



MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SOCIETY OF CANADA

2019-2020 PILOT GRANT POLICIES

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1. TERMS AND CONDITIONS.....	3
1.1. CONDITIONS OF THE PILOT GRANT	3
1.2. GENERAL CATEGORIES OF EXPENDITURES	5
2. REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY	6
2.1. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY.....	6
2.2. REPORTING SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS	7
2.3. PUBLICATIONS AND COMMUNICATION	7
3. GENERAL PROVISIONS	8
3.1. RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS OR ANIMALS	8
3.2. INDEMNIFICATION POLICY	9
3.3. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY REGULATIONS.....	9
3.4. AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES	9
3.5. POLICY ON SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT AND FRAUD	9
3.6. OPEN ACCESS TO RESEARCH OUTPUTS	10
APPENDIX A.....	12

1. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1.1. CONDITIONS OF THE PILOT GRANT

Notification: The Principal Investigator (PI) will be advised of the term and amount of the grant awarded. A fully executed letter of agreement must be returned to the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada (MSSC) in order for the funds to be released. Payment of the grant will be remitted as stated in the letter of agreement and Accounting Procedures. Payment of subsequent quarters is dependent on (a) receipt, review, and approval by the MSSC of semi-annual or annual financial reports; (b) receipt, review and approval by the MSSC of annual research progress reports; (c) for research involving humans and/or animals, receipt of certificate(s) demonstrating approval of the specific research proposed from the grant recipient's institution's Research Ethics Board and/or the Animal Care and Use Committee for each year of the grant as part of the progress report; and (d) compliance with all requirements and procedures outlined in the executed letter of agreement.

Renewals: Pilot grants are non-renewable. Grants submitted to the operating grant competition that build on preliminary data obtained from a pilot grant are considered new operating grant submissions.

Holding Multiple MSSC grants: A PI can concurrently hold a maximum of two operating grants and one pilot grant.

Resubmissions: All applications that were unsuccessful in their previous submission to the MSSC grants and awards competition, are considered resubmissions. Resubmitting an application is permitted under MSSC competition rules. An application is considered to be a resubmission if the overall research plan (hypothesis and aims) are similar to what was outlined in the first submission. The MSSC may choose to reclassify a new application as a resubmission if it is very similar to a previous application from the PI. Resubmissions will be assessed according to the review criteria for a new application, and must include a "Response to the previous review" and should demonstrate substantive modification to the proposal addressing the reviewers' comments. An pilot grant application can only be re-submitted once, for a total of two submissions.

Change of PI: In most cases, a grant terminates when the PI becomes unable to continue supervision of the research. However, within thirty (30) days after such an occurrence, the institution may request that the grant be continued with the responsibility transferred to a new PI until the grant can be terminated appropriately or until a new and complete application can be submitted by the new PI. Such changes must be approved by the MSSC prior to taking effect.

Termination of Pilot Grant: A research grant may be terminated before the end of the

project in the following instances: (1) if the PI requests, in writing, that the grant be terminated; (2) if the PI is unable to carry out the research at the original Institution and a transfer of the grant to another institution has not been requested and approved by the MSSC; (3) if the sponsoring institution requests in writing that the grant be terminated because of the awardee's termination of his/her academic appointment; (4) if the PI fails to notify the MSSC of any change in his/her affiliation with the department or institution on record at the time the grant was made; (5) if the PI changes any aspect of the grant from that which was originally approved by the MSSC, including significant changes in the specific aims or methods of the study, without prior notification and approval by the MSSC; (6) when annual progress reports are not received from the PI by March 31st of every year of each grant's anniversary year; (7) for research involving humans or animals, failure to submit a copy of proper approval of the specific research proposed from the grant recipient's institution's Research Ethics Board and/or the Animal Care and Use Committee for each year of the grant; (8) if the PI is found by an institutional investigation to have committed scientific misconduct or fraud; (9) if the PI violates the terms of the executed letter of agreement; or (10) by action of the Board of Directors of the MSSC.

