

ECTRIMS MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS NURSE TRAINING FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

ECTRIMS offers a MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS NURSE TRAINING FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME for qualified/licensed nurses from anywhere in the world to provide the opportunity for them to obtain additional expertise through practical nursing experience and training in a mentored MS environment in Europe. Our aim is to enhance care and support of individuals with MS by fostering improved clinical care and education and by helping to promote best practices in nursing care for MS.

Mentored training will be available for outstanding nurse candidates with some MS nursing experience who wish to enhance their professional capabilities. Training must be under the direction and mentorship of a senior MS nurse specialist, in association with a senior MS clinician where appropriate, at a European clinical site with significant expertise in MS. The training period must be for a minimum of 6 months or up to one year in duration. It is anticipated that two fellowships will be awarded each year, with additional awards possible depending on ECTRIMS finances and the qualifications of candidates.

PROGRAMME TERMS

Eligibility:

- ⊖ Citizens of any country are eligible to apply to this programme; however, the nursing care training must be undertaken in a European institution or clinic
- Candidates must have a nursing qualification (a general nursing degree with or without special nursing credentials, such as neurological nursing, rehabilitation nursing, etc.) and be licensed for nursing practice in their home country.
- It is anticipated that successful candidates will have some, but not necessarily extensive, full or part time MS nursing experience at their home institution and will return to their home institution after training, better prepared to excel in MS nursing and to better support people living with MS and the MS clinical care team.
- In general, successful candidates will be 55 years of age or younger, and will anticipate continuing in their MS nursing careers upon completion of the training.

The Home Institution:

- Candidates must be engaged full time or part time in MS nursing care at their home institution prior to application for a training programme. In special circumstances, which must be justified, individuals engaged in related, but not specifically MS-focused, nursing care will be considered if there is a demonstrated commitment to a future career focused on MS nursing.
- The head nurse, clinical director or other individual at the home institution must indicate their approval for a “leave of absence” during the training period. It is recognized that enhanced training in MS nursing may make the fellow more competitive for a position at another institution, which would be an acceptable outcome. The aim is to demonstrate that after training the candidate intends to return to a nursing career focused on MS.

The Training Mentor and Institution:

- The training institution/mentor must be located in Europe, with outstanding reputation and credentials related to MS clinical care. While it is anticipated that the training institution will be a hospital/clinic in or closely affiliated with an academic medical center, private clinic training sites will be considered if they are of outstanding quality and reputation in MS care.
- The fellowship candidate must identify and solicit the agreement of an appropriate mentor for the training period. It is expected that the lead mentor will be an experienced MS nurse or team of nurses.
- A relevant clinic director must be identified and must agree to host the trainees in his/her clinic/department; the training institution must certify its willingness to support the trainee during the fellowship period.
- The training institution may be in the same city or country as the home institution, but fellows wishing to train in a different city or different European country are encouraged, so long as language and nursing licensing requirements do not present barriers to a successful training period.

The Training Plan:

- The trainee and mentor must outline and present a comprehensive nursing care training programme for evaluation. This may include observation, hands-on clinical care under the guidance of the mentor/team, relevant academic course work and other training-related activities. A special clinical or clinical research project may be part of the training experience and if included, should be documented and justified within the context of a comprehensive nurse training fellowship experience.

Term and Support Levels:

- ECTRIMS MS nursing fellowships are available for a 6-month or 1-year period (or any duration between 6 months and 1 year). A shorter period of training than 6 months will likely be inadequate to provide the skills that are expected and needed.
- ECTRIMS will provide a personal stipend of €55,000 for 1 year or €27,500 for 6 months (stipend will be prorated for periods between 6 months and 1 year). The stipend is intended to provide living wages to the fellow.
- Health care benefits and other benefits are expected to be provided by the normal paths for the fellow in her/his home country or host country. No institutional “indirect costs” may be taken from the ECTRIMS stipend for health insurance, liability insurance or any other purpose.
- Payments from ECTRIMS will ordinarily be made to the host institution, which will be considered to be 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 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.
- No additional support for travel, books, journal subscriptions, etc. will be provided.

