MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SOCIETY OF CANADA

2019-2020 PILOT GRANT
ONLINE APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Revised June 2018

1. ONLINE APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The MS Society of Canada (MSSC) uses 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. Important things to note:

- If you have already created a profile and forgot your password, please contact msresearchgrants@mssociety.ca or select **Forgot Your Password?** on the home page.

- Please review the MSSC Pilot Grant Program Guide and Policies prior to submitting an application. If you have any questions regarding eligibility, please contact msresearchgrants@mssociety.ca.

- Please ensure that your contact information (institution, primary address, phone number, and e-mail) are **correct** and **up to date**. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure the submitted application contains all required components.

- **Applications that are incomplete or do not adhere to the format and assigned page limits or are submitted after the deadline will be automatically disqualified from the competition.**

- The MSSC accepts applications in French; please refer to the MSSC Pilot Grants Application Guidelines for more information. French applications might be translated into English for reviewers' convenience.

2. PILOT GRANT APPLICATION

Below is a list of required information and documents as part of the Pilot Grant application. Satisfactory completion and submission of all documents is required for consideration in the competition.

2.1. FIELDS TO BE COMPLETED IN EASYGRANTS

ELIGIBILITY QUIZ

- Applicants must successfully pass the Eligibility Quiz to access the application.
- False information will result in an application being disqualified

The following fields are to be completed in Easygrants. Ensure all word limits are adhered to, additional words will be removed. Do not copy and paste fields into Easygrants.

CONTACT INFORMATION

- Enter your name and the institution/organization at which you will be conducting the proposed

research.
- Enter your contact information such as address, phone, email, etc.
- If you cannot find your institution in the menu, contact msresearchgrants@mssociety.ca.
- Please ensure that your contact information (institution, primary address, phone number and e-mail) is **correct** and **up to date**.
- Some information may be pre-filled; please update the information as required.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title:
- Enter project title. Ensure that the title accurately and concisely captures the overall objective of your research project.

Brief Project Description:
- Provide a brief description of the research project being proposed.
- Maximum 100 words.

Project Subject and Research Area(s)
- **Required**, select **Clinical and Population Health** OR **Biomedical Research** from drop-down menu.
- **Required,** select additional subject area(s) that pertain to the project by selecting from the menu on the left and clicking the "Add" button.

BUDGET
- Enter the budget per year for a maximum of 2 years.
- Amount requested over the grant term is approximately $50,000.
- Use the **Notes** section to provide a Budget Justification:
  - Details and justification of all budget items relative to the proposed research are required.
  - In the **Appendix**, applicants may include electronic copies of quotations and other information useful to the reviewers.
  - The MSSC does not fund indirect costs. Consult the MSSC CPH Pilot Grant Policies for all eligible expenditures. Note that use of pilot grant funds for conference travel is not permitted. Travel necessary for the conduct of the study will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

OTHER PERSONNEL
- Enter the names, institutions, address, and contact information for Co-Principal Investigator(s), Co-Applicant(s) and Collaborator(s) (if applicable),
- Consult the MSSC CPH Pilot Grant Program Guide for personnel definitions

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
- Indicate whether this is a **New,** or **Resubmission** (include EGID of previous submission). A pilot grant application can only be re-submitted once, for a total of two submissions.
- Select one of the following themes that apply to the project. This information will be used to track funding trends over time.
  1. **Symptom management and quality of life** (epidemiology, comprehensive care, pain and fatigue, exercise and diet, cognition, etc.)

2. **Mechanisms of disease** (pathophysiology, inflammation, neurodegeneration, myelin repair, cell and animal models, etc.). If your grant theme is mechanisms of disease, please specify if it relates to mechanisms of progression, repair processes or nerve damage and triggers.
3. **Therapy and clinical tool development** (clinical trials, drug repurposing, diagnostics, imaging, health-based technological applications, etc.)
4. **Cause and Risk Factors** (genetic, lifestyle, environmental, biological, etc.)