No Cost Extension of Pilot Grant: An extension of the grant term without additional funds may be approved when requested and justified in writing. Grant terms can be extended for either six (6) or 12 months and extensions can only be requested once per grant, except under extenuating circumstances and with proper justification provided to and approved by the MSSC. To request a no-cost extension, please fill the form provided on the MS Society's website. The following information will be requested: (1) the amount of funds to be carried into the extension period; (2) a statement of why the funds were not used in the original grant period; (3) an outline on how the funds will be used during the extension, stating the aims/work from the approved project that needs to be completed; (4) an official up-to-date financial report. No cost extension requests must be made at least ninety (90) days before the termination date of a grant.

Transfer of an Pilot Grant: The MSSC retains the right to transfer a grant from one institution to another (provided that the institutions are Canadian), along with the transfer of the PI, upon the PI's written request. For the approval of such a transfer, the MSSC requires a letter of acknowledgment signed by the new institution on institutional letterhead. For research involving human subjects and/or animals, written approval from the new Institution's Research Ethics 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 official financial report and return all unexpended funds to the MSSC before a final transfer can be made. There should be no interruption of financial support if the transfer request is received by the MSSC at least ninety (90) days prior to the anticipated date of transfer, and a financial report is submitted from the original institution prior to the transfer date.

1.2. GENERAL CATEGORIES OF EXPENDITURES

Eligible Categories: Investigators may request funds for the following categories of expenditure: salaries for professional and non-professional personnel, patient costs, permanent equipment (\$5,000 or less over the term of the grant) and consumable supplies. 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.

Indirect Costs: Funds cannot be used or requested for indirect costs or overhead costs in respect to the conduct of research (defined as costs associated with institution's ongoing pilot expenses such as facilities and basic utilities, the purchase and repair of office equipment, administration fees, property, environmental assessment and safety compliance, eating, lighting, ethics reviews etc.). These costs are not specific to individual research projects or programs and are considered fundamental support services for the operation of the institution and its research facilities, and are therefore deemed to be ineligible costs.

Personnel: All personnel paid from grant funds shall be in accordance with the prevailing policies of the grant recipient's institution. However, budgets for multi-year studies cannot include cost-of-living or similar salary increases for personnel working on the project. Requested salaries are not to be used to replace salaries or portions of salaries already assured by institutional or other funds. Grant funds may not be used for purchasing, accounting, financial record keeping, laundry or student and tuition costs.

Stipend support from the pilot grant for Postdoctoral Fellowships, Doctoral, Master's Studentships and summer students are not permissible. Please visit the Funding Opportunities page for more information on the MS Society's endMS Studentships and Fellowships.

Professional Support: The MSSC will not pay salaries of the PIs, Co-PIs, Collaborators and Faculty members. Investigators are not considered employees of the MSSC but rather of the institution where the research is conducted. The research grant is to be administered in accordance with the prevailing policies of the sponsoring institution, including policies regarding statutory deductions, vacations, sick leaves, holidays, etc.

Technical and Non-Professional Support: Salaries for technical and non-professional personnel may be requested in proportion to the time they will spend on the research directly supported by the grant. All technical and non-professional personnel must be funded within a Canadian institution.

Equipment and Supplies: The MSSC allows a maximum request of \$5,000.00 per grant for scientific equipment. The cost of installing equipment purchased with funds of the grant is not allowed unless such funds were requested in the application and specifically approved in the budget of the grant awarded.

Office equipment, personal computers, office supplies, books, and journals may not be

purchased with grant funds unless included in the application and specifically approved in the budget of the grant awarded.

Consumable supplies may include any type of laboratory supplies, including purchase and maintenance of experimental animals.

Other: Any other expenses directly related to the cost of conducting the proposed research may be requested in the application for a grant but must be properly justified. Construction or renovation costs are not permissible expenditures under any circumstances.

