



MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH FOUNDATION (MSSRF)
MULTI-CENTRE, COLLABORATIVE TEAM GRANT (Team Grant)
APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Revised June 2017

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1. ONLINE APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The MS Society of Canada (MSSC) and MSSRF use an online research grants and awards management system that enables researchers to submit, and review, applications on the Web. The system is called Easygrants and can be accessed through the following website: <https://www.mscanadagrants.ca>

Interested applicants must create a profile on Easygrants through which they can complete the application process. Templates for the required documents for the LOI and Full Application can be downloaded from Easygrants, completed and uploaded in an applicant's profile. All required documents must be fully completed and uploaded on Easygrants prior to the due date for the application to be considered for review. Before you begin your application, please ensure that your contact information (name of institution, primary address, phone number and e-mail) are accurate and up to date. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure the submitted application contains all required components. Be sure to review your application in full by clicking "View PDF" on the "Review and Submit" page BEFORE the final submission of your LOI and Full Application.

You will receive a confirmation e-mail of your submission. If you DO NOT receive this e-mail within one hour after submitting your application you MUST contact msresearchgrants@mssociety.ca as soon as possible.

2. LETTER OF INTENT (LOI)

Interested applicants must first submit an LOI. If the team does not wish to apply within the same calendar year as the LOI, the entire process must be reinitiated commencing with an LOI in any subsequent year. Lead PIs who currently hold a MSSRF Team Grant must apply as a new applicant, and the proposed research must consist of new questions and approaches. As well the Lead PIs must have achieved successful completion of all milestones from previous grant to be considered for the full application stage. The LOI outlines the purpose of the study, researchers and institutions involved, and potential transformational impact on the understanding and treatment of MS.

LOI Requirements

- ✓ **Project Detail:** The applicant must provide a project title. This section will also include the amount of funds the applicant is requesting per year for a maximum of 3 years.
- ✓ **Lead Principal Investigator (PI) Contact Information:** The Lead PI will oversee operations of the grant and collaborative members. The Lead PI will assume the scientific and administrative oversight for the study and ensure a collaborative effort. The Lead PI must have an M.D., Ph.D., or equivalent degree, hold an academic or research appointment, and be conducting research in a recognized Canadian institution eligible to receive Tri-Council funding. The Lead PI need not be a Canadian citizen. The Lead PI should be an established, highly qualified scientist with adequate administrative and leadership experience and authority to manage grant operations. The Lead PI cannot hold two concurrent Team Grants.

- ✓ **Other Personnel:** The applicant can list all additional personnel involved in the Team Grant. Personnel may include:
- **Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PI)** will share responsibilities for the oversight of the research operations at specific sites. The Co-PI(s) must have an M.D., Ph.D., or equivalent degree, hold an academic or research appointment, and be conducting research in a recognized Canadian institution eligible to receive Tri-Council funding. **Note: Co-PI(s) conducting research at an institution(s) outside of Canada may be considered eligible under certain circumstances. If the team consists of one or more international Co-PIs, justification must be provided in the LOI indicating that the proposal would be significantly improved by having certain components of the research being conducted by Co-PIs at study sites outside of Canada.**
 - **Collaborative members** provide a specific service (e.g. access to equipment, training in a specialized technique, statistical analysis, industry support, etc.). Collaborators can be located outside of Canada. A collaborator need not be directly involved in MS research, but should provide skills and scientific oversight that is advantageous to advancing the goals of the study.
 - **Trainees** are Postdoctoral fellows, Doctoral and Master's candidates, who support the research study and will have an opportunity for further training in the research project.

Uploads

Documents that may be uploaded for this application are listed below.

Please note that some the following uploads will have templates available within the online system. Please login to your account to view the templates and ensure all pop-up blockers are turned off when accessing the templates.

Format (applies to all Uploads): 12-font size, page margins of at least 0.75 inches, including figures and references. Additional pages beyond the specified page limits will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed.

- ✓ **Lay Summary:** Using non-scientific, everyday language, describe the key objectives of the collaborative research project. Indicate how the proposed research can improve the health and quality of life of people affected by MS, uncover important knowledge of the biological and societal impacts of MS, and advance the scientific field; e.g.: advancement of new knowledge and/or scientific methods, development of a novel therapy, etc. Briefly describe how the collaborative effort will achieve the aims of the research project beyond a series of individual operating grants. **Maximum 300 words.**
- ✓ **LOI:** The LOI should include the background and objectives of the research project to be undertaken by the team over the period of funding, a description of the hypothesis and scientific questions to be addressed and why they are important, and an explanation of a novel proposed research plan including descriptions of the study design and methodology. The LOI must also describe how the research will lead to significant advancements in the MS field and have a beneficial outcome on

treatment and quality of life of people affected by MS. The LOI should also describe the extent of collaboration between members of the investigative team, with an explanation of the anticipated value added to the study through the synergy of the group (i.e. an explanation as to why the outcomes cannot be achieved through individual operating grants). The LOI should include an outline explaining how the research study and/or any programs or outcomes stemming from the study will be sustained beyond the term of the grant. Consideration should also be given to the manner in which people affected by MS will be actively engaged in the research process and how research outputs will be shared with knowledge end-users. **Maximum 5 pages.**

