

ECTRIMS ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

Updated July 2024

PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

ECTRIMS offers a *Allied Health Professional Fellowship Programme* for nurses, psychologists, physiotherapists, and related allied health care professionals to obtain or expand their expertise in MS through practical experience and training in a mentored MS environment in Europe. Our aim is to enhance the care and support of individuals with MS by fostering improved clinical care and education and by helping to promote best practices in MS care throughout Europe.

KEY INFORMATION

- For recipients of advanced degrees (RN, PhD, OT, PT, etc) in allied health professions who wish to obtain mentored clinical and/or research training related to MS.
- Funded fellowships in a European laboratory or clinic with flexible durations of up to one year.
- Citizens of any country are eligible to apply to this programme, however, the training must be undertaken in a European institution of clinic.
- For European candidates, the training institution may be in the same city or country as the candidate's home institution, however applicants are strongly encouraged to train in a different city or different European country than their current place of work, so long as language and any professional licensing requirements do not present barriers to a successful training period.
- The application requires documents from the candidate, the proposed mentor and the proposed host training institute, as well as other professional referees.
- Successful fellows and their mentors will be asked to provide progress and financial accounting reports at the end of the fellowship period.
- Application period: 15 July through 1 December 2024.

ECTRIMS Fellowship Programmes

ECTRIMS Secretariat | Reinacherstrasse 131, 4053 Basel, Switzerland

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PROGRAMME TERMS

Fellow Eligibility

- Citizens of any country are eligible to apply to this programme; however, the training must be undertaken in a European institution or clinic.
- Candidates must have a professional qualification (with relevant degree) such as nursing, psychology, physiotherapy/rehabilitation, etc. and, if appropriate, be licensed to practise in their home country.
- It is anticipated that successful candidates will have little, but not necessarily extensive, full- or part-time MS experience at their home institution, and that the candidate will return to their home institution after training or move on to an MS-related position at another institution, better prepared to excel in MS care, management and research and to better support people living with MS and the MS clinical care team.
- In general, successful candidates will be under 55 years of age and will anticipate continuing in their MS careers upon completion of the training.
- Candidates and their mentors must affirm that there will be no language barriers that will impede the training experience at the training venue.

Eligibility of the Training Mentor and Institution

- The training institution/mentor must be located in Europe, with an outstanding reputation and credentials related to MS clinical care/research. While it is anticipated that the training institution will be a hospital/clinic in or closely affiliated with an academic medical centre, private clinic sites will be considered if they are of outstanding quality and reputation in MS care.
- For European candidates, the training institution may be in the same city or country as the candidate's home institution, however the fellowship must take place at a different institute than the fellow's current placement of 12 months or longer.

Fellows wishing to train in a different city or different European country are strongly encouraged, so long as language and any professional licensing requirements do not present barriers to a successful training period.

- The fellowship candidate must identify and solicit the agreement of an appropriate mentor as well as develop a specific training plan for the fellowship period.

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- It is expected that the lead mentor will be an experienced MS professional. If assistance is needed in identifying an appropriate training site/mentor, the ECTRIMS Secretariat may be able to provide advice and direction.
- A relevant department head or clinic director must be identified and must agree to host the trainee in their clinic, and the training institution must certify its willingness to support the fellow during the fellowship period.

Explanation of the Training Plan

- The fellow and mentor must outline and present a relevant, MS-specific training programme. This may include observational training or hands-on work under the guidance of the mentor, relevant academic coursework, and other training-related activities. While not required, a special research project may be part of the training experience and if included, should be documented and justified within the context of a comprehensive fellowship experience.

Fellowship Term and Support Levels

- These ECTRIMS MS training fellowships are available for flexible terms of weeks to months, up to a maximum of one year.
- Training preferably should be planned to begin within six months of the award notification.
- ECTRIMS will provide a stipend that corresponds to the institutional, regional and experience level for fellows at the identified training site, up to a maximum of 55,000.00 EUR per year (includes salary plus any benefits) for the training period, which must be documented by the host institution at the time of application. For shorter periods than one year, the ECTRIMS award will be prorated according to the length of the training programme (e.g. 27,500.00 EUR for a six-month programme; 4,583.00 EUR for one month, etc.).
- The ECTRIMS award must be used by the institution to pay the fellow's stipend ("salary") at the appropriate local rate for the fellow's stage of training. Funds may be requested for any needed "social benefits" of employment (healthcare coverage, pension, other benefits) that may be required by the institution.
- If the total required stipend, plus benefits, exceeds the amount provided by the ECTRIMS award, it is the responsibility of the institution/mentor to supplement the ECTRIMS award to cover the entire required costs. Additional sources of funding that may be needed to cover the total costs of training must be indicated.

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- Payments from ECTRIMS will be made to the host institution, which will be considered the employer of the fellow during the training period. Stipends will be paid by the host institution to the fellow according to the institution's own payment policies and schedules.
- ECTRIMS will also provide economy class round-trip transportation between the successful candidate's home location to the training site at the beginning and end of the training period. Upon presentation of receipts, ECTRIMS will reimburse the fellow directly for all approved travel expenses. Travel expenses for accompanying family members cannot be provided.
- Fellows will be invited to attend the annual ECTRIMS congress during the term of their training period. ECTRIMS will separately support travel and accommodations for congress participation.
- It is expected that the training activities to be undertaken at the host institution will be supported by the host institution/mentor. No additional support for equipment, travel, books, journal subscriptions, etc. should be paid for by the fellowship grant.