Reallocation of Funds: Transfers between and among categories of the budget approved in the grant may be made as follows: (1) transfers between personnel and consumable supplies categories may be made at the discretion of the grant recipient's Institution, but (2) no transfers may be made without prior approval in writing by the MSSC for equipment, travel, or other items not specifically identified in the approved budget. Unless prior written approval has been obtained from the MSSC, expenditures are likely to be disallowed for items not specifically included in the budget of the grant awarded.

2. REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

2.1. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Semi-Annual Financial Reports: The MSSC will release the Funds in quarterly installments, with the release of first and second quarterly instalments of the Funds to the Institution on April 1st and July 1st, respectively, of the first year of the Term upon execution of the Letter of Agreement. For renewal pilot grants, the funds from the previous grant must be expended in full prior to the release of funds for the new grant

In order for the MSSC to release grant funds, the grant recipient and the Institution must submit a financial report indicating that 75% or more of the funds released to date have been expended. If so, the next quarterly installments of funds will be authorized and released. The semi-annual financial reports are to be submitted at least 30 days after the end of every cycle. If 75% or more of the grants funds released to date have **not** been spent, the MSSC will withhold subsequent payments until this condition has been met. If it is determined that the funds are not expended appropriately, the MSSC has the right to withhold grant funds until further notice or terminate the grant agreement. A financial report template will be provided to the grant recipients by the MSSC and must be used to report all financial expenses. The MSSC will only accept financial reports that are submitted using reporting template.

Final Financial Reports: A full account of all expenses incurred over the entire lifecycle of a research project is due within thirty (30) days of the termination of the grant.

Unexpended funds remaining after termination of the grant must be returned to the MSSC if

renewal support is not awarded. If renewal support is awarded, please see the section below on Carryover Funds. Grant recipients agree to return to the MSSC unexpended funds within three (3) months following the termination date. A Final Financial Report Form will be provided.

The MSSC may from time to time, at its sole discretion and expense, retain the services of professional auditors to conduct an audit to review the propriety of reported financial expenditures in the context of a particular grant.

Unspent Funds: Budgets in applications for grants are estimates of the funds required to perform the research indicated. Unexpended funds in a particular year may be carried over to the next year of the approved funding term without requiring the approval of the MSSC.

Any unexpended funds remaining at the termination of the grant must be returned to the MSSC within three (3) months if a renewal is not awarded.

2.2. REPORTING SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS

Annual Research Progress Report: An annual research progress report is due March 31st of every year unless otherwise directed by the MSSC. The report requires a written description of research progress, referring to the hypothesis and aims proposed in the original application. Compliance with this policy is necessary for ongoing funding of the grant. A template for the annual research progress report can be found on the MSSC's [website](#).

Final Research Report: A final report is due within thirty (30) days of the end of the grant term unless renewal support is awarded. If renewal support is awarded, the final research progress report will be required within thirty (30) days of the end of the renewal grant term. Please note that an annual research progress report is due if the grant is renewed in place of a final report. This report must include documentation of all milestones achieved during the funding cycle, with reference to the initial hypothesis and aims of the research project. For no cost extensions, the PI should submit an annual research progress report on March 31st and then a final research progress report within thirty (30) days of the end of the extension period. A template for the final research progress report can be found on the MSSC's [website](#).

2.3. PUBLICATIONS AND COMMUNICATION

Publications: The MSSC expects that the results of the research will be published in appropriate journals. The responsibility for publications lies with the PI. As soon as a manuscript is accepted for publication, it is expected that the grant recipient will inform the MSSC's Research Department (msresearchgrants@mssociety.ca) as early as possible with the name of the journal, title of the article and expected date of publication. Failure to do so

may result in suspension of the subsequent payments.

Acknowledgment: The following acknowledgment or its equivalent should be used in publications, presentations, press releases and other media content, and any other materials promoting the outcomes of the research funded by the pilot grant: **“This investigation/work/study/project was supported (in part, if applicable) by a pilot grant from the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada.”** If the award is being sponsored by an individual or organization, the appropriate named award as indicated in the agreement must be used in the acknowledgement.

