



Dementia Researcher

Building research capacity and supporting early career researchers, from all areas of discovery

Annual Report 2025



Introduction

Each year we review what Dementia Researcher is doing, who it is reaching, and what difference it is making. The 2025 annual report shows continued growth in reach and a service that is now established across web, newsletter, podcast, video, and a dedicated community app.

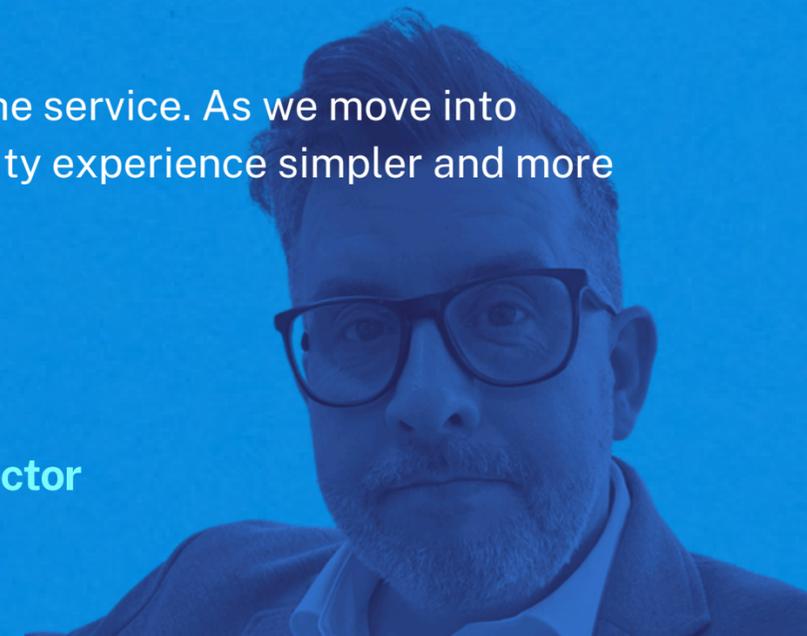
The headline numbers matter because they show scale. In 2025 we saw strong increases in page views and unique visitors, and we now reach people across well over 100 countries through our communications and media. Numbers alone do not explain why the service matters or what it feels like to use. That is why we also ran our first community poll in late summer 2025 to capture user experience, including what people use most, what it has helped them achieve, and what they want next.

Together these reports tell a consistent story. Dementia Researcher is being used as intended, helping researchers and research staff find opportunities, learn from peers, and stay connected to a wider community. They also highlight the next step clearly. We have built a growing membership, but turning a content led service into a community where more people post, comment, and support one another takes time and confidence.

Our focus now is to lower barriers to contribution, create structured prompts and simpler ways to take part, and continue investing in the spaces where people already engage, including webinars, newsletters, and practical resources.

I am proud of what has been delivered with partners and contributors in 2025 and grateful for the trust people place in the service. As we move into 2026, our focus is on deepening engagement, widening representation and international reach, and making the community experience simpler and more rewarding for the people it exists to support.

Adam Smith
Programme Director



Executive summary

In 2025, Dementia Researcher continued to grow as a single place for opportunities, learning, and connection across dementia research, with strong gains in website reach and steady expansion across platforms.

Audience growth remained a clear headline. The annual report shows large increases in page views and unique visitors, with growth across key areas including funding calls, job listings, and community events. The October user engagement poll supports what sits behind those numbers, with respondents describing real world outcomes such as finding opportunities, attending events they would not otherwise have found, and building new connections.

The service also continued to mature as a multi platform offer. The newsletter now reaches more than 5,500 people each week, with strong open and click through rates. Social reach increased, with more than 15,000 followers and over 2.6 million impressions across the year. YouTube plays across video podcasts, webinars, audio blogs, and livestreams reached more than 80,000, reflecting a growing shift towards video consumption.

Delivery stayed high volume and collaborative. In 2025 the service published 117 blogs with 37 contributors, delivered 47 Salon webinars with 82 presenters, attracted 960 live attendees, and recorded 6,480 post event views. Community membership reached 1,527 across 42 countries, while the next challenge is participation, with about 7% of members posting so far. This is typical for emerging professional communities and gives a clear focus for the next phase.

Analysis of listings shows there is real pressures across the wider sector. Jobs advertised decreased in 2025 compared with 2024, and funding calls also reduced. This reinforces the value of curation and signposting during a tighter opportunity environment.

Looking ahead, the 2026 plan is aligned with what users asked for in the October poll. Priorities include strengthening community experience and engagement, widening reach and careers inspiration, and growing international contribution and listings, including stronger links with clinical and trial delivery communities.



Its Goals



Drive progress in Dementia Research by facilitating collaboration, providing a community of support and enabling sharing while inspiring the next generation of dementia researchers and helping to retain the current generation.



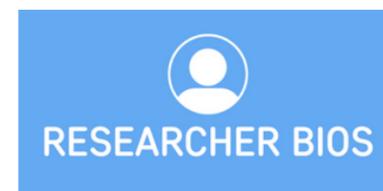


What it Does

What is does



Searches for all dementia research events, jobs, further education courses and funding calls and collates and curated them into a single directory - providing a one-stop-shop.



Provides a community where researchers from different fields and countries interact, collaborate & support each other in their work & careers via a dedicated community app.



Collates and curates' content from partners on research (clinical, fundamental science, care, etc.), methods and career topics relevant to the dementia ECR community. Partners, Journals, Charities.



Provides an online repository of tools and resources to support ECR on all areas of interest, from grant writing to datasets, and provides informal mentoring and special campaigns e.g. careers week festival.



Organises and publishes over 150 written and narrated blogs each year, a fortnightly podcast, blogs podcast and weekly webinars on careers, research, conference outputs + more.

2025 Specials, Highlights & Collaborations



Attended in-person only conferences to record and share talks to reach a wider audience. 14 events attended / recorded resulting in:

5147 YouTube plays

Events from 2024 also still have increasing engagements.



10 special live debates explored a number of research and career hot topics around genetic testing, animal models, funding systems and careers. The debates attracted 278 live attendees,



Provided Community space to newly established Alzheimer's Society Doctoral Training Centre's to provide a collaborative support and event space.

Supported the UCL ALS / FTD with community events and community spaces, and establishment of new 'Community Forum' spaces for discussing specific research studies.



X / YouTube Livestreams, podcasts, webinars, and articles to promote awareness of funding calls, training and other opportunities provided by funders and research organisations.



Work underway to deliver 2025/26 worldwide ECR careers survey (Update to 2022). Results from previous survey resulted in 3 further papers in 2025 (2 published, 1 under review), this adds to the 4 already published in 2023/24. Discussing sexism, career motivations and research culture worldwide.



Building a community:

- Weekly webinars
- Career discussion spaces
- Solutions Lab Q&A
- Find a Mentor
- Research discussion spaces
- 8 Research Forums
- Funding call push notifications
- Jobs push notifications
- Events spaces + collaborator finder
- Ethics guidance exchange
- Training courses - first on Viva prep has 66 participants.

1515 Members from 40 countries working in all areas of discovery (762 new members in 2025)

Other Collaborations:

- Alzheimer's Research UK
- Alzheimer's Society
- Race Against Dementia
- NIHR Evidence
- UKRI / Zinc Catalyst
- NIHR ARCs
- AAIC / ISTAART
- UK Dementia Research Institute
- Alzheimer Europe
- MND Association
- MND Scotland
- Liverpool Neuroscience
- Liverpool Dementia Forum
- NIHR ARCs
- BNA



Core Membership of the UCL Research Culture Steering Group - representing Brain Sciences in improving research culture across the institution



Undergraduate student engagement:

- Work on the national steering committee to deliver four undergraduate in-person and online student engagement events to encourage careers in research.
- Delivered 8 'Creative Communications' workshops to undergraduate and postgraduate students.



