Instructions for Application Submission
Sylvia Lawry Physician Fellowship

INTRODUCTION

Please read these instructions and follow them carefully. Applications that are incomplete exceed the page limitations, or use undersize or condensed type ***will not be considered for funding by the Society.***

The following changes to the Society's application procedures have been implemented:
- The grants management system called **MSGrants** has been implemented for preparation and submission of research proposals to the Society. MSGrants can be found at **https://nmss.fluxx.io**
- Compatible browsers include **Chrome, Firefox,** and **Safari.** Internet Explorer is **not** fully compatible and should be avoided. Check with your IT department for information on installing one of these browsers if you do not already have one.
- Passwords for accessing the site never expire and a new password will not be needed for each cycle.
- Submission of proposals is exclusively electronic for **all** parts of the proposal, including institutional approval and appendix materials, and no paper copies of any part of the proposal will be sent to the Society.
- In place of the former coversheet, institutional approval by your organization to submit your application will be made electronically using the same online system.
- The application process itself consists of two parts, a short pre-application and the full application.
- The basic elements of the application remain largely unchanged but have been re-ordered and reformatted compared to our former system.
- The full application, including electronic Institutional Approval, must be submitted before the deadline.

Details concerning the grants management system and application process can be found in these instructions and on the system's Web site itself.

GETTING STARTED

If you have already been issued a password for MSGrants, you can skip the next two sections.

Registration for New Users

If you did not have a password for our previous system, mssocietyapplyonline, you will need to register and be approved for access to the new system. Go to **https://nmss.fluxx.io** and once you are at the login page, click on **Register Now.** Complete the online registration form and submit your registration by clicking on the words **Submit Request.** This will submit your request for access to the site to the Research Programs staff of the Society. The staff will review your registration information to verify that you are qualified to apply for funding from the Society. If approved, you will receive an automated e-mail message containing your login credentials within *two business days*.

Registration for Existing Users

If you have a password for our previous system, you do not need to register again, however you will need to reset your password. Go to **https://nmss.fluxx.io** and once you are at the login page, click on **Reset or Create Password.** At the next screen, enter the e-mail address that you used in the old system and click on **Submit.** The system will send you an e-mail with a link to reset your password. If the system does not recognize your e-mail address, you will need to register as if you are a new user.

Your password should contain at least one of the following:

• Uppercase letter (A through Z)
• Lowercase letter (a through z)
• Number (0 through 9)

A Word about Passwords

Once you have obtained a user id and password, go to **https://nmss.fluxx.io** and log in. Once you log in, you will be able to see which funding opportunities are active along with the deadlines for each. You will also be able to begin the preparation of your pre-application. In the system your password never expires and you will not need to obtain a new password in order to apply for other funding programs or subsequent cycles. You will be using MSGrants for a variety of purposes in addition to preparation and submission of proposals. For example, progress reports will be prepared and submitted through MSGrants as well and you will be able to view proposals that you have prepared on the system. It is important that you not share your password with others and it is not possible for two different people to apply for funding opportunities using a single password.

NAVIGATING MSGrants

When you log on you will see the grantee portal (illustrated below). A description of the main parts of the grantee portal follows below.