Media and Communications: The support of the MSSC must be adequately acknowledged in any presentations, publications, press releases, or media announcements related to this research project. The MSSC expects that if a grant recipient’s institution and/or journal is preparing a press release or other media announcement related to a MSSC funded grant, the institution and/or publisher and the grant recipient must inform the MSSC’s Research Department with minimum advanced notice of 2 weeks, and share any materials in advance for review by MSSC staff. The MSSC may choose to participate in a joint media release and/or event at their discretion and be able to provide input on materials and promotional events created by the institution and media. Non-compliance with this term shall entitle MSSC to withhold further funds or terminate the grant.

Knowledge Translation and Public Outreach: To help increase stakeholder awareness of the research funded by the MSSC, the grant recipients may expect the MSSC to call upon them during the term of the grant to apply their research to improve health practice and policy, as well as summarize pertinent outcomes to a variety of audiences (e.g. the public, media, government, donors, researchers in other fields, healthcare professionals, etc.). It is also expected that the grant recipient participates in public events that help raise awareness of the MSSC’s research program and impact of MSSC funded research. Non-compliance with this term shall entitle MSSC to withhold further funds or terminate the agreement and grant.

3. GENERAL PROVISIONS

3.1. RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS OR ANIMALS

The MSSC does not support research involving human subjects without proper approval of the specific research proposed from the grant recipient’s institution's Human Research Ethics Board. Such approval must be granted prior to the release of any funds from the MSSC. This approval must be signed by the Chairperson of the Committee.

The MSSC believes that there is evidence of important benefits to people with MS through stem cell research. Accordingly, it will consider funding research on all types of human cells if that research follows Federal Government legislation and Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) guidelines.

For research involving animals, approval from the grant recipient's institutional Animal Use and Care Committee must be granted prior to the release of any funds from the MSSC. This approval must be signed by the Chairperson of the Committee.

MSSC requires grant recipients whose research involves humans or animals to submit a copy of an up-to-date ethics approval certificate for each year of the grant or award as part of their annual research progress report.

3.2. INDEMNIFICATION POLICY

The MSSC is not responsible for any claim, judgment, award, damages, settlement, negligence or malpractice arising from the research project or investigation related to this grant. The Grant recipient and Institution acknowledge responsibility for the conduct of research or investigation related to this grant, and release of the MSSC from all claims or liability that may arise from the conduct of research or investigation related to this grant or award resulting from any act or omission on the part of the Grant recipient and Institution, their employees, agents or representatives to the extent allowed by applicable law.

3.3. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY REGULATIONS

The MSSC adheres to a policy of equal opportunity in employment and requires that all Canadian institutions to which its research or training awards are made adhere to federally or provincially mandated equal opportunity policies. Institutions outside of Canada must adhere to locally applicable equal opportunity policies.

3.4. AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES

Investigators who receive funds from the MSSC are expected to share research resources developed with the MSSC's support with other qualified investigators working on multiple sclerosis. Examples of such resources include (but are not limited to) cell lines and clones, antibodies, and nucleotide and protein sequences.

3.5. POLICY ON SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT AND FRAUD

Any institution that receives funds from the MSSC must have written policy guidelines on conflict of interest and scientific misconduct and fraud. It is the responsibility of the Institution and the Grant recipient/Awardee to inform the MSSC immediately, in writing, of any institutional investigation into the conduct of an Investigator whose work is supported by the MSSC, and to keep the MSSC informed in a timely manner of the progress and outcome of such investigation. A finding by the institutional investigation that the Investigator was guilty

of research fraud or misconduct is sufficient grounds to terminate MSSC support of a project and may jeopardize future support for the Investigator from the MSSC.

3.6. OPEN ACCESS TO RESEARCH OUTPUTS

The MSSC is strongly committed to enhancing the application of research results. This section on Open Access to Research Outputs' ("Open Access") has been adopted with the expectation that all research funded by the MSSC will be made freely accessible and useable for others in the international and national research community. The objective of Open Access is to enhance access to and disclosure of all MSSC funded research to a broad audience.