JOB

848



FUNDING

259

Number listed in 2024



EDUCATION

82



EVENTS

504

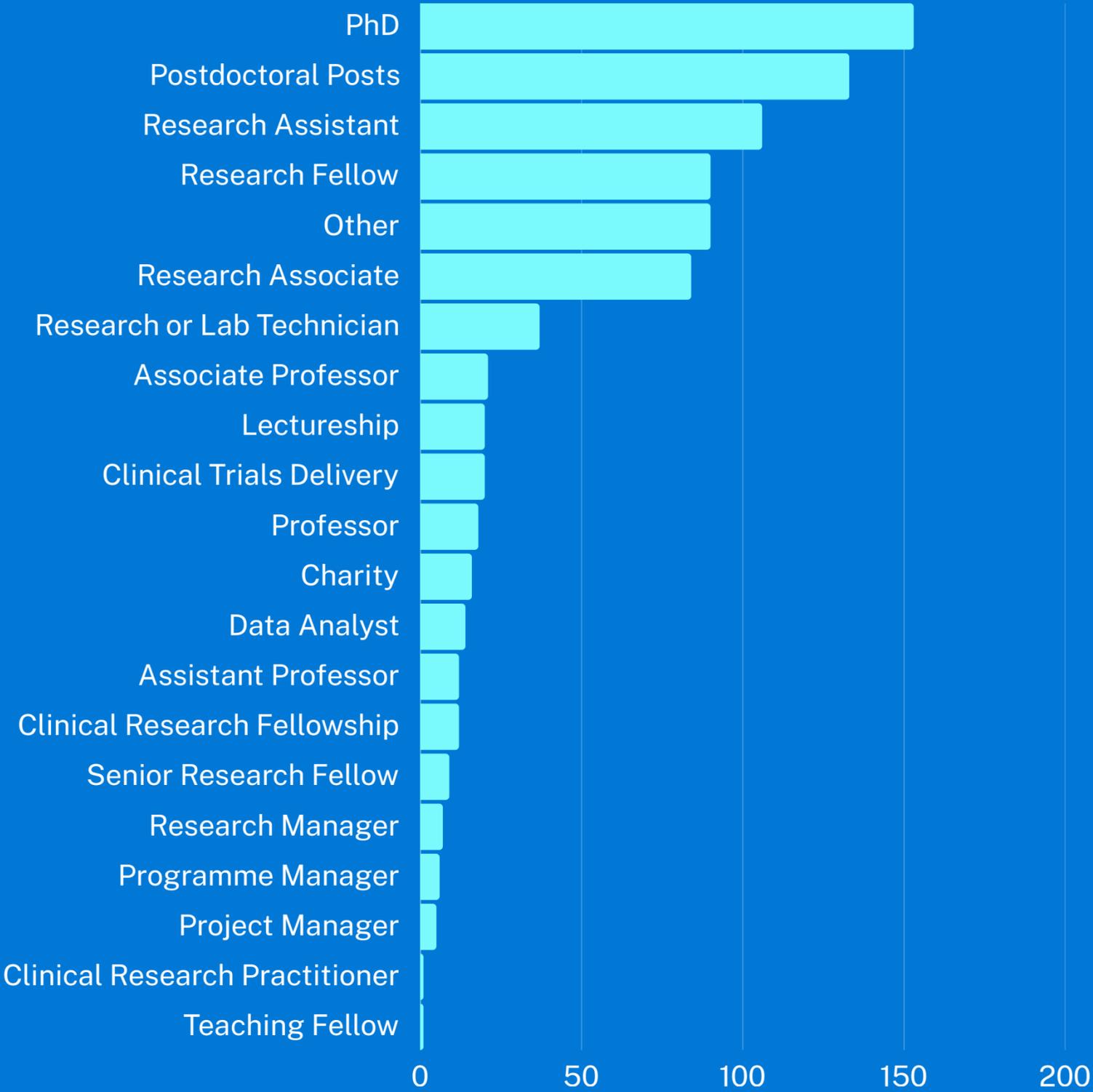
All in one Place Jobs, Events, Funding Calls

Dementia Researcher shares jobs, events, funding calls and higher education courses to widen the reach of the opportunities. There was a 14% decrease in the number of jobs advertised in 2025 compared to 2024 (this previous year saw a same decrease), and a 13% drop in the number of funding calls listed.

Job Types

- Analysis of job listings in 2025 shows a continued concentration of opportunities at early career stages, with PhD studentships, postdoctoral posts, research assistants, and research fellows making up the majority of roles advertised. This reflects sustained investment in training and short term research capacity across the dementia research sector.
- However, there is a clear narrowing of opportunities beyond these stages. Listings decrease sharply at mid career transition points, with comparatively few lectureship, associate professor, and professor level roles. This pattern highlights an ongoing structural challenge, where entry into research is more accessible than long term progression within it.
- The data also indicates gradual diversification in career pathways. Alongside traditional academic posts, roles in clinical trials delivery, data analysis, technical support, and the charity sector appear consistently, suggesting broader employment routes are emerging, although these remain smaller in scale.
- In terms of research focus, molecular and cellular mechanisms continue to dominate recruitment, accounting for the largest proportion of advertised roles. Clinical trials, care and carer research, genetics, and technology focused posts form a substantial secondary group, with increasing evidence of interdisciplinary roles that span multiple research areas.
- Overall, the 2025 job market presents a wide but uneven landscape, offering many entry points into dementia research but fewer stable progression opportunities, particularly in translations / care focused research. This reinforces the importance of continued attention to career sustainability, progression pathways, and support beyond early career stages.

*Based on jobs listed on the dementia researcher website curated from multiple sources.



Funding Types



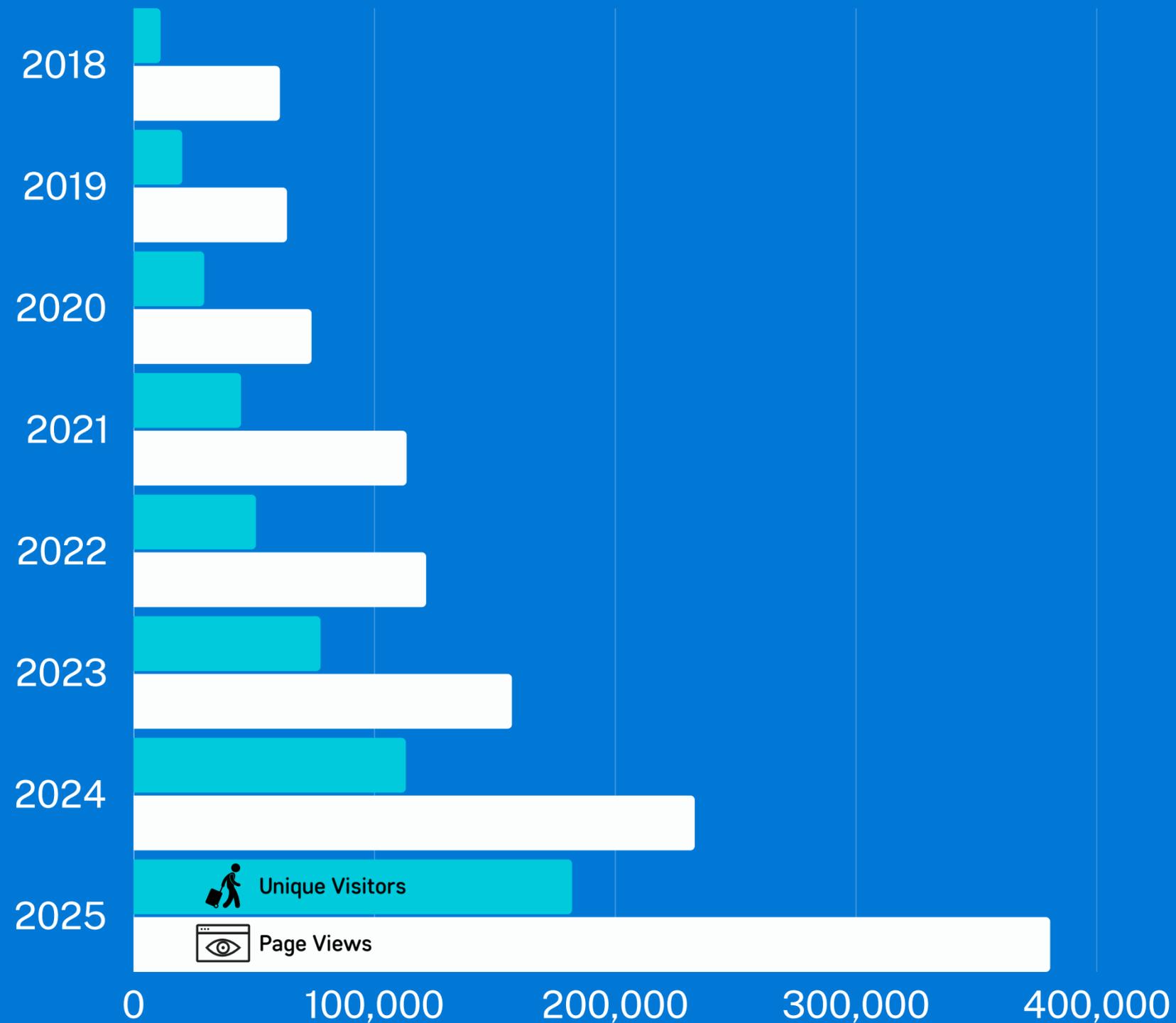
- Funding calls listed in 2025 were strongly focused on fellowships and career development awards, highlighting continued investment in individual researchers, particularly at early and mid career stages.
- The majority of opportunities were delivered by a small number of major public and charitable funders, led by the National Institute for Health and Care Research, reinforcing both the strength and concentration of the funding landscape.
- Calls covered a broad range of research areas, though biological and clinical research featured more prominently than care, community, and applied research. Overall, the funding environment remains competitive and time limited, underlining ongoing challenges around career sustainability and long term progression.

*Note some funding individual funding calls may be duplicated due to being open to multiple areas e.g. Research for Patient Benefit.