- ✓ **References and Figures:** Include references, tables, charts, figures, and/or photographs. There is no page limit.
- ✓ **CV:** Please upload the Common CV for the Lead PI and a maximum of five (5) other key members of the applicant team. The MSSC and MSSRF endorse the Common CV and request that all applicants based at a Canadian institution submit a Common CV. The template can be found at <https://ccv-cvc.ca/indexresearcher-eng.frm> (please choose MS Society as the agency).
- ✓ **Required Signatures:** Please download the signatures template provided on Easygrants (multiple copies may be downloaded depending on the size of the collaborative team). The form must be signed by the Lead PI and any Co-PIs that will share scientific and operational oversight of the Team Grant, the Chair of the Department(s) and the Dean of the Faculty or Director of the Institution(s). Electronic signatures will be accepted. The form(s) must be signed and uploaded in Easygrants.

3. FULL APPLICATION

The Full Application is only available for applicants who have submitted an LOI and have been invited to submit a full application.

Full Application Requirements

- ✓ **Brief Project Description:** Provide a brief description of the proposed research project that outlines the hypothesis and scientific questions to be addressed, why they are important, and the methodology and study design that will be undertaken to address these questions. **Maximum 100 words.**
- ✓ **Lay Summary:** Describe your project in a way that is accessible, relevant and engaging to a lay audience, in non-technical, everyday language. **Maximum 200 words.**
- ✓ **Relevance to MS Description:** In non-technical, everyday language, describe how and why the proposed research is important to people affected by MS and how it will influence their quality of life in the short and/or long term. Describe any other important outcomes of the proposed research, such as advancing knowledge of the biological and/or societal impacts of MS, providing clues about the cause

and progression of the disease, identifying new disease management strategies, etc. **Maximum 200 words.**

- ✓ **Other personnel:** List the names of the Lead PI, Co-PI(s), Collaborator(s) and trainees (Postdoctoral Fellows, Doctoral and Master's Candidates), and their institutions.
- ✓ **Budget:** Budget categories are divided into Research Staff, Materials, Supplies, Services, Travel and Equipment. Note that a dedicated portion of the funds must be used towards public outreach and knowledge translation activities. You may apply for 3 to 5 years of funding. If funding is needed beyond 3 years, you must provide justification for the additional years required to complete the research activities. Refer to **Budget and Additional Years Justification** under Uploads.

Uploads

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Format (applies to all Uploads): 12-font size, single-spaced and page margins of at least 0.75 inches. Page limits do not apply to references, tables, or figures. Figure and table legends should be succinct.

- ✓ **Detailed Scientific Research Proposal:** Describe the background, objectives, hypothesis, scientific questions, budget, personnel and methodology pertaining to the research project. Clearly state how the research can lead to major advances and have a direct impact on understanding and treating MS and improving the quality of life of people affected by MS. Describe the anticipated value of the results, highlighting the relevance of the scientific or technical advances, as well as new expertise and innovative techniques that will be developed. Describe the nature of the team's linkages and explain how integration and interdisciplinary collaboration will bring added value in terms of the approach to MS, health care, the speed and efficiency with which new knowledge in MS will be generated, and improvements in health, when compared with funding the proposed work as a series of separate operating grants. **Maximum 30 pages.**
- ✓ **References and Figures:** Include references, tables, charts, figures, and/or photographs. There is no page limit.
- ✓ **Scientific Plan:** Describe the major scientific and operational milestones that will be achieved during the duration of the Team Grant. Additionally, list key deliverables and explain how the deliverables will help to advance the project towards achievement of the milestones and desired project outcomes. MSSRF Team Grant Milestones and Deliverables Charts summarizing the information provided in the scientific plan must also be completed. Funding of the grant will be contingent on successful completion of project deliverables and milestones as determined by quarterly check-in calls with the MSSC. **Template provide online*

- ✓ **Operational Plan:** Describe the governance and operational structure of the collaborative team. Specifically, explain how the study sites will be managed, how administrative responsibilities will be delegated, and how research activities will be coordinated between sites to ensure overall coherence of the project. Describe how progress will be monitored across study sites, how expenditures and distribution of funds will be managed, how existing expertise and capacity will be effectively leveraged, how data and resources will be shared and exchanged, and how decision-making processes and governance will be established. Describe the training environment for trainees that are working on the project, and describe that opportunities within the study that are available for trainees to further their scientific and professional development. Applicants are encouraged to include a diagram clearly illustrating the governance structure of the collaborative team; this may be included in the Appendix and does not count towards the page limit. **Update:** If the team consists of one or more international Co-PIs, justification must be provided in the LOI indicating that the proposal would be significantly improved by having certain components of the research being conducted by Co-PIs at study sites outside of Canada. **Maximum 3 pages.**