2.2.   UPLOADS

The documents that may be uploaded for this application are listed below. Note that some uploads will have templates available in Easygrants. Please log in to your account to view the templates in the Uploads section. Ensure all pop-up blockers are off when accessing the templates. **Do NOT upload any password protected, secured or encrypted documents as they will not upload properly to your application.**

Upload Format: Single spaced, 12-point font size, Times New Roman font style and margins that are ½" must be used for all uploads. *Pages in excess of the limit will not be reviewed.* **All uploads must contain relevant headers within the documents; e.g. Proposed Research Project, Training Overview, etc.**

Scientific Summary of Research Proposal
- Provide a scientific summary of the research proposal.
- One (1) page maximum.

Research Proposal
- Five (5) pages maximum. Any content beyond five (5) pages will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed.
- Provide detailed research proposal including rationale, an overview of preliminary data and findings (if applicable), hypotheses, scientific aims, and methodology. The Research Proposal should stand alone (i.e. it should contain all of the information required to support your research plan and should contain a self-contained, complete description of your project).

In the Research Proposal, you should include:
- A description of the objective(s), central research questions/hypotheses and scientific aims of the project.
- Brief background on why you are conducting this work and how it is relevant to MS, with appropriate references to scientific literature.
- A description of the novelty and innovation of the project, with a discussion of how it will provide new knowledge that has not previously been tested and how it will encourage the pursuit of new areas of research in the field.
- A plan of investigation and methodology, including experimental methods, techniques and analyses that will be used to collect data and test the proposed hypotheses.
- A description of your qualifications and research environment, including relevant prior experience, productivity and skills, and capacity of your collaborators to address any knowledge and technical gaps, if applicable.
- A plan for building on the preliminary data gathered over the term of the pilot grant to pursue further funding and research to expand on the findings.

Other Requirements and Considerations:
- Pilot grant proposals does not have to demonstrate that sufficient preliminary data for the project has been collected in order to be competitive, as the objective of the pilot grant program is to provide seed funding for obtaining preliminary data that could be used as the basis for submitting larger grants and further pursuing the proposed research direction.
- A detailed breakdown of the proposed budget for the pilot grant as well as a strong budget justification should be provided. Please consult MSSC CPH Pilot Grants Policies for allowed expenses
- Justify team structure; your team should have the necessary expertise. The curriculum vitae (CV) of the PI leading the project will be required as part of the application.
- Where possible, include justifications for methodology, for example intervention and follow-up timelines, sample size, inclusion of individuals of a specific age and/or sex, use of specific assay or outcomes measure, etc.
  Pilot grant applications will be evaluated against the review criteria described in the Program guide.

References and Figures
- Include references, tables, charts, figures, or photographs.
- There is no page limit.

Expected Outcomes and Next Steps
- Describe why the pilot project is novel and how it will generate new data and open new avenues of research in MS.
- Explain how the data generated will be used to spur subsequent relevant studies and why this pilot project in particular is critical to advancing ongoing research in this area of interest.
- One (1) page maximum.

Research Timeline
- Using the template provided on Easygrants, provide the expected timeline to achieve the aims of your project.
- If the grant is awarded, this timeline will be used to follow-up the progress of the research in the annual progress report.

Impact and Relevance to MS
- Describe your project using non-scientific, plain language. Provide clear key messages about your research and the outcomes of the project, ensuring that they are relevant to people affected by MS and address important unmet needs and challenges faced by the MS community.
- Indicate how the proposed research can improve the health and quality of life of people affected by MS, uncover important knowledge of the biological, clinical, psychosocial and societal impacts of MS, and how it will advance the field overall.
- This information will be reviewed by the lay reviewers on the review committee, referred to as community representatives. The summaries are also used by the MSSC to inform stakeholders – including people living with MS, staff, volunteers, and donors - about the valuable research supported through its funds. Failure to meet the criteria of a satisfactory lay and relevance summary as determined by the community representatives will result in the applicant resubmitting this section for approval.
- One (1) page maximum.