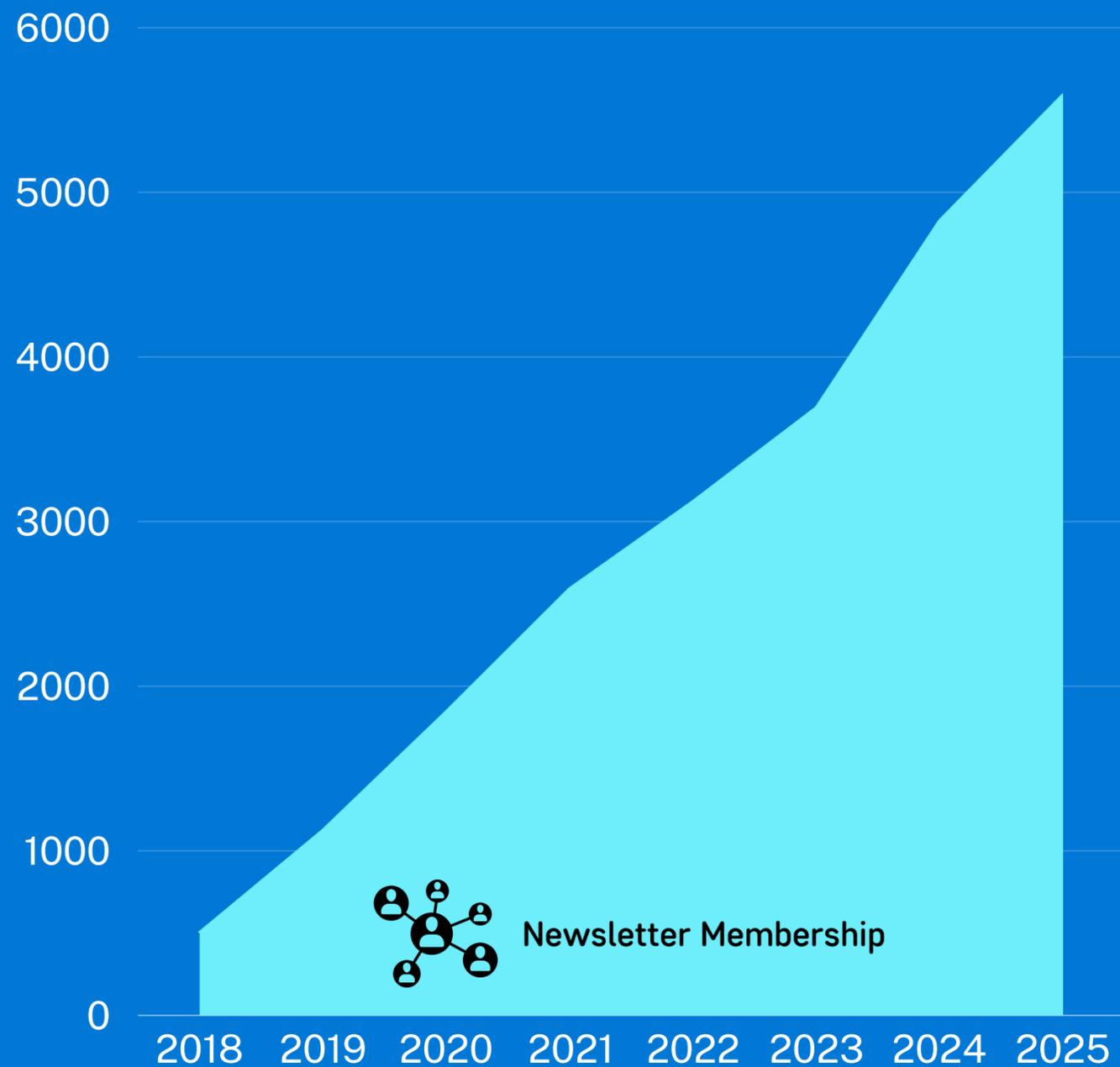


Its Success

Year on year growth in users **+63% views** **+61% visitors**



The website continued its strong upward trend in 2025, with substantial increases in both page views and unique visitors compared with the previous year. Growth was seen across the site as a whole, with particularly marked increases on funding calls, job listings, and community events. This sustained growth reflects improvements in search engine optimisation, a steady increase in the volume of high quality content, deliberate efforts to resurface and reuse existing material and community services.



Newsletter Growth

16%

The automated Friday Newsletter is now circulated to 5500+ people each week, **from more than 100 countries.**

The average 'open' rate is **42%** (mailchimps reported average for similar newsletters is 34%) and the average 'click through' rate is 14% (mailchimps reported average for similar newsletters is 2.6%)



Multi-platform growth

Followers

15,416



Impressions

2.6 million



Views

129,000



Watch time

4,954 hours



Dementia Researcher users and engagements now stretch across multiple platforms as the service extends to reach a wider audience and produces more multi-media / platform content. In 2025 the service invested more heavily in LinkedIn and YouTube, and these areas contributed to a 17% growth in social media following.

The effectiveness of social media continued to decrease in 2025, driving 15% fewer website visitors. However, LinkedIn as a stand alone platform for the content added saw Dementia Researcher received 812,725 impressions and over 8,000 engagements.

Subscribers
6,500+

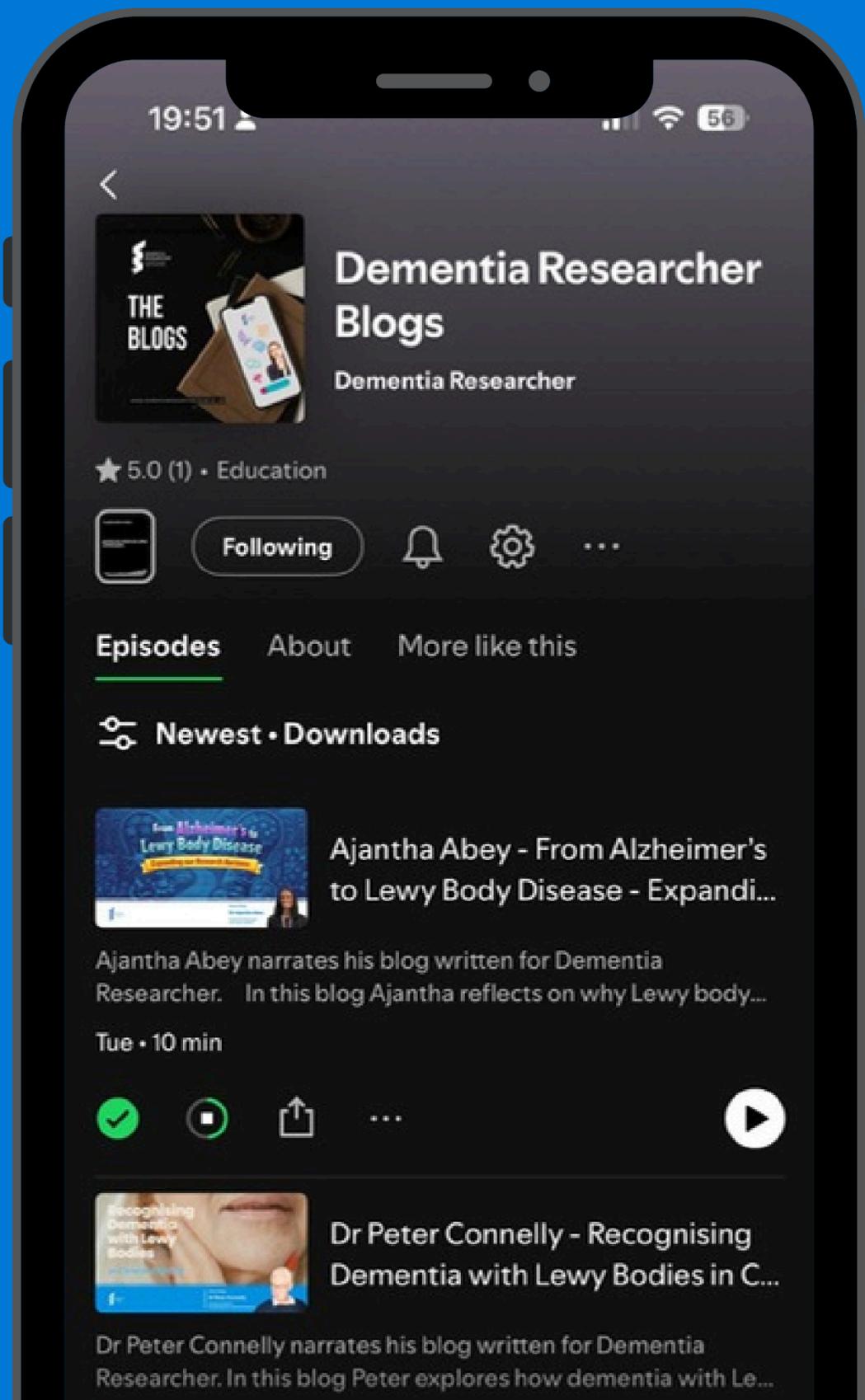
Monthly Plays
4,193 avg

**On all podcast
platforms +
smart home
devices**

Audio Podcast 37 Episodes in 2025

Podcast topics cover everything from Fundamental Science to Care Research and Careers + Conference Reviews and special mini-series, collaborations. Shows features guest hosts + varied panels from across the world (stats exclude plays from Video versions of the podcasts & blogs podcast - reported separately). The drop in overall listeners reflects that some users have transitioned to the video version on YouTube, and releasing 6 fewer episodes in 2025 (this is mostly due to fewer 'conference highlight shows).





Audio Podcast Listens

+29% in 2020

+39% in 2021

+81% in 2022

+8% in 2023

+47% in 2024

+115% in 2025

Separate from being 'read' as text on our website - the audio narrations of our podcasts were listened to 22,800 times in 2025 (all blogs irrespective of year published).