Changes in the Fellowship Programme Agreement

- It is anticipated that the entire training period will be undertaken with the host institution and mentor as planned. However, in special circumstances, ECTRIMS will consider requests to transfer the fellowship to a new mentor or institution. Authorisation must be requested and provided prior to any such change. Unexpended funds at the original host institution must be returned to ECTRIMS in the event of an approved institutional transfer and the balance will be reissued to a new approved host institution by ECTRIMS.
- An ECTRIMS MS training fellowship is awarded to an individual and is not transferable to a different fellow at the host institution.
- ECTRIMS must be notified of early termination of a fellowship and unexpended funds at the host institution must be returned to ECTRIMS.
- ECTRIMS may revoke or terminate an MS training fellowship early if the fellow is unable to carry out the training as planned, a mentor requests termination because of unsatisfactory performance by the fellow, or in the event of cause established by due process of law or regulations or as a consequence of an institutional review committee's determination of fraud or malfeasance.

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Reporting

- Fellows and their mentors are required to provide reports of the training experience at its conclusion, due within 30 days after the completion of the training programme, including an evaluation of the mentor and training site by the fellow, as well as of the fellow by the mentor. A financial report of how funds were expended by the host institution must also be provided. Forms for completing the reporting will be provided by ECTRIMS.

Post-Fellowship Follow-Up

- After the training period, it is expected that the fellow will return to their original home institution for employment, or will obtain employment in a different institution. Post-fellowship career plans should be detailed as part of the application process.
- ECTRIMS fellows are requested to maintain contact with the ECTRIMS Secretariat so that post-training career paths can be tracked and to assist with overall programme evaluation.

Application Process

ECTRIMS Allied Health Care Professional Training Fellowship will be awarded in a competitive review process conducted by members of the ECTRIMS Fellowship Committee. Applications will be evaluated based on the:

- candidate's qualifications, including education, previous employment history, current employment responsibilities, self-stated goals of training, and an evaluation of the candidate's career plans;
- qualifications and characteristics of the proposed training mentor;
- qualifications and characteristics of the host institution;
- nature of the proposed training plan and its plausibility;
- quality of letters of endorsement from the proposed mentor and from the home institution and from professional references.

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To these ends, the following documents must be submitted to the online application system:

Part 1: Provided by the Candidate

1. A completed online application, available through the [ECTRIMS website](#);
2. A complete curriculum vitae for the applicant including a bibliography of any relevant publications;
3. A training programme description as developed together by the candidate and proposed mentor; if a research project is to be part of the training experience, it should be described and justified in detail.
4. Proof of knowledge of the training venue's local language (e.g. language certificate, personal letter of confirmation).

Part 2: Supporting Materials Provided Directly to ECTRIMS by Others

The following additional items must be submitted electronically to the ECTRIMS Secretariat (secretariat@ectrims.eu) by 1 December 2024. These should be submitted separately by their respective authors as confidential documents and should not be submitted with the materials requested in Part 1. Please be sure to ask referees to clearly identify the name of the applicant on all pages of their letters.

1. From the proposed mentor:

- 1) Letter of support from the proposed training mentor, with special reference to interactions they have had with the proposed fellow in planning for the training period and with details of the training programme that will be provided to the candidate. If hands-on training (direct interaction with MS patients) is proposed, a certification that the proposed fellow will be able to undertake activities as outlined in the training plan at the training institution must be provided by the mentor (this is not needed if the training experience is to be purely observational).
- 2) A current curriculum vitae and full bibliography for the proposed mentor should be included. The "Biographical Sketch" form provided in the online fellowship application system should be used. The applicant is responsible for forwarding this form to the proposed mentor for their use.

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2. From the training institution:

- 1) Letter of support from the department chair (or another relevant institutional official) at the proposed host institution accepting the proposed fellow, should a fellowship be awarded.
 - 2) Certification from the training institution accepting the terms of the ECTRIMS fellowship and payments. The necessary form, “Acceptance of ECTRIMS Payment Rules” is available for download from the online application system. The applicant is responsible for forwarding this form to the institution for completion and submission to ECTRIMS.
- 3. From other referees:** In addition to a supporting letter from the mentor, letters of reference from the candidate’s home institution and from professionals acquainted with the proposed fellow, that addresses the fellow’s qualities and likelihood for a future successful career focused on MS. Applicants should arrange for at least one and up to three letters of reference.

Reminder

The applicant’s CV/bibliography and research project summary and description are to be submitted by the applicant using the online application system by 1 December 2024.

Mentor CV and support letter, as well as institutional and referee support letters and forms, are to be submitted **separately** by the mentor and/or institution as confidential documents to the ECTRIMS Secretariat (secretariat@ectrims.eu) by 1 December 2024.

Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.

Notification of ECTRIMS Award Deliberations

The ECTRIMS Fellowship Committee will review all proposals after the application period. Notification of the review outcomes will be made by the end of March 2025, to facilitate logistics involved in relocation by the following autumn.

For questions and further information, please contact the ECTRIMS Secretariat at: secretariat@ectrims.eu.