POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS

The Society welcomes applications for support of training of postdoctoral fellows in studies related to multiple sclerosis which may serve to advance the mission of the Society.

The Society supports fundamental as well as applied studies, non-clinical or clinical in nature, including projects in patient management, care and rehabilitation. To be considered for funding, all projects must show relevance to the Society's mission.

In order to submit a proposal for research support, investigators must first register with our apply online site (www.mssocietyapplyonline.org) and complete a pre-application. Staff of the Research Programs Department will review the pre-application to determine whether the research plan is appropriate and relevant to our goals.

GENERAL

The Society offers postdoctoral fellowship grants to unusually promising recipients of M.D., Ph.D. or equivalent degrees when it appears that the program of training to be supported by the grant will enhance the likelihood that the trainee will: (a) perform meaningful and independent research relevant to multiple sclerosis in the future, and (b) obtain a suitable position which will enable them to do so. Postdoctoral Fellowship Awards are not made to applicants seeking continuing support for the completion of an on-going research project or to those in a training program leading to a degree. The proposed postdoctoral program should emphasize opportunities for new research training and broadening scientific competence of the applicant.

ELIGIBILITY

Previous Training: Applicants with 0-36 months of previous postdoctoral training may apply for this award. Applicants must hold, or be candidates for, an M.D., Ph.D. or equivalent degree. However, a fellowship will not be activated for a doctoral candidate until the Society has received written notification from a university or professional school that an appropriate doctoral degree has been awarded. The Society will consider applications from individuals with more than 36 months experience on a case-by-case basis. Individuals seeking such consideration should contact the Society.

Citizenship: U.S. citizenship is not required for applicants who desire training in institutions in the United States. However, applicants who plan training in other countries must be U.S. citizens. Applicants are requested to submit dual applications to governmental granting agencies and other non-profit funding agencies. To support research by a U.S. citizen in a foreign country or by a non-U.S. citizen in the United States, applications should also be sent to other national multiple sclerosis societies before coming to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society of the United States with a request for funding.

Mentor and Institution: It is the responsibility of the applicant to make all arrangements for the proposed training with an appropriate mentor and institution, prior to formal application.

REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

Timing: The Society utilizes a Web-based facility for the submission of Postdoctoral Fellowship applications. All applicants are required to use this facility for the completion of their proposals In order to submit a proposal for research support, investigators must first register with our apply online site (www.mssocietyapplyonline.org) and complete a pre-application. Staff of the Research Programs Department will review the pre-application to determine whether the research plan is appropriate and relevant to our goals.
Completed applications, including all required supporting documents, received by the Society by the August deadline will be considered for review.

Application: The research proposal must provide: (1) a meaningful description of the proposed program of training, (2) the academic qualifications for both the proposed fellow and mentor, (3) letter of support from the mentor, including a brief account of the nature of the ongoing activities within the mentor's laboratory, especially as they relate to the program of training proposed, (4) an exact and itemized statement of all financial requirements, including salary, relocation costs of travel and institutional allowances (under the limitations noted below). In addition, three letters of recommendation must be submitted online. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all letters are received by the deadline, and an application may be considered incomplete without them.

Interview: Each applicant must agree to be phone interviewed by a member of the Advisory Committee on Fellowships or its designee. This is an integral part of the evaluation of all applications and may not be substituted with other means of communication.

Review Group: All applications are reviewed by the National MS Society's Advisory Committee on Fellowships.

CONDITIONS OF AWARD

Duration of Fellowship: Fellowship support will not be provided for more than three years. The Society is willing to consider requests for reinstatement of a fellowship interrupted by military service, maternity leave or other major events.

Salary: The salary levels requested for each year of the fellowship award must be based on the Society's salary scale listed below. The amount of the salary must relate to the applicant's professional status and previous training and experience. The current annual salary for postdoctoral trainees is determined by the number of FULL years of relevant postdoctoral experience at the time of appointment. Relevant experience may include research experience, internship, or residency. No additional funds for fringe benefits or indirect costs are allowed. The current salary scale for Society's Postdoctoral Fellows is as follows:

Salary Scale for the National MS Society Postdoctoral Fellows

Years of Relevant Postdoctoral Experience	Salary
Less than 1	$41,576
1	$43,792
2	$46,954
3	$48,807
4	$50,635
5	$52,812
6	$54,899
7 or more	$57,361

The salary for each additional full year of salary support is the next level in the salary structure. Institutions may not modify the salary schedule to provide support less than the salary levels listed above. However, institutions may supplement the fellow's salary (see below).