UK Listeners
21%

USA Listeners
36%

EU Listeners
4%

Japan Listeners
13%

Australia Listeners
8%

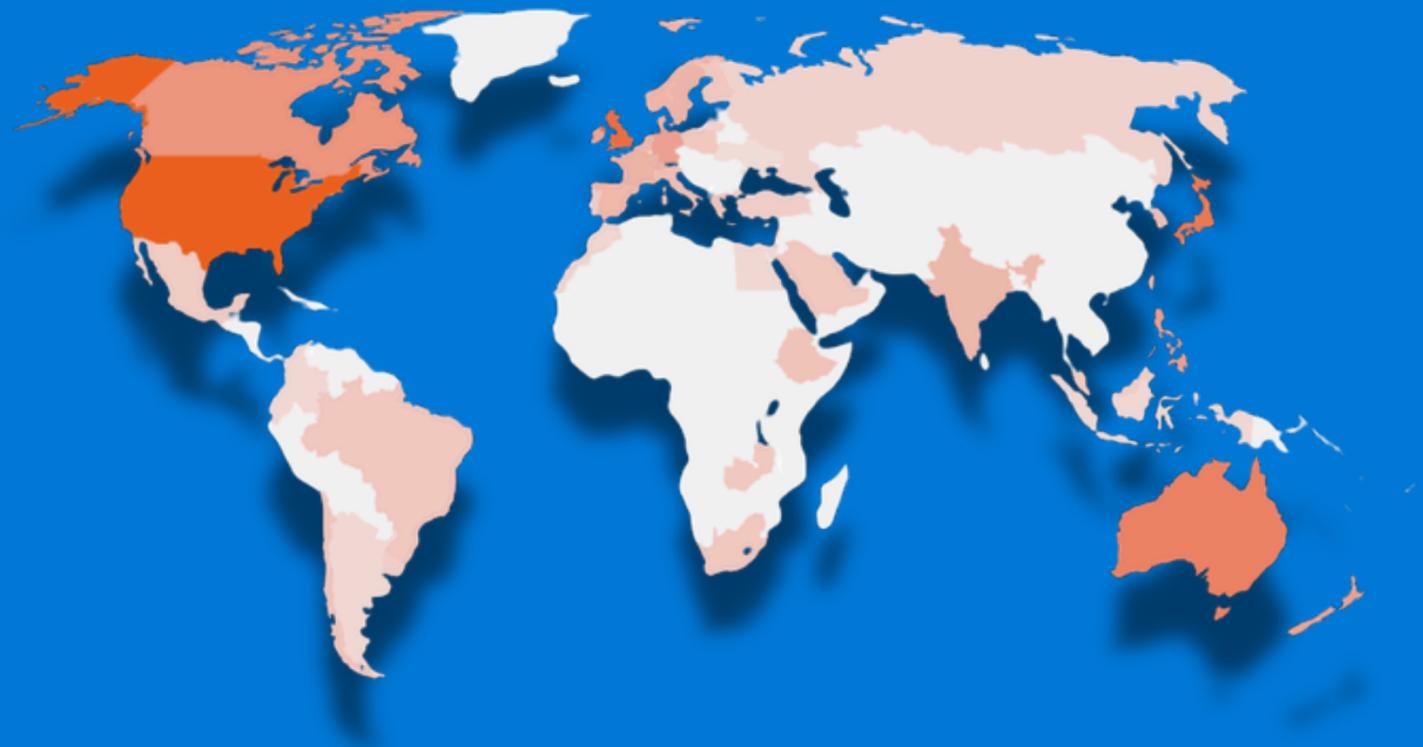
Rest of the World
18%

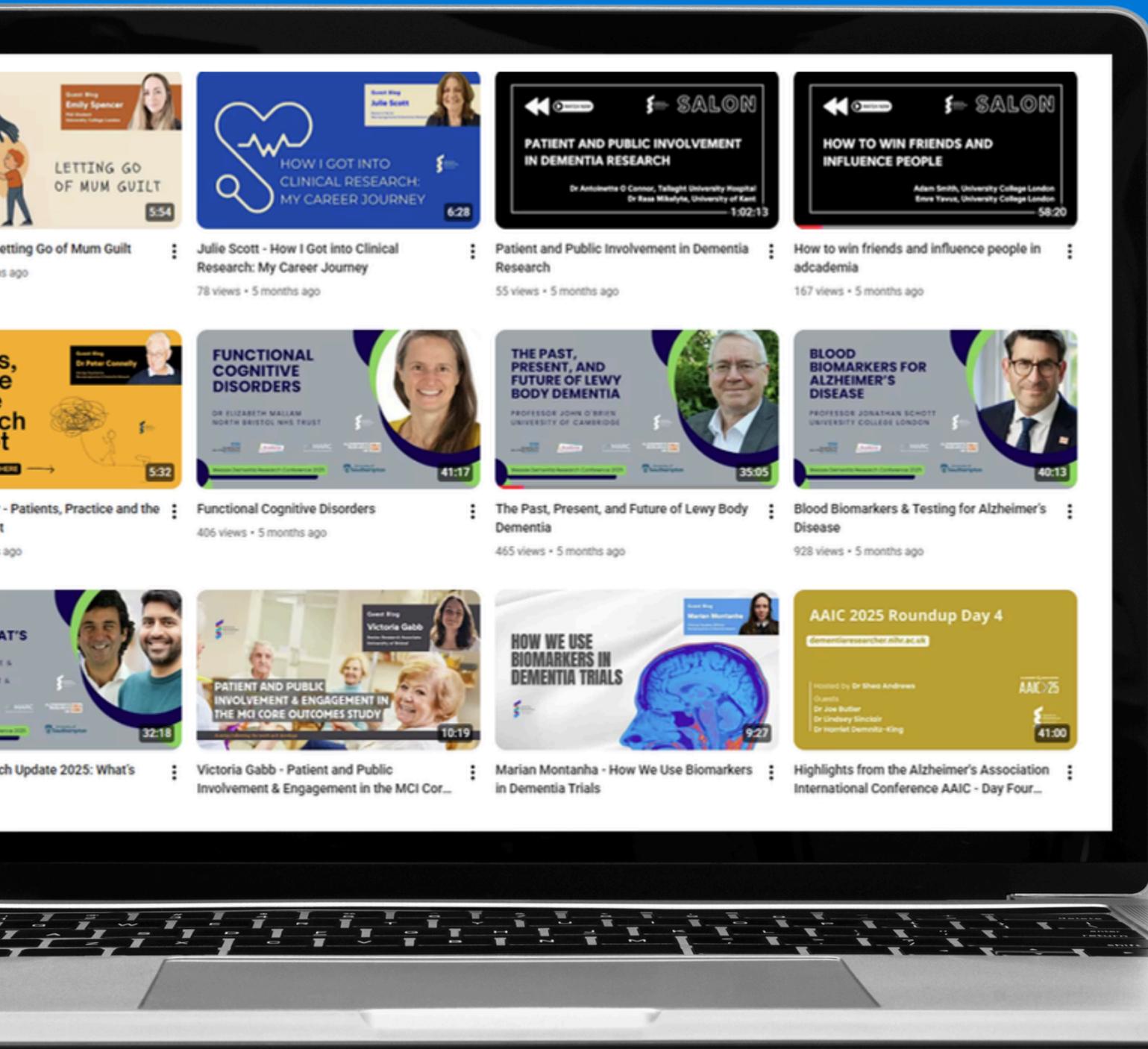
Audio Podcast Worldwide 110 countries

The Dementia Researcher podcast is bringing ECRs from across the world together. With guests from more than 15 countries (in 2025), it is listened to in over 100 countries worldwide, and it is in the top 3% of science podcasts worldwide. From Peru and Nigeria to the UK and USA. Featured in the Goodpods top 10 all-time science podcasts, and #1 in Life Sciences.

Largest gains in 2025 came from Japan, Canada and Australia.

Note this is an incomplete picture and just from the main podcast platform Soundcloud. Due to the way data is spread between hundreds of podcast apps it is impossible to gather all geography data, but total plays are accurate.





YouTube Video Podcast / Blog Plays 80,088

Since 2022, all audio podcast recordings are also published in video format, in addition to webinars and livestreams they alone attracted **63,400 plays, 4800 hours of watch time + 31% increase in subscribers.**

Overall YouTube plays of all content, video podcasts, webinar recordings, audio blogs and livestreams increased by 27% in 2025

Number
2-3 per week

Listens
22,900+

Narrations on
all podcast
platforms +
smart home
devices

Blogs Published in 2025 - 117

37 people contributed blogs to the service in 2025, we increased our number of paid staff bloggers to broaden our range of topics to include researchers starting families and those working in trial delivery. A significant partnership with the Scottish Neuroprogressive and Dementia Network helped provide greater coverage of clinical research delivery topics (20 blogs). Overall, blogs cover a variety of topics, from personal updates to careers advice, news and their own research. Blogs are published with narrations - there were 22,900 listens in 2025, and over 91,000 reads.



Salon Weekly Webinars

Launched in July 2024, webinars take place in the Dementia Researcher Community every Wednesday. 47 webinars delivered in 2025, with 82 presenters. Sessions attracted **960 live attendees, and 6480 post-event recording views.**

Sessions are booked through to June 2026.

