



ECTRIMS MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS NURSE TRAINING FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMMES

PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

ECTRIMS offers MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS NURSE TRAINING FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMMES for qualified/licensed nurses 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 throughout Europe.

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.

Two types of training experiences will be supported:

1. Comprehensive nurse training: The intent is to provide midrange to long-term training, either hands-on or observational in a specialized MS nursing practice with a training period of 6 months to one year in duration. The proposal for hand-on and/or observational training should include a detailed explanation of the training programme at the host institution.
2. Short-term, flexible specialized MS nurse training: The intent is to provide shorter term training in one or more specialized aspects of MS nursing (for instance, education, bladder-bowel management, spasticity, etc.). Training duration can be flexible, depending on the proposed programme and experience, from weeks to months; training can be initiated at any point by the fellow and mentor; and multiple visits to one or more host institutions can be supported. The proposal for short-term training should include a brief description of the proposed training programme and training duration at the host institution (or multiple institutions) throughout the training period.

It is anticipated that multiple fellowships will be awarded each year, depending on the candidate and mentor qualifications, the quality of the training proposal and ECTRIMS finances.

PROGRAMME TERMS

Eligibility:

The Fellow:

- 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 that the candidate will return to their home institution after training or move on to another MS nursing position at another institution, 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.
- Candidates and their mentors must affirm that there will be no language barriers that will impede the training experience.

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. If assistance is needed in identifying an appropriate training site/mentor, the ECTRIMS Secretariat may be able to provide advice and direction.
- 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 candidate's 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.

Explanation of the Training Plan:

For the comprehensive training programme (6 months - 1 year)

- The trainee and mentor must outline and present a comprehensive nursing care training programme for evaluation. This may include observational training and/or 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.

For the short-term, flexible specialized MS nurse training:

- The trainee or mentor must outline a brief nursing care training programme for evaluation, not more than one page in length. This may include observational and/or hands-on clinical care under the guidance of the mentor/team, academic course work

Fellowship Term and Support Levels

- ECTRIMS MS nursing fellowships are available for flexible terms of weeks up to a maximum of 1-year
- ECTRIMS will provide a stipend of € 55'000 per year for the training period. For shorter periods than 1 year, the ECTRIMS award will be prorated accordingly to the length of the training programme (e.g. € 27'500 for a 6 month programme; € 4'583 for 1 month, etc.).
- 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.
- The ECTRIMS award must be used by the institution to pay the fellow's stipend ("salary") at the appropriate rate for the fellow's stage of training. Should there be any remaining funds, the remainder of the award can be used to support institutional social benefits (health care coverage, pension, other benefits) that may be required by the institution.
- If the total 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 source(s) of funding that may be needed to cover the total costs have to be listed.
- The expected fellow's total salary as well as the expected fellow's total social benefits costs per year have to be indicated by the host institution.
- 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 should 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 Fellowship Administrator (fellowship@ectrims.eu) or the ECTRIMS website (www.ectrims.eu) including demographics of the candidate, her/his past experience, goals for training and future career plans.
2. A complete curriculum vitae of the applicant including bibliography of any relevant publication.
3. 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 for a 6 month -1 year programme. For a shorter training programme than 6 months, the training description can be more brief, and should be no more than one page in length.

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. If hands-on training (direct interaction with MS patients) is proposed, certification that the proposed fellow will be able to undertake nursing care 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).

A current curriculum vitae and full bibliography for the proposed mentor should be included.

2. **From the training institution:** 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.
3. **From other referees:** In addition to a supporting letter from the mentor, letter(s) of reference from the candidate's home institution and from professionals acquainted with the proposed fellow that address the fellow's qualities and likelihood for a future successful career focused on MS nursing. Up to 3 letters of reference may be provided.

REMINDERS: The applicants CV/bibliography and description/ brief 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 including 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 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.

Notification of ECTRIMS award deliberations:

The ECTRIMS Fellowship Review Committee will review all proposals; notification of the review outcomes during the spring of each award year; announcements of awards 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.