Supplementation or additional support to offset the cost of living may be provided by the awardees institution but must not require any significant obligation from the trainee. The extent of supplementation must be stated in the application, and the Society must be notified of subsequent additional support. Fellows may spend up to 10% of their time in teaching or clinical duties, if appropriate. However, it is the intent of this fellowship award that the majority of the fellow's time will be spent on the approved Society's training program.

Similarly Society postdoctoral salaries may be used to supplement other support to reach the total amount recommended by Society Advisory Committees. Under no circumstances may the conditions of salary supplementation interfere with, detract from, or prolong the trainee's approved Society's training program.

Awards are paid to the training institution on an annual quarterly basis. The fellow, the mentor, and the grantee institution will each be advised by letter 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 research 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.

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 of application and the amount requested must be comparable to economy class transportation by air or equivalent.

Institutional Allowance: An allowance of no more than $7,850 per year may be made to help institutions defray the costs of providing the fellow's training, but only when such funds are requested in the original application and approved by the Society. These funds should be used primarily to help underwrite the costs of individual medical insurance for the fellow, either by enrolling the fellow in a group plan, or turning over the funds to the fellow to help pay for his/her independent plan. These

funds may not be used to cover medical insurance for the fellow's spouse or for family members. Travel to scientific meetings, research supplies and related expenses, may be paid from the balance of the institutional allowance. No other funds are provided to defray the costs of research or training. Funds may not be used to offset any tuition or other similar fees. Purchase of personal computers is not an allowable expense.

Tykeson Conference on MS for National MS Society Fellows and Faculty Awardees: Through a generous contribution from Mr. Donald Tykeson (active volunteer and member of the Society's National Board of Directors), the National MS Society will hold a meeting of Society's fellows and faculty awardees on alternate years. All Society's fellows and faculty awardees whose awards are active at the time of the conference are required to attend at the Society's expense. The goal of this meeting is to improve the sharing of research information among the Society's awardees, develop a sense of community among our investigators, strengthen their commitment to MS, and establish new collaborations among these investigators.

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

Change in Terms of the Award: Any change to the conditions of an award, including a change in the direction of the research project or in the level of activity by the fellow or mentor, requires prior approval by the Society. Failure to notify the Society will be considered grounds for revocation of a postdoctoral fellowship award.

Transfer of a Fellowship Award: The transfer of an award from one institution to another along with transfer of the fellow cannot be made without prior approval in writing by the Society. A new application face sheet and budget request will be required from, and must be approved by, the new institution. For research involving human subjects and/or animals, written approval from the new institution's Institutional Review Board and/or the Animal Care and Use Committee must be received prior to initiation of payment. In addition, the original institution must submit an acceptable report of expenditures and return all unexpended funds to the Society before a final transfer can be made. No interruption of financial support should be involved if the request to transfer the award is received by the Society at least 90 days prior to the anticipated date of transfer and the financial report is submitted from the original institution prior to the transfer date.

Change of Mentor: If the fellow's mentor becomes unable to continue the supervision of the fellow's training, a replacement may be named by the sponsoring institution pending the prior approval by the Society. Any fellow considering a change in mentor for other reasons must notify the Society in writing to obtain prior approval. In the event that the fellow is unable to continue with the approved postdoctoral research project with a new mentor, the fellowship award is non-transferable and the award will be terminated prematurely.

Personnel Policies: Fellows are not considered employees of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society but rather of the institution where the training is provided. The fellowship is to be administered in accordance with the prevailing policies of the sponsoring institution, including vacations, sick leaves, holidays, etc.

Non-Research Activities: Postdoctoral fellowships are awarded to support training in research and are not intended to support clinical training directed toward the completion of internship and/or specialty board certification or as a substitute for funding the conduct of research ordinarily provided by research grants. Similarly, postdoctoral fellowships cannot be used to provide support for individuals whose primary responsibility is teaching and/or service, although fellows are allowed to spend up to ten percent of their time in teaching or clinical duties, if appropriate.

