

Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada-Brain Canada-Biogen Platform Support and Team Grant MS Progression Cohort Application Guidelines

1. ONLINE APPLICATION PROCEDURE

This funding opportunity requires applicants to use Easygrants, an online grants and awards management system, to submit, and review, applications on the Web. **Easygrants** 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:

- Interested applicants must first create profile on Easygrants. 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 [MS Progression Cohort Request for Applications](#) (RFA) 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.

2. LETTER OF INTENT (LOI) APPLICATION

Below is a list of required information and documents as part of the LOI application for the MS Progression Cohort planning grant. Satisfactory completion and submission of all documents is required for consideration in the competition. **Failure to submit all required documents will result in an incomplete application and it will be disqualified from the competition.**

PROJECT DETAILS

In the section titled Project Details, please enter the project title and a brief description that describes the overall goals of this project and the potential impact of the research.

In the section titled Project Subject and Research Area(s), please select the research area and subject area(s) that best apply to your research project.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Enter the Principal Investigator's (PI) contact information. Fields marked with an asterisk (*) are required. Some information may be pre-filled; please update the information as required. Ensure that a primary address, phone number and email address are added. If the institution is not found, contact msresearchgrants@mssociety.ca.

OTHER PERSONNEL

The applicant can list all additional personnel involved in the cohort study. Additional personnel may include:

- Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PI) will share responsibilities for the oversight in the research operations at specific sites. The Co-PI must hold an M.D., Ph.D., or equivalent degree, has an academic or research appointment, and be conducting research in a recognized Canadian institution.
- Collaborative members provide a specific service (e.g. access to equipment, training in a specialized technique, statistical analysis, industry partners, 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.

UPLOADS

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.

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

Format: 12-font size, page margins of at least 0.75 inches, including figures and references. Additional pages beyond the maximum specified in each component will not be reviewed.

Upload Components

- Lay Summary:** Using non-scientific, everyday language, describe the key objectives of the cohort study. Explain the impact of the cohort study and how the insights that are gained will lead to a better understanding of the mechanisms underlying MS progression; diagnosis, prevention and treatment strategies; and the impacts of progression on health-related quality of life and social determinants of health? (1 page maximum)
- Scientific Plan and Data Integration:** Please include the following sections (5 pages maximum):
 - **Scientific Plan:**
 - Background stating the objective of the overall research project including hypothesis and the scientific questions that will be addressed specifically related to the three research domains.
 - The team will provide an outline of the feasibility assessment which will ultimately inform type and timing of data collection as well as effect sizes, and reliability and validity of such data to address the broader research question. The team will design the overall research concept and will define the measures/endpoints to be evaluate during the study. Data collected may include

imaging, immunological assessments, genetic analysis, patient reported outcomes and other biomarkers. Applicants need to consider both available retrospective data and a prospective design. The retrospective data should inform the prospective research design. It is not expected that the study will be able to identify all clinical, imaging, immunologic and genetic biomarkers for disease progression; however, the applicants need to consider the approach that is likely to yield a sustainable model. Only by following people with MS over a longer time period will we be able to define variables that are associated with progression.

- An overall strategy as to how the collaborative team will look to define, identify and assemble a sufficiently large cohort of people with MS that will be followed long term and best address the research questions raised in this RFA.
- **Data Integration:**
 - A preliminary outline of how this study will leverage but not duplicate existing platforms and infrastructure, including current national and international cohort studies, or make use of existing data platforms and biosamples from other studies or leverage other funds, or align with other efforts to sustain the proposed cohort is required. Also important, this outline should address how key lessons from other research efforts will be incorporated.
 - An outline of how data collection will be streamlined across study sites, including standardization of the MRI data to be collected.
 - Outline considerations regarding infrastructure for collecting data, data integrations, streamlining IT systems and privacy.

iii. Administration, Governance and Timelines (2 pages maximum)

- An initial description of the structure of the project to support the scientific plan.
- Research team structure, list of team members and anticipated roles of individual members
- A preliminary description of the centers that will be involved and the consideration of how other centers may be included over time.
- A description of comprehensive communications and information-sharing plans among team members and centers.
- A list of key milestones and timelines for the work that is anticipated over the period of the planning grant.
- A description of the incorporation of people living with MS in the design, input and/or governance structure of the team.

iv. References and Figures: Include references, tables, charts, figures, or photographs (No page limit).

v. Budget: Please include a budget description detailing how the investigative team will spend the available planning grant funding to complete a full application submission. Note that the total funding envelope that is available for the planning grant is up to **\$250,000 (CAD)** for 5 months. (2 pages maximum).

vi. Curriculum Vitae: Please upload the Common CVs for the PI, all Co-PIs, site PIs, and any other key investigators that will play in important role in this project. The MS Society of Canada

endorses the Common CV and requests 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).

vii. Required Signatures: The signature of PI and any Co-PIs that will lead the MS Progression Cohort, the Chair(s) of the Department(s) and the Dean(s) of the Faculty or Director(s) of the Institution(s). * *Template provided in Easygrants.*

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.
- **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.

4. 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.

5. 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.