Research & Career Support topics, and Debates - 1 hour sessions, two speakers and live chat,

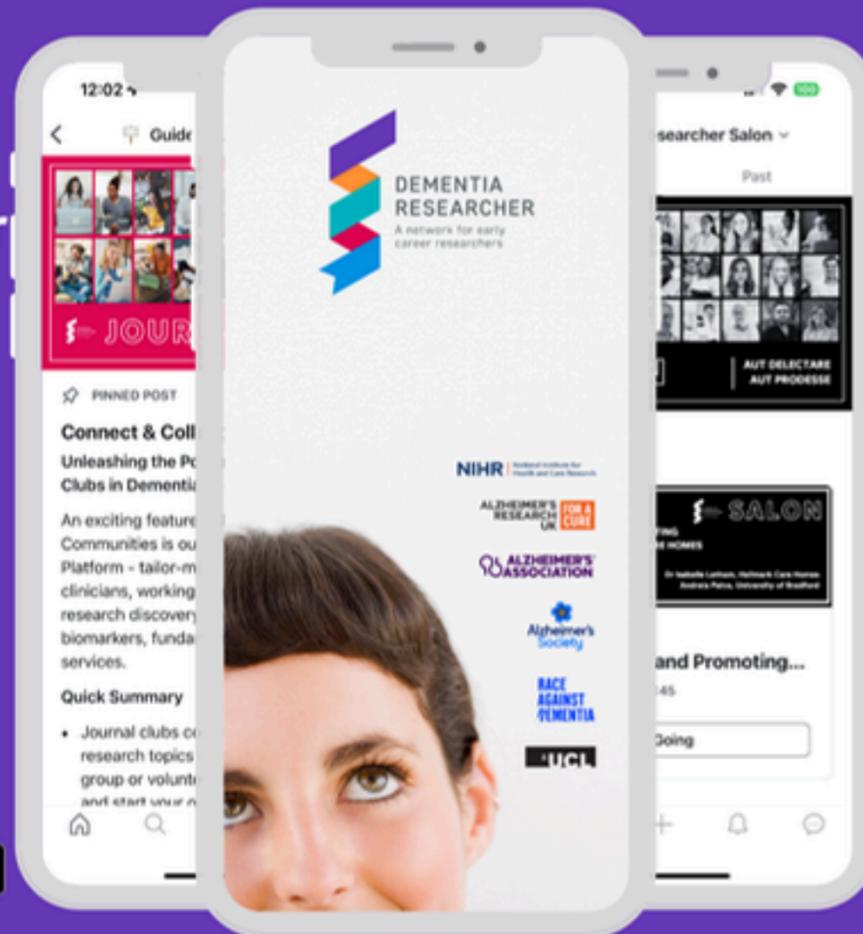


Dementia Researcher Community

Introducing the new Dementia Researcher Community App

Network, collaborate, get the information & support you need

- Careers & research chat + support
- Find a mentor
- Weekly webinars
- Training & careers livestreams
- Research funding alerts
- Virtual journal clubs
- Study spaces, conference planning
- Much more....



- Research Chat
- Careers Chat
- Salon Webinars
- Careers Livestreams
- Community Partner Spaces
- Find a Mentor
- Forums
- Push notifications - Jobs / Funding Calls
- Peer Support & Discussion

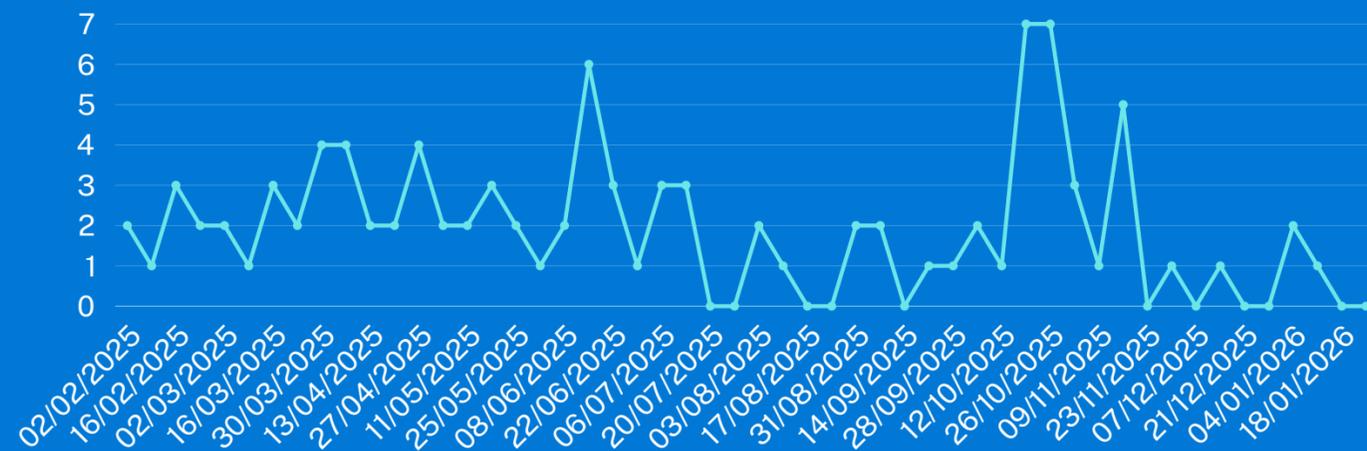
1527 Members + 82%

Stats to measure community performance are under development. Engagement with events has been good, however other areas are proving slow to develop.

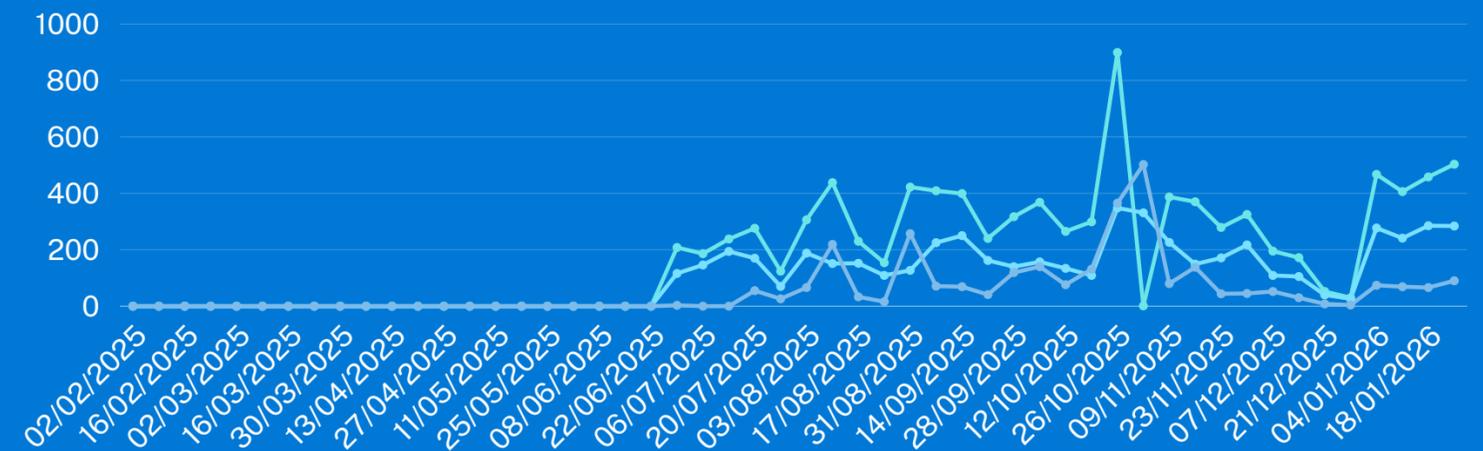
Dementia Researcher Community

Members 1,527
Countries 42
Total Posts 5,117 (7% of members)

Creating Posts



Reading Posts



Community engagement and participation

While membership of the Dementia Researcher Community has grown quickly, encouraging active participation has been more challenging. Most members initially engage as content consumers, using the platform to access webinars, podcasts, jobs, and funding information. Shifting behaviour from reading and watching to posting, commenting, and contributing takes time, confidence, and trust.

This is a common pattern in professional and academic communities, particularly for early career researchers who may feel hesitant about sharing publicly. As a result, visible activity has developed more slowly than overall membership growth. This does not reflect lack of interest, but rather the early stage of the community and the cultural norms of academic engagement.

Over the next phase, the focus will be on lowering barriers to contribution through clearer prompts, structured discussions, visible examples of participation, and greater use of low effort engagement tools such as polls and short updates. The aim is to gradually support members to move from passive engagement towards shared ownership of the community.