- ✓ **Sustainability Plan:** One of the main objectives of the Team Grant is to fund high impact research with immediate translational potential; however, we recognize that large-scale collaborative projects may include long-term research objectives and thus applicants are encouraged to consider how the project will be supported to achieve the desired long term outcomes, beyond the duration of the grant. Activities that might require the development of a sustainability plan include developing data platforms or bio repositories for use as a public resource, health service delivery initiatives, clinical trials, etc. Considering the sustainability of such projects long term will ensure that they continue to be supported and can achieve their long-term goals are successfully. Describe any long-term objectives for the study and how the team intends to achieve them beyond the end of the grant term. **Maximum 2 pages.**

- ✓ **Public Engagement and Involvement:** Using clear, non-scientific language, clearly demonstrate how the collaborative team will engage members of the public, specifically people who are affected by MS, in the research process. Public engagement strategies that can be explored include involving the public in prioritization and decision-making throughout the study, convening an advisory board or steering committee that includes people affected by MS, gathering public input on and/or involving the public in the study design, implementation and data interpretation, etc. Include an explanation of how research progress and outcomes will be effectively communicated to the public and other knowledge end-users through a detailed knowledge translation plan. **Maximum 2 pages.**

- ✓ **Impact and Translation:** Describe the extent to which knowledge generated by the study will be mobilized effectively into meaningful outcomes that will impact the lives of people affected by MS. Potential outcomes include development of effective MS treatments and symptom management strategies, improved health services delivery, effective changes to clinical practices and/or public policy, generation of novel and translatable knowledge about the pathogenesis and progression of MS, etc. Describe how the collaborative team will engage with partners (e.g. industry, government,

translational research organizations, etc.) to assist in the translation of research discoveries stemming from the grant into impactful outcomes. **Maximum 2 pages.**

- ✓ **Budget and Additional Years Justification:** Provide additional details and justification of all budget items pertaining to the proposed research activities. In this upload, you may include electronic copies of quotations and other information that may be of use to the reviewers. If funding support is required beyond a 3-year term, please provide adequate justification to explain why the project cannot be completed in 3 years. **Note that applicants cannot request more than \$4,500,000 for the entire term of the grant.**

Funding requests for the Team Grant may include:

- Research operating costs for the proposed research study.
- Purchase of equipment and maintenance contracts for common services and shared facilities.
- Costs of data collection, database maintenance, and data access directly related to the Team Grant.
- Costs of regional, national and international networking activities, including collaboration, planning, and knowledge exchange activities, directly related to the Team Grant.
- Salaries of research assistants and technicians who will enhance the research and collective productivity of the team; **Lead PI and Co-PI salaries are not eligible for funding.**
- Support of research trainees, at the rate specified by the MS Society of Canada for trainees (see [endMS Personnel Award Program Guide](#). Team Grants are expected to provide a superior training environment aimed at broadening the scientific knowledge, technical skills, and professional development of trainees.
- Salary of a professional coordinator and/or administrative assistant that will be directly involved in supporting the study.
- Costs involved in linkage with, and dissemination of, research findings to those who use the results, as appropriate for the research program (including other researchers, the public, practitioner and policy communities, and the industrial sector).

Funding requests for the Team Grant may NOT include:

- Indirect costs, such as institutional overhead, purchase and repair of office equipment, basic utilities, and other costs that are not specific to the individual research project and are therefore considered fundamental support services for the operation of the institution(s) and its research facilities.
- Research activities whose objectives are distinct from the Team Grant and that are covered under the individual operating grants of the Lead PI, Co-PIs, or Collaborators.
- Salaries of the Lead PI, Co-PI(s), or Collaborators.

- ✓ **CV:** The applicant is required to provide the CV of the Lead PI, Co- PIs and Collaborators. The MS Society of Canada MSSRF endorses the Common CV and all applicants working at a Canadian Institution must submit a Common CV. The template can be found at <https://ccv-cvc.ca/indexresearcher-eng.frm> (please choose MS Society as the agency).
- ✓ **Full Publications:** Full-text versions of publications from the past five years, relevant to the Team Grant proposal, may be uploaded. A maximum of 10 publications may be uploaded for the entire collaborative team.
- ✓ **Required Signatures:** **Template provided online*

The following signatures are required:

- The Lead PI and all Co-PIs.
 - Head of Department of Institution for Lead PI and each Co-PI.
 - Dean of Faculty or Director of Institution for Lead PI and/or each Co-PI.
- ✓ **Letters of Collaboration:** Include letters of support from the study collaborators outlining how they will be contribute to the research project. Letters must be on institutional letterhead and signed by the investigators.
 - ✓ **Appendix:** Additional supporting documents and publications may be added here.

4. REVIEW AND SUBMISSION

Please review the application in full by selecting “View PDF” on the “Review and Submit” page BEFORE the submission.

It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that the submitted application is complete, contains all required components, and adheres to the format and page or word limits assigned.

You will receive a confirmation email of your submission. If you DO NOT receive this email after submitting your application, you MUST contact msresearchgrants@mssociety.ca as soon as possible.