jennifer MacRitchie and Impact Officer Amira Samatar outlined strategy guidelines to help academic teams maximise the real-world impact of their projects and prepare for upcoming BRIDGES research funding calls.

Acknowledgments

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all of our speakers, presenters, session facilitators, and exhibitors for contributing their time and expertise to make the event a success. We are especially grateful to all attendees – including academics, healthcare partners, and people living with dementia and their carers – whose active collaboration continues to drive the BRIDGES Network+ mission forward.



Reflections on the Joint EQUADEM Network+/ INTERDEM Taskforce Symposium on Solutions to Dementia Inequalities

Last week, Chris Fox (SPIN-D co-lead) attended the EQUADEM/ INTERDEM Taskforce Symposium to share the progress of the network to date. Group discussions were fruitful and interesting, and hopefully left everyone on a more positive note to try and address inequalities in dementia together..

Read the blog here, written by EQUADEM lead, Clarissa Giebel.

International Symposium on Solutions to Dementia Inequalities – Equadem



INTERDEM Academy Opportunities

Are you not yet a member of INTERDEM Academy?

Join INTERDEM Academy today! **[Application form here.](#)** Criteria:

- Involved in psychosocial research in dementia care

- Consider yourself a junior researcher in the field (e.g., less than 3 years of active dementia research experience, PhD/doctoral student in the field)

If you are in doubt about your eligibility, please email us at interdem-masterclass@maastrichtuniversity.nl

INTERDEM Academy: Current opportunities

Annual Travel Fellowship offers opportunity for 1-3 months research exchange with up to **€3500** funding for travel and accommodation, promoting knowledge exchanges, learning methodologies, and building cross-country collaborations.

Call open: Monday 14 September 2026

Deadline applications: Monday 2 November 2026 (6pm CET).

Announcement of winner: December 2026

Start of fellowship: January – December 2027

Contact and more information: Interdem-masterclass@maastrichtuniversity.nl

The INTERDEM Academy Publication Awards (€500 prize to support career development) highlights outstanding scientific contributions by EMCRs, inviting the winner to present their work at the annual INTERDEM Business Meeting.

Call open: TBC. Eligible criteria:

- Early-stage researchers who are at a maximum of 3 years after receiving their degree
- Only one article of which the early-stage researcher is the first author.
- Articles should be published or accepted for publication in the year prior to the call

Mentorship: MENTORDEM. One-to-one MENTORDEM scheme matches INTERDEM and Academy members, providing guidance on career development, leadership and work-life balance.

Dementia Inclusive Universities – Invitation to support research from the Working With Dementia Network+

The Dementia Inclusive Universities initiative is inviting anyone who is living with dementia and involved in university research to take part in an online focus group taking place during October and November.

Details are on the flier for how people can sign up, but if anyone would like more information they can email: **wwdnetworkplus@dementia.uws.ac.uk**



Join our online focus group to help us find out how universities can be more dementia inclusive...

Participation involves an online focus group in October or November 2026 lasting approximately two hours. The aim of the project is to develop guidance to support inclusivity for those affected by dementia from various perspectives.



Four networks are jointly funded by the Alzheimer's Society, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC, part of UK Research and Innovation), and the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR).

EQUADEM Network+

Working with Dementia Network+

Four networks are jointly funded by the Alzheimer's Society, the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC, part of UK Research and Innovation), and the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR).

BRIDGES for Dementia (University of Sheffield)
CONSOLIDATE (Heriot Watt University)
TEDI (Northumbria University)
ZeDTech (Imperial College)

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