Addressing Reviewers' Recommendations (REQUIRED for resubmissions only)
- A Pilot grant application that was **unsuccessful in the previous competition** is considered a resubmission. A grant application can only be submitted a total of two times (1 original submission and 1 resubmission). See MSSC's CPH Pilot Grant Program Guide for further details.
- State how the reviewers' concerns (both scientific and lay), as outlined in the written critiques from the previous competition, have been addressed in the current application. **The previous reviewers' comments will be provided to the review committee to ensure that the concerns have been addressed.**
- Two (2) page maximum.

CV
The applicant is required to upload the CV of the Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigator (if applicable) and Co-Applicants. The MSSC requires CVs to be submitted using the **Common CV format**, the template for which can be found at https://ccv-cvc.ca .

1. Please choose "MSSC" as the agency and select Pilot Grant Template, click next. Save the Common CV to your Desktop and upload it in Easygrants.
2. The CV **must include** publications (relevant to your project) from the past five (5) years.
3. Enter all the relevant and necessary information and click "**Done**". A validation will automatically be performed and errors, if any, will be displayed.
4. Review the CCV data online via a preview of the PDF.
5. When complete, click on "Submit".
6. Record the confirmation number that is displayed with the status message (which can also be found under the "History" tab and on the first page of the CCV PDF).

- The CV must include a list of relevant publications. **For renewal applications**, list all publications resulting from the last funding period.

Publications
- Full publications and or manuscripts may be uploaded.
- Please upload the relevant publications in the order that you would like them to appear in your application from within the past 5 years.
- Any additional manuscripts that have been accepted for publication after the Pilot grant submission deadline must be submitted by e-mail to msresearchgrants@mssociety.ca by January 7th.

Pilot Grant Required Signatures
- Signatures from the Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigator (if applicable), Head of Department and Dean of Faculty or Institution are required.
- Electronic signatures will be accepted.
- A Template is provided on Easygrants.

Appendix
- Additional relevant documents such as letters of support, quotes etc. may be uploaded in the Appendix.

2.3. 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. **Changes cannot be made to an application once it is submitted.**

- Select **"Submit"** to complete the submission. **You will receive a confirmation email of your submission.** If you DO NOT receive an email after submitting your application, you MUST contact msresearchgrants@mssociety.ca as soon as possible.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

The hours of the MSSC's administrative and technical support for all enquiries related to research funding opportunities are: **Monday - Friday 9:00 to 16:00 ET**

Please direct all questions to msresearchgrants@mssociety.ca.

4. TROUBLESHOOTING

Accessing templates: If you experience difficulty opening the templates, please ensure that all pop-up blockers turned OFF. It may help to hold the "CTRL" key down when clicking on a template link.

Additionally, ensure your computer is configured to the following settings:

1. Open Internet Explorer.
2. Go to Tools | Internet Options.
3. Click on the Security tab.
4. Click on Trusted sites and then the Sites button.
5. Add the Easygrants URL (https://mscanadagrants.ca) in the Add this website to the zone field and click on Add.
6. Ensure the Require server verification (https:) for all sites in this zone checkbox is unchecked.
7. Click on Close.
8. Go back to the Security tab and click on Custom level with the Trusted sites zone still selected.
9. Choose Enable for Automatic prompting for file downloads.
10. Choose Enable for File download.
11. Choose Enable for Font download.
12. Also under Settings, go to the Use Pop-up Blocker setting and choose Disable.
13. Click on OK in the Security Settings – Trusted Sites Zone dialog.
14. Click on OK in the Internet Options dialog.

If you continue to experience issues opening the templates, please email msresearchgrants@mssociety.ca. Include in the email the specifics of the operating system you are using as well as the internet browser you are using.