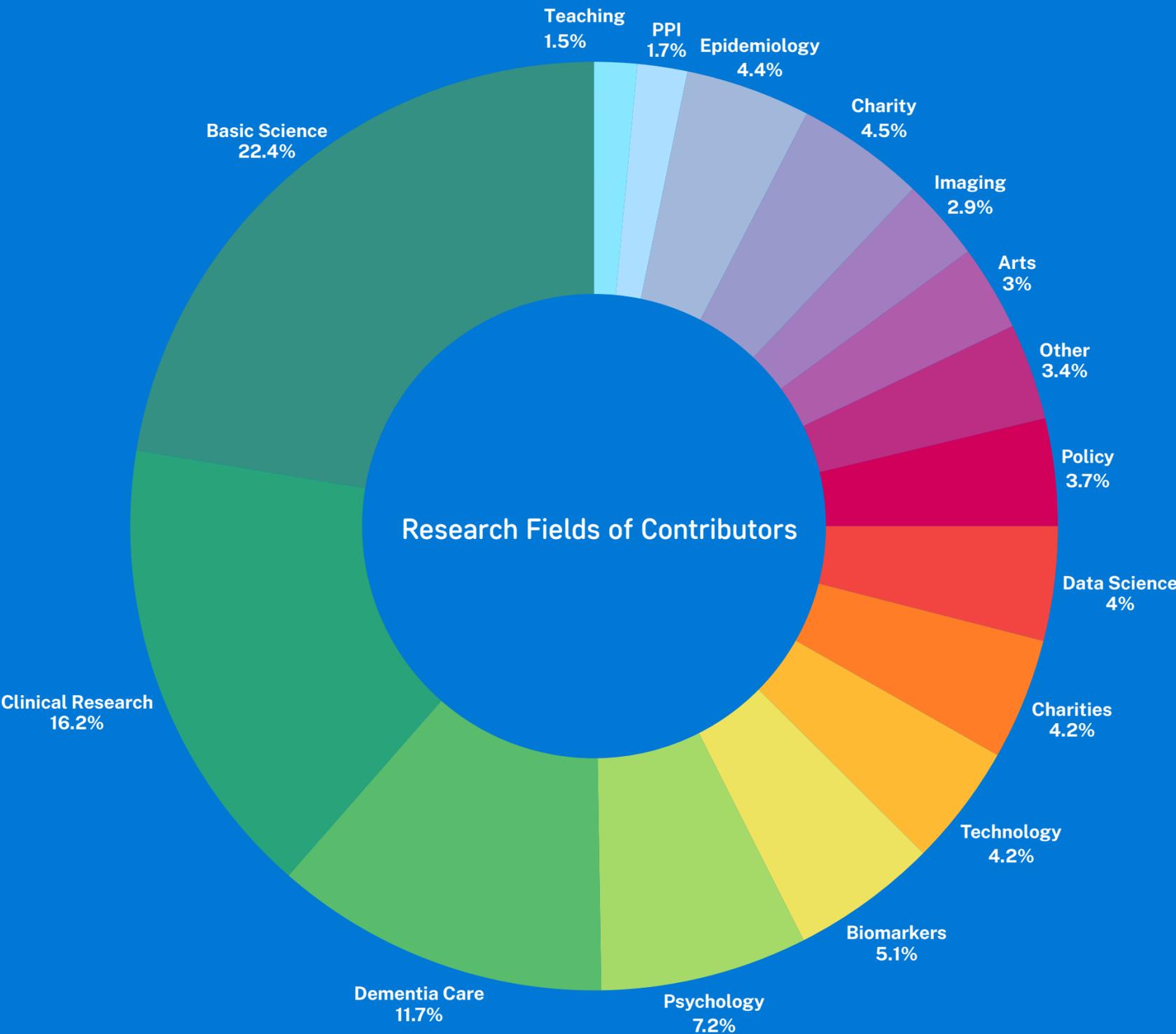
Delivering EDI

Research Diversity

747

Contributors

2018-2025
Contributors

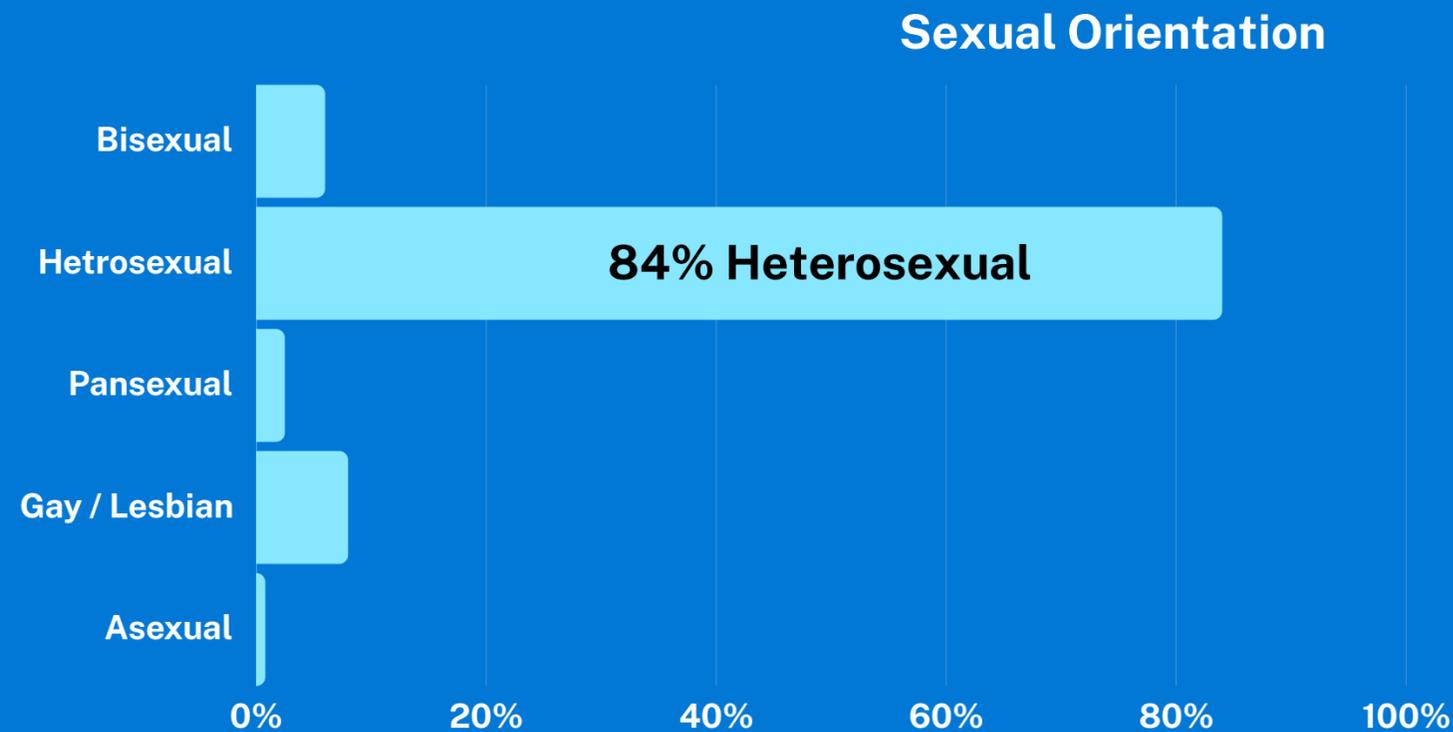
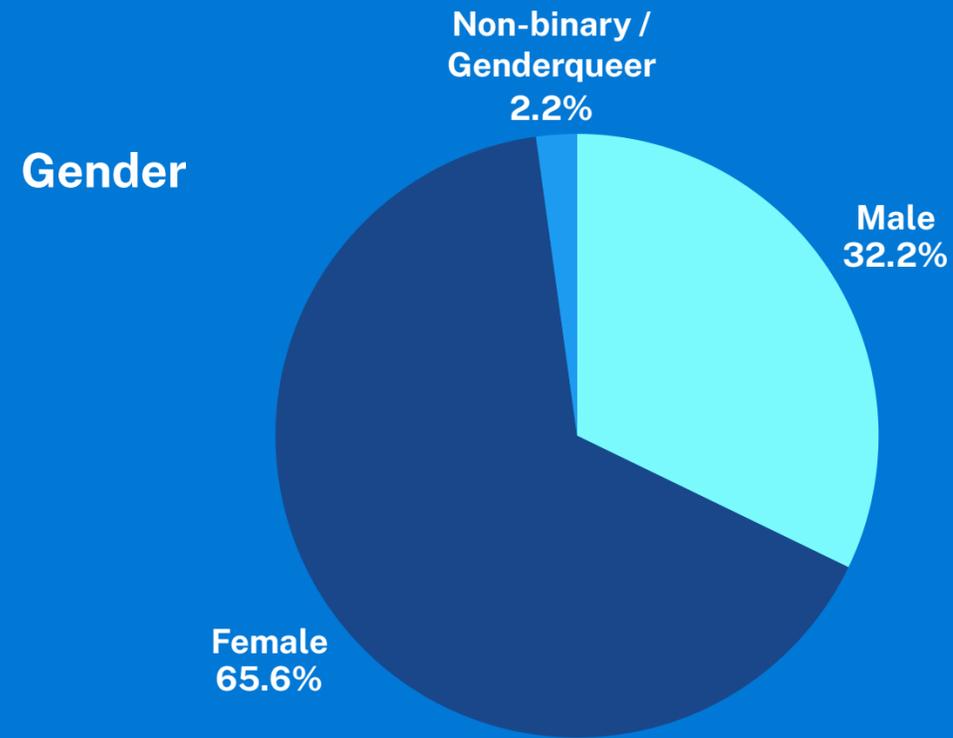


Contributors report that this helps raise their own profile, help raise awareness of their work, results in new collaborations & helps others. In 2025 the service had **79 new contributors** writing blogs, taking part in podcasts or delivery of talks or livestreams, this is a **12% increase**.