Research Outputs: The MSSC has adopted the definition of "research outputs" from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) definition as "conceptual or practical knowledge, data, information, and physical or biological materials developed during the course of a research project that are integral for building on research discoveries."

Application and Compliance with Open Access: The Open Access requirements under this Policy apply to all grants awarded after July 1, 2013 and onward, in whole or in part, from the MSSC. The MSSC encourages compliance of these Open Access requirements from research funded by the MSSC prior to July 1st, 2013.

Journal Publication: As previously noted, PIs are required to make every effort to ensure that peer-reviewed publications stemming from MSSC funded research are freely accessible through an online repository as soon as possible and in any event within six (6) months of publication. This may be done by publishing research findings:

- a) To a non-subscription based journal;
- b) To a subscription-based journal where the authors may also self-archive peer
- c) Reviewed papers in an online repository; or
- d) Through a "Hybrid" journal that also has open access publishing options. (see Appendix "A" for examples of journals and research outputs)

Research Data: The MSSC requires grant recipients to deposit bioinformatics, atomic, and molecular coordinate data into an appropriate public database immediately upon publication of research results. (see Appendix "A" for examples of journals and research outputs). Grant recipients are required to retain original data sets arising from MSSC funded research for a minimum of five (5) years after the end of the term of their funding agreement with the MSSC. This applies to all data, whether published or not.

Publication Costs: Funding received through the MSSC may also be used by the grant recipient to pay expenses incurred in the publication of MSSC funded research. These costs should be requested in the pilot grant application and specifically approved in the budget.

Consents: In order for the MSSC to achieve the Open Access goals of this Policy, grant recipients are required to use their best efforts to acquire the appropriate level of consent from individual participants involved in any research funded, whether in whole or in part, by the MSSC.

All consents acquired by the grant recipients must be done in accordance with all applicable laws including, without limitation, all applicable privacy and health information laws, government regulations and Health Canada guidelines, including but not limited to the ICH Harmonised Tripartite Good Clinical Practice Consolidated Guideline, the Declaration of Helsinki, the 2nd edition of the Tri-Council Policy Statement, “Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans” and in accordance with generally accepted clinical practices.

Monitoring and Adherence: In accepting any grant from the MSSC, grant recipients accept the terms and conditions of their grant, which include the Open Access Requirements of this Policy. In the event of any breach or non-compliance with this, the MSSC may take steps to investigate the allegation, which may result in termination of funding, grants or awards at the sole discretion of the MSSC.

Obligations under Law: These Policies should be read in conjunction with all applicable laws including, without limitation, all applicable privacy and health information laws, government regulations and guidelines.

Research Portal: MS Research Portal is an initiative from the MSSC to highlight research studies that are seeking participants. PIs are required to post recruitment information for their MSSC-funded study online at <http://msresearch.ca/> if they are seeking participants who are affected by MS.

For any questions related to the MSSC pilot grant policies, contact msresearchgrants@mssociety.ca.

APPENDIX A

Examples of research outputs and corresponding publicly accessible archive, repository or database*	
Peer-reviewed journal publications: Publicly accessible archive or repository	
PubMed Central Canada Institutional Repositories at Canadian universities Directory of Open Access Repositories (international)	
<u>Research data</u>	<u>Public database or archive</u>
Nucleic acid sequences	GenBank
Gene expression data	Gene Expression Omnibus
Structure data	Research Collaboratory for Structural Bioinformatics (RCSB) Protein Data Bank
Single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs)	The Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms Database
Molecular interaction data	International Molecular Exchange Consortium (IMEx) partners
DNA and clinical data related to the human major histocompatibility complex (MHC).	dbMHC
Data underlying scientific and medical publications	Dryad Repository
Proteomics data (Deposition of proteomics data)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRoteomics IDentifications database (PRIDE) [European Bioinformatics Institute (EBI)] • PeptideAtlas [Institute for Systems Biology (ISB)] • Global Proteomics Machine (GPM)