Changes in the Fellowship Programme:

- It is anticipated that the entire training period will be undertaken at the host institution as planned. However, in special circumstances, ECTRIMS will consider requests to transfer the fellowship to a new mentor or institution. Authorization 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.
- The ECTRIMS MS Nurse 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 Nurse Training Fellowship early if the fellow is unable to carry out the training as planned, if 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.

Reporting:

- Fellows and their mentors are required to provide reports of the training experience at its conclusion, due within 30 days of the completion of the training programme, including an evaluation of the mentor and training site by the fellow and of the trainee by the mentor. A financial report of how funds were expended by the home institution must also be provided. Forms for completing the reporting requirements will be sent by ECTRIMS to the fellow and her/his mentor near the time of the end of the fellowship.

Post-fellowship Follow-up:

- After the training period, it is expected that the fellow will return to her/his original home institution for employment as an MS nurse, or will obtain employment as an MS nurse in a different institution. Post-fellowship career plans must be detailed as part of the application process.
- ECTRIMS fellows will be 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 MS Nurse Training Fellowships will be awarded in a competitive review process conducted by members of the ECTRIMS Executive Committee and designated consultants. Applications will be evaluated based on the:

- candidate qualifications, including educational history, previous employment history, current employment responsibilities related to MS nursing, 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
- the nature of the proposed training plan and its plausibility
- the quality of letters of endorsement from the proposed mentor and from the home institution and from professional references.

To these ends, the fellowship application should provide:

Part 1: provided by the candidate

1. A completed online application, in English, available from the ECTRIMS website (www.ectrims.eu) including demographics of the candidate, her/his past experience, goals for training and future career plans.
2. An abbreviated curriculum vitae of the applicant including bibliography of any relevant publication not to exceed 5 pages (You must use the form "biographical sketch" provided by ECTRIMS, available in the online fellowship application system).
3. Applicant's career plans (not to exceed 1 page)

4. A training programme description developed together by the candidate and proposed mentor; if a clinical or clinical research project is to be part of the training experience, it should be described and justified in detail, not to exceed 6 pages

Part 2: supporting materials provided directly to ECTRIMS by others

The following additional items must be submitted electronically to fellowship@ectrims.eu. These should be submitted as confidential documents (.doc or .pdf format) 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 his/her letters and supporting materials.

1. **From the proposed mentor:** Letter of support from the proposed training mentor, with special reference to interactions she/he has 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. Certification that the proposed fellow will be able to undertake nursing care training activities as outlined in the training plan at the training institution must be provided by the mentor. An abbreviated curriculum vitae and bibliography for the proposed mentor should be included (not to exceed 5 pages). The form “biographical sketch” provided in the online fellowship application system should be used. The applicant should send this form to the mentor.
2. **From the training institution:**
 - 1) Letter of support from the department chair (or other relevant institutional official) at the proposed host institution accepting the proposed fellow, should a fellowship be awarded;
 - 2) Institutional certification accepting the terms of the ECTRIMS fellowship and payments. The necessary Form is available from the online application system; the applicant should forward this form to the institution for completion and return to ECTRIMS.
3. **From other referees:** Three letters of reference from professionals acquainted with the proposed fellow, from her/his home institution or elsewhere, that address the fellow’s qualities and likelihood for a future successful career focused on MS nursing.

REMINDERS: The application, CV/bibliography and description of the training programme are to be submitted by the applicant to the ECTRIMS Fellowship Administrator using the online application by 1 February of each year.

The mentor's letter, details of the training programme, certification that the proposed fellow will be able to undertake training at the host institution, and the mentor CV and institutional and referee support letters and forms are to be submitted SEPARATELY as confidential documents to the ECTRIMS Fellowship Administrator (fellowship@ectrims.eu) by 1 February of each year.

Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.

The ECTRIMS Fellowship Review Committee will review all proposals; notification of the review outcomes will be made by May 15 of each year, to facilitate logistics involved in relocation by the following fall of each academic year.

For questions and further information, please contact the ECTRIMS Fellowship Administrator at: fellowship@ectrims.eu.