*All contributors have a profile page, which appear in top positions on Google Search:
<https://www.dementiaresearcher.nihr.ac.uk/meet-the-researchers/>

Reporting equality, diversity & inclusion

2024
Contributors



All **new** contributors were invited to complete a voluntary EDI monitoring form to understand the gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and disabilities / health conditions. This information is reported monthly on the website.

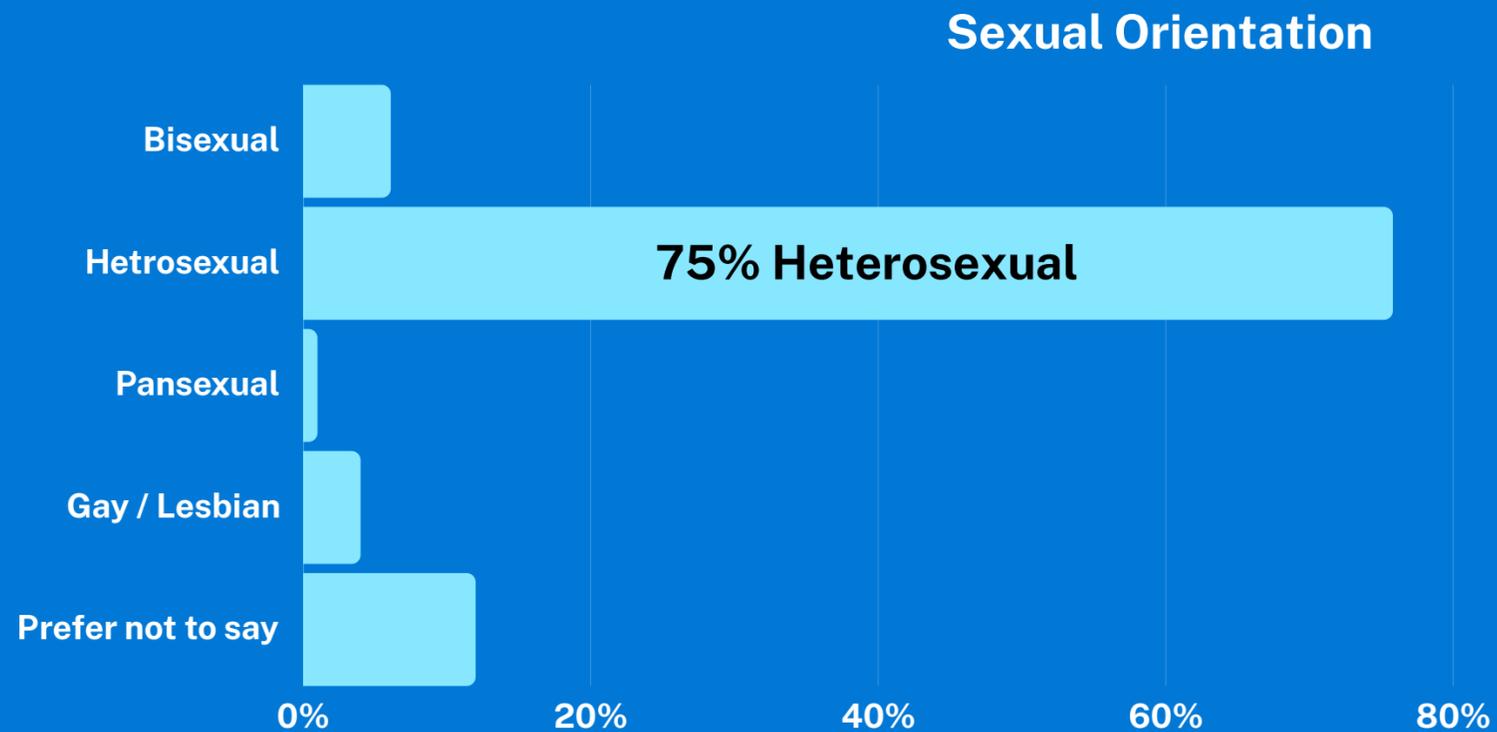
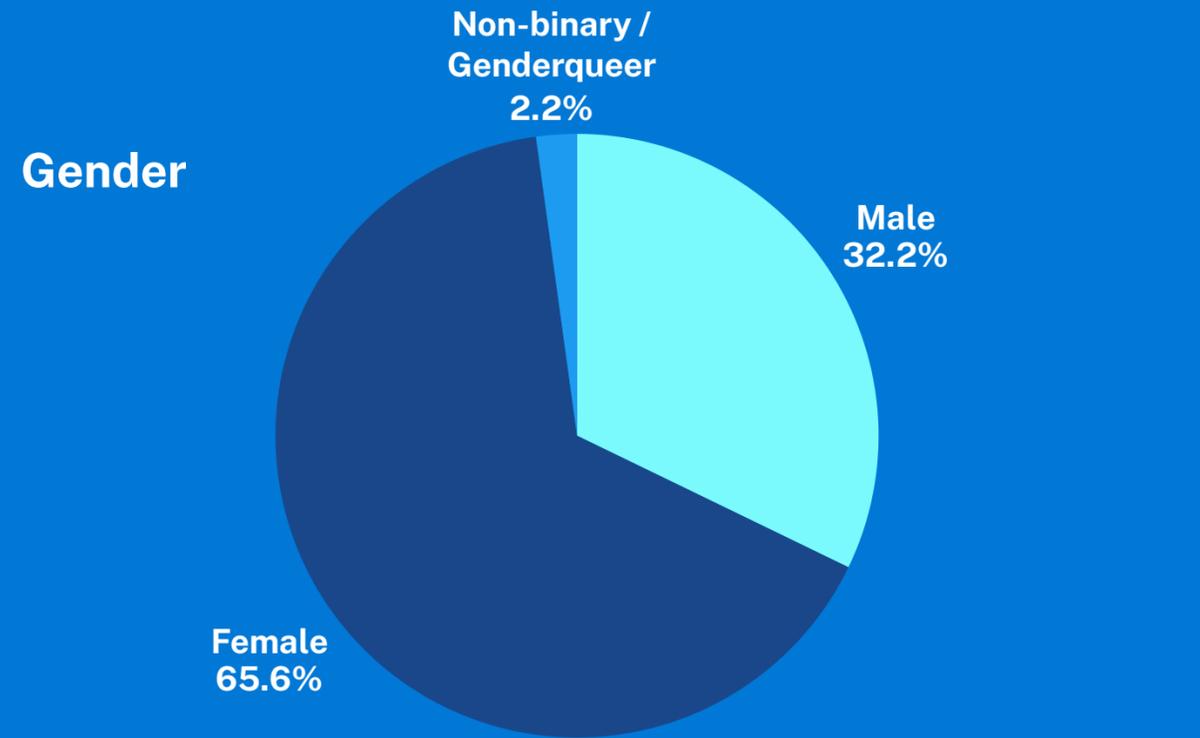
Dementia Researcher aimed to improve contributions from the LGBTQ+ community to 20% by end 2024 - actual achieved was 16%. This objective will carry on to 2025.