Termination of a Postdoctoral Fellowship: Whenever a fellow or a mentor elects to terminate a postdoctoral fellowship on a date prior to that indicated in the letter of award, the Society must be notified immediately in writing of the action taken and of the date involved. Grounds for revocation of a postdoctoral fellowship will be deemed to exist: (1) if a fellow is unable to carry out the research at the original institution; (2) if a mentor requests in writing that the fellowship be terminated because of unsatisfactory performance by the fellow; (3) if a fellow requests in writing that the fellowship be terminated for any reason; (4) if the fellow's mentor becomes unable to continue the supervision of the fellow's training and a replacement acceptable to the Society is not named within 30 days by the sponsoring institution; (5) if the fellow changes any aspect of the award from that which was originally approved by the Society, including the mentor, the department, the institution and/or the specific aims of the research studies, without prior notification and approval by the Society; (6) when annual reports of progress and recommendation for continuation are not received from both the mentor and the fellow within one month of the end of each award anniversary year; or (7) for a cause established by due process of law or as a consequence of an institutional review committee's determination of fraud or malfeasance.

CARRYOVER OF FUNDS TO A FACULTY POSITION

If a postdoctoral fellow obtains an independent position or its equivalent before the termination of the awarded fellowship period, remaining funds from the fellowship award may be carried over to the new position as a National MS Society research grant. Funds may be used for salary or rebudgeted for research expenses.

Prior to conversion to a research grant, the following documents must be submitted to the Society for review:

1) A formal request for conversion to a research grant
2) A final fellowship progress report, including a letter of support from the mentor confirming the faculty appointment and a final financial report from the postdoctoral institution.
3) A completed transfer document including a detailed budget for the faculty support period.
4) A letter of support from the chair of the department at the institution of employment, which details the nature of the appointment, the institutional resources, and the financial support provided to the new faculty member
5) Other supporting materials, including relevant institutional review body details (e.g. IRB and/or IACUC approvals, etc.)

If the conversion to a research grant is approved, it is expected that the fellow will continue the previously approved research plan.

ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

Annual Financial Reports: A brief account of the expenses made for each fellowship award is due before each anniversary date during the term of an award. Any unexpended funds remaining at the end of each award year may be carried over to the next year. Forms and instructions for this report will be sent with the annual progress report by 30 days before the anniversary date of the award.

Final Financial Reports: A full account of all expenses made for a fellowship award is due within 90 days of the termination of the award. Any unexpended funds remaining at the end of the award must be returned to the Society. The form for this report will be sent with the final progress report and must be forwarded by the fellow to the financial officer of the awardee's institution. These forms are self-explanatory.

Bonded Financial Officer: The Society requires that the financial officer administering grant funds be bonded. Unless otherwise indicated in the application for an award, it is understood that such officials are bonded as a prerequisite to assumption of office.

PROGRESS REPORTS

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

1) **Annual Progress Reports:** For Fellowships awarded for more than one year, the fellow must submit every twelve months an acceptable report of research progress. As part of this report, the mentor must submit a letter of evaluation with a recommendation for continuation. This report is due before each anniversary date during the term of an award along with a copy of the current approval letter from the IRB and/or IACUC. Approximately one month before the end of a funding cycle, the Society will email forms and detailed instructions for completing the progress report. Attached to the completed report should be reprints or pdf files of all published reports as well as preprints of all submitted manuscripts, which include research results obtained 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 three months, the postdoctoral fellowship grant will be terminated automatically as of the date when the report was due. Grants so terminated will not be reactivated.

2) **Final Progress Report:** The fellow and the mentor are expected to submit separately 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 email forms and instructions for completing the progress report. The final report must include a summary of work conducted during the final year of support and the entire term, a statement describing the overall benefits of the training experience, future plans, and any new contact information.

3) **A Status Report:** The Society periodically (every 4-5 years) conducts surveys of its past postdoctoral fellows to assess their career output since their postdoctoral years. To assist the Society in keeping track of our former fellows, we request that the Society be notified of changes in their professional status, professional address, and email address.

PUBLICATIONS AND REPRINTS

All fellows are expected to send to the Society reprints or pdf files of each publication supported in whole or in part by the fellowship grant. As soon as a manuscript is accepted for publication, a copy should be sent by mail or fax (212-986-7981) to the Senior Director of Research Information in the Research Programs Department, accompanied by the name of the journal and the probable date of publication. Manuscripts or preprints will be respected as privileged communications. In addition, if a press release from the institution is being prepared for distribution, a confidential copy of the press release should be FAXed in advance to the Society's Senior Director of Research Information.

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society must be acknowledged in all dissemination materials (e.g., publications, scientific exhibits, scientific presentations, press releases, etc.) related to research supported in full or in part by the Society. The following acknowledgment, or its equivalent, should be used:

"This investigation was supported (in part) by a postdoctoral fellowship from the National Multiple Sclerosis Society."