

INSTITUTIONAL CLINICIAN TRAINING AWARD

See Introduction on pages 4-18, for general policies, procedures, and obligations related to awards.

INTRODUCTION AND GOALS OF THIS AWARD

Consistent with its mission to move toward a world free of multiple sclerosis, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society supports the professional development and training of physicians in the comprehensive care of people with MS. The Society welcomes applications for support of mentors and institutions that will provide training for board-certified/eligible neurologists and psychiatrists in new patient consultations, treatment and follow-up evaluations under the direct supervision of an MS specialist physician, as well as participation in multidisciplinary team activities, lectures, and professional meetings. The goal is for fellows to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to provide personalized, high-quality care for individuals with MS.

This program provides support for a mentor-institution combination that is responsible for the recruitment, selection, and training of postdoctoral fellows to pursue a clinical career specializing in the care of individuals with multiple sclerosis and similar disorders. The mentor should be an established and active clinician in the MS field. The fellowship will provide for support of postdoctoral fellows who will work closely with the mentor.

The fellow selected by the mentor must hold an MD, DO or equivalent degree, be licensed to practice medicine in the United States, have completed a residency in neurology or psychiatry in the U.S., and plan on practicing medicine in the U.S. following the fellowship. The program of training to be supported should enhance the likelihood that the trainee will: (a) Establish or join an active MS clinical practice in the United States to provide high quality, state-of-the-art, comprehensive clinical care to patients with MS and (b) become an active participant and future leader in the MS clinical community, including volunteer activities with the Society at a local chapter or the home office (e.g., as a member of the Clinical Advisory Committee, Chapter Programs Committee, or Board of Trustees, as a speaker at a patient or professional education program, etc.)

ELIGIBILITY

Mentor and Institution: The mentor must have an MD or equivalent degree, be board certified in neurology or psychiatry, hold a faculty appointment or the equivalent at an accredited institution such as a university or teaching hospital, spend a minimum of 25% time on MS clinical care, have a clinical practice that includes relationships with a multidisciplinary care team, and work in a setting that can support an appropriate training environment for the postdoctoral fellow. It is the responsibility of the mentor and institution to recruit and select one or more appropriate postdoctoral fellow(s) and to provide an appropriate program of training and experience leading to independence in the conduct of clinical care in multiple sclerosis. Once postdoctoral candidates are selected, their credentials will be submitted to the Society for final review and approval.

Citizenship: U.S. citizenship is not required either for mentors or postdoctoral fellows, but all training must occur at institutions in the United States, and both the mentor and the fellow must be licensed to practice medicine in the U.S.

REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

Timing: For application deadlines and timing of review and potential start dates, see <http://www.nationalmssociety.org/For-Professionals/Researchers/Deadlines>.

Application: The mentor and organization are considered jointly to be the “applicant” and must provide: (1) a detailed description of the facilities and environment available for training; (2) the academic qualifications of the proposed mentor; (3) a thorough and meaningful description of the proposed program of training, including the nature of the mentor/fellow relationship; and (4) an exact and itemized statement of all financial requirements, (under the limitations noted below). Supplemental grants are rarely made to cover costs not specifically requested in the original application.

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In addition to the above, the following elements should be incorporated in the application:

- A recruitment plan and specific selection criteria for the postdoctoral fellow(s) to be trained.
- A well-articulated training plan with specifics to allow for meaningful evaluation. As a guideline, it is expected that at least 50% of the fellow's time will be spent in direct, supervised MS patient care, with a clear outline of the mentor/co-mentor's roles.
- There should be significant exposure to the multidisciplinary healthcare team, including physical medicine and rehabilitation, nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, social services, clinical and cognitive psychology, neuro-urology, vocational rehabilitation, orthotics, neuroradiologic interpretation and electrodiagnostics.
- The fellow should be involved in didactic activities, such as producing a clinical paper, review, poster, etc., attending lectures, grand rounds, seminars, interaction with the Society, and professional meetings.
- The program description should include what training will be available to the fellow for working with systematically disadvantaged populations (rural populations, people from diverse racial and ethnic groups, low socioeconomic populations, Veterans and military servicemembers, people who are LGBTQ+, people with progressive MS, etc.).
- Evidence of the track record of the mentor(s) in training postdoctoral fellows.
- A description of how the different disciplines represented in the training program will work together.

Selection of the Postdoctoral Fellow: It will be the responsibility of the mentor to identify and recruit the postdoctoral fellow and to submit the fellow's qualifications to the Society for approval. Information concerning the proposed fellow is **not** to be submitted as part of the original application for support. Instead, the mentor will submit the fellow's qualifications at some point **after** the application for support has been submitted. The qualifications for the proposed fellow can be submitted either 1) prior to notification of the outcome of the review of the mentor's application for support, or 2) after the mentor's application for support has been approved. This will provide the mentor with ample time and opportunity to identify and recruit the most promising candidate.