Reporting equality, diversity & inclusion

2025
Contributors

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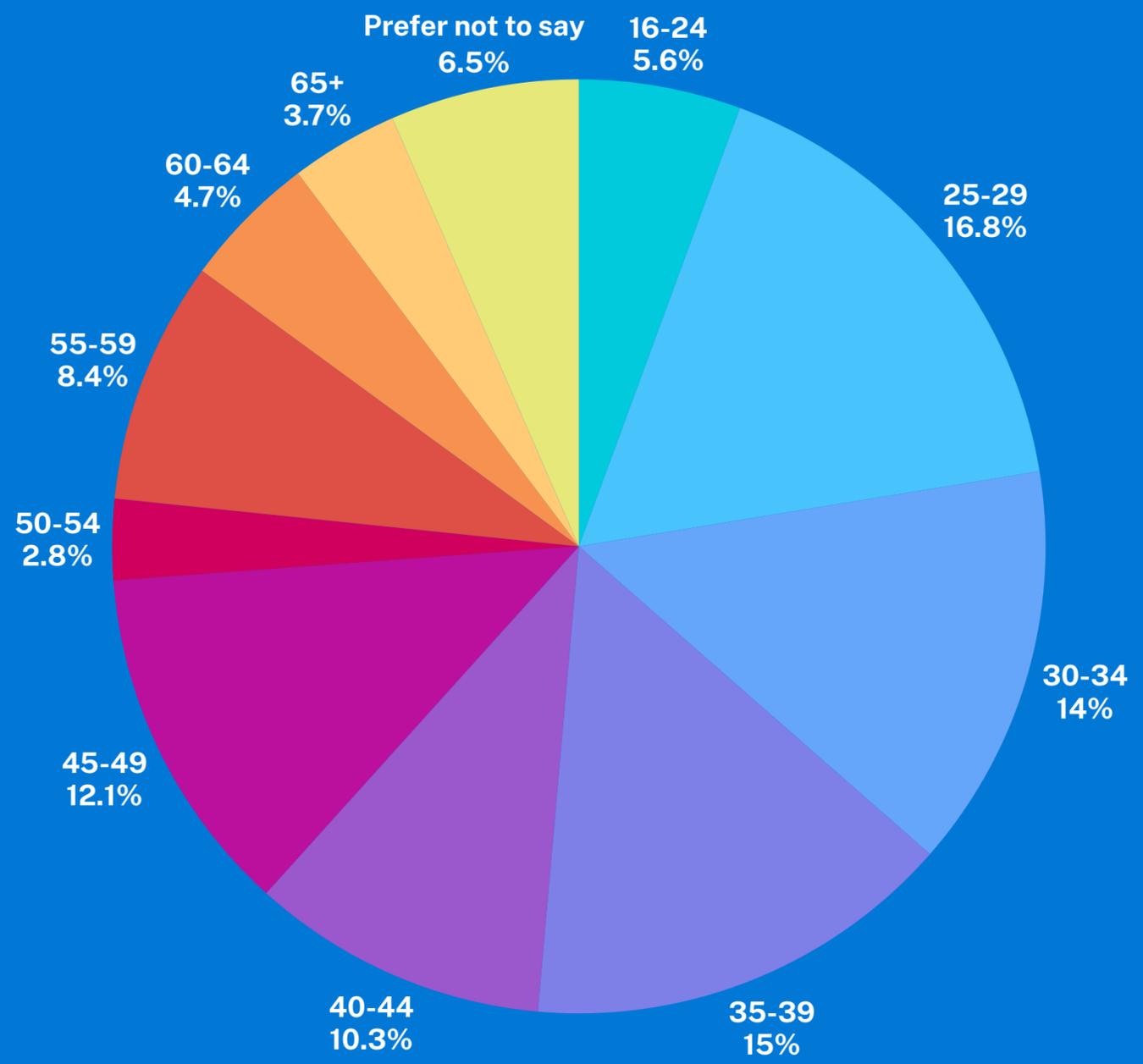
Dementia Researcher aimed to improve contributions from the LGBTQ+ community to 20% by end 2025 - actual achieved was estimated at 106%. This objective will carry on to 2025.



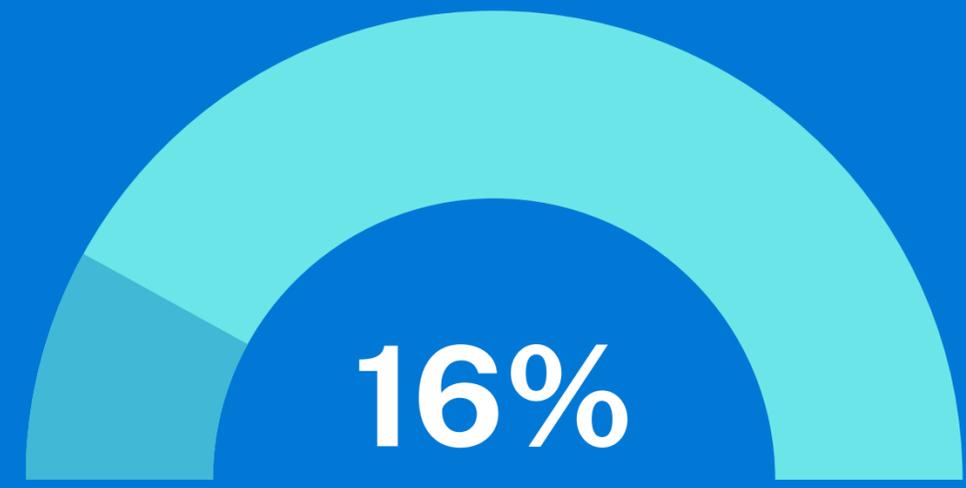
Reporting equality, diversity & inclusion

2025
Contributors

Age

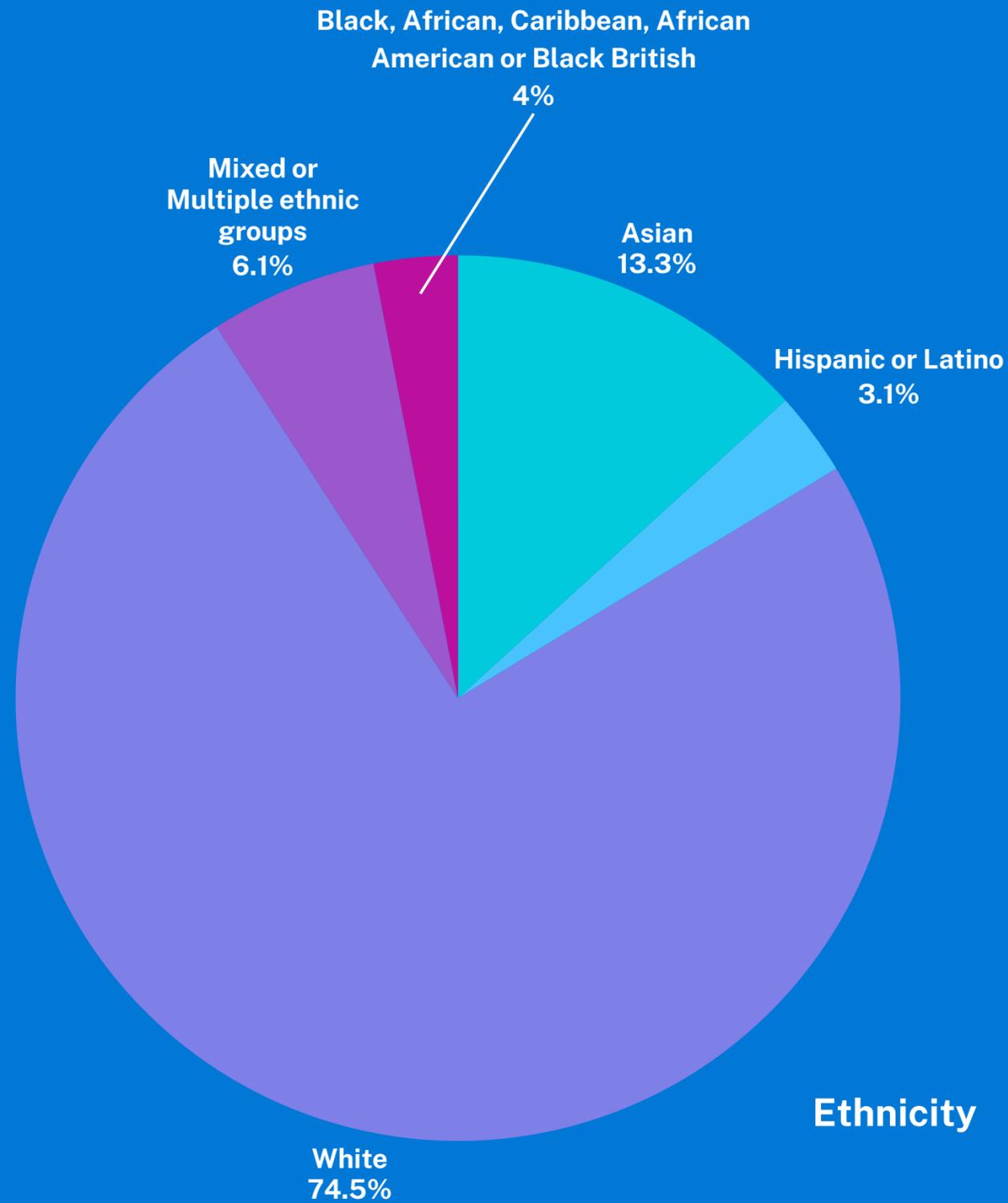


Health issue / disability



Reporting equality, diversity & inclusion

2025
Contributors



Although Dementia Researcher benefits from contributions from people with varied backgrounds, our contributor data indicates that representation across ethnic groups remains uneven. This highlights the need for continued work to broaden participation and ensure a wider range of voices are reflected.

Our aim is to increase contributions from people from other ethnicities to at least 30% by the end of 2026. This target has been carried forward from 2024, following a small decrease of 2%, and recognising that some contributors choose not to provide ethnicity information.

Equity & Inclusion

Accessible Content

Dementia Researcher has continued to work on ensuring that all content across all platforms is fully accessible to those who are deaf, live with hearing loss or who are blind or visually impaired.

All content is created and published to be full inclusive - with all written content provided with audio narrations, all audio content provided with accessible transcriptions (human not AI created) and closed captions. Additionally, all images represent people from a range of background, and those along with reports come with alt tags. As a result, the service works on all forms of screen readers.

Including this report, which is available in a basic screen reader format.





The Future

Delivering for & with partners 2026 plan

+ with your input



Inspire



Promoting dementia research careers across all areas of discovery, with a particular emphasis on people from under-represented backgrounds and those working in the health service. Through stories, blogs, webinars, podcasts, films and conference attendance and improved connections with educational institutions and healthcare providers.

International

Increase contributions from the wider international community, and jobs / events listings from elsewhere in the world. To ensure that the service supports all, and that ECRs relate to the stories and experiences of our contributors. Engage researchers in LMIC to ensure they are aware of all international opportunities.

Community

Develop the user engagement and experiences within the Community App which delivers common social media platform functionality, specifically for dementia researchers - working with partners to improve community connections with clinical researchers and trial delivery staff.

**For more
information:**

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Thank you!