The mentor must submit the name and qualifications to the Society prior to the start of the fellowship. The Society will review the qualifications of the proposed fellow when this is submitted and provide an answer to the mentor in a timely fashion. Funds to support the postdoctoral fellow will not be released until the Society has reviewed and approved the mentor's selection.

CONDITIONS OF AWARD

Term or Duration of Award: The Institutional Clinician Training Award will have a term of five years. However, the term of training of each postdoctoral fellow will be determined by the mentor based on the period of time required for the training needed for development of an independent clinician. Support for a given postdoctoral fellow will not usually be provided for less than one year or more than three years. Beginning in 2020, fellows funded by the National MS Society may use funds for maternity/parental leave as outlined in the During the Award Period section above. Additionally, at its discretion, the awardee organization may consider requests for reinstatement of a fellowship interrupted by military service or other major events.

Salary: The fellows salary offered is \$75,000, payable to the institution, plus up to an additional 25% to cover fringe benefits. Supplementation or additional support to offset the cost of living may be provided by the awardee's institution but must not require any significant obligation from the trainee. The extent of supplementation must be stated when the postdoctoral fellow is nominated, and the Society must be notified of subsequent additional support. It is the intent of this fellowship award that the fellow's time will be spent on the approved Society's training program.

Awards are paid to the training institution on a quarterly basis. The mentor, the grantee institution, and the fellow will each be advised of the duration and amount of the award and will be provided with a budget that reflects the approved expenditures for each grant year. Payment of subsequent years is dependent upon a) availability of funds; and b) receipt, review, and approval by the Society of annual financial and progress reports. Fellows are considered employees of the institution, and their salaries are paid by the institution according to the payment policy and schedule of the institution.

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The mentor must notify the Society if there will be no fellow for a given year. Any adjustment in the length of the grant will then be discussed and determined on an individual basis.

Limited Relocation Costs: Funds to cover the cost of travel to the institution where the training is provided are available but only for the fellow and not for family members or for transportation of household belongings. The relocation costs must be requested at the time the postdoctoral fellow is nominated and the amount requested must be comparable to economy class transportation by air or equivalent.

Travel Allowance: An allowance of no more than \$2,500 per year may be made to help institutions defray the costs of travel for the postdoctoral fellow to one or more professional meetings.

Mentoring Expenses: An allowance of no more than \$10,000 per year may be made to help institutions defray the costs incurred by the mentor in the course of providing training and supervision to the postdoctoral fellow. The funds may be used for salary support, supplies or similar expenses. However, these funds cannot be used for the purchase of equipment or computers, or for travel.

Unexpended Funds: Any unexpended funds remaining at the end of each award year may be carried over to the next year only upon approval by the Society. Unexpended funds remaining at the termination of the award must be returned to the Society.

Change of Mentor: If the mentor becomes unable to continue the supervision of the fellow's training, a replacement may be named by the sponsoring institution pending approval by the Society.

Personnel Policies: Fellows are not considered employees of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society but rather of the institution where the training is provided. Beginning in 2020, fellows funded by the National MS Society may use funds for maternity/parental leave as outlined in the During the Award Period section above; otherwise, the fellowship is to be administered in accordance with the prevailing policies of the sponsoring institution, including vacations, sick leaves, holidays, etc.

Participation in Society Educational Programs: In addition to following the training plans outlined in the application, funded fellows are also expected to attend and participate in the educational programs organized by the Society staff for clinical fellows. New fellows will receive communication from Society staff about the schedule.

Other Activities: The Institutional Clinician Training Award is intended to support specialized MS clinical training and not for the completion of internship and/or specialty board certification. Similarly, postdoctoral fellowships cannot be used to provide support for individuals whose primary responsibility is research, teaching and/or service, although fellows are encouraged to spend up to twenty percent of their time in research and/or teaching if appropriate.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Over the term of the award, the Society requires several different types of progress reports from recipients:

- 1) **Annual Progress Reports:** The mentor must submit every twelve months an acceptable report of progress and recommendation for continuation. This report is due following each anniversary date during the term of an award along with a copy of the annual approval letter from the IRB and/or IACUC, if applicable. Prior to the anniversary date, the Society will provide forms and detailed instructions for completing the progress report. If applicable, attached to the report should be a PDF file of all published reports and preprints of all reports in press or submitted but not yet published of the results of any work accomplished under the fellowship. Manuscripts will be respected as privileged communications.

Award payments to the institution will be discontinued after each twelve-month period pending receipt of such reports, unless the Society receives prior notification of an acceptable reason for the delay of such reports. When such reports become overdue by one month, the postdoctoral fellowship grant will be terminated automatically as of the date when the report was due. Grants so terminated will not be reactivated.

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- 2) **Final Progress Report:** The mentor is expected to submit a final report of progress to the Society within 15 days following the termination of the award. Approximately one month before the termination date, the Society will provide forms and detailed instructions for completing the progress report. The final report must include a summary of work conducted during the final year of support; and a statement describing the overall benefits of the training experience and future plans. To assist the Society in keeping track of our former fellows, we request that the Society be notified of changes in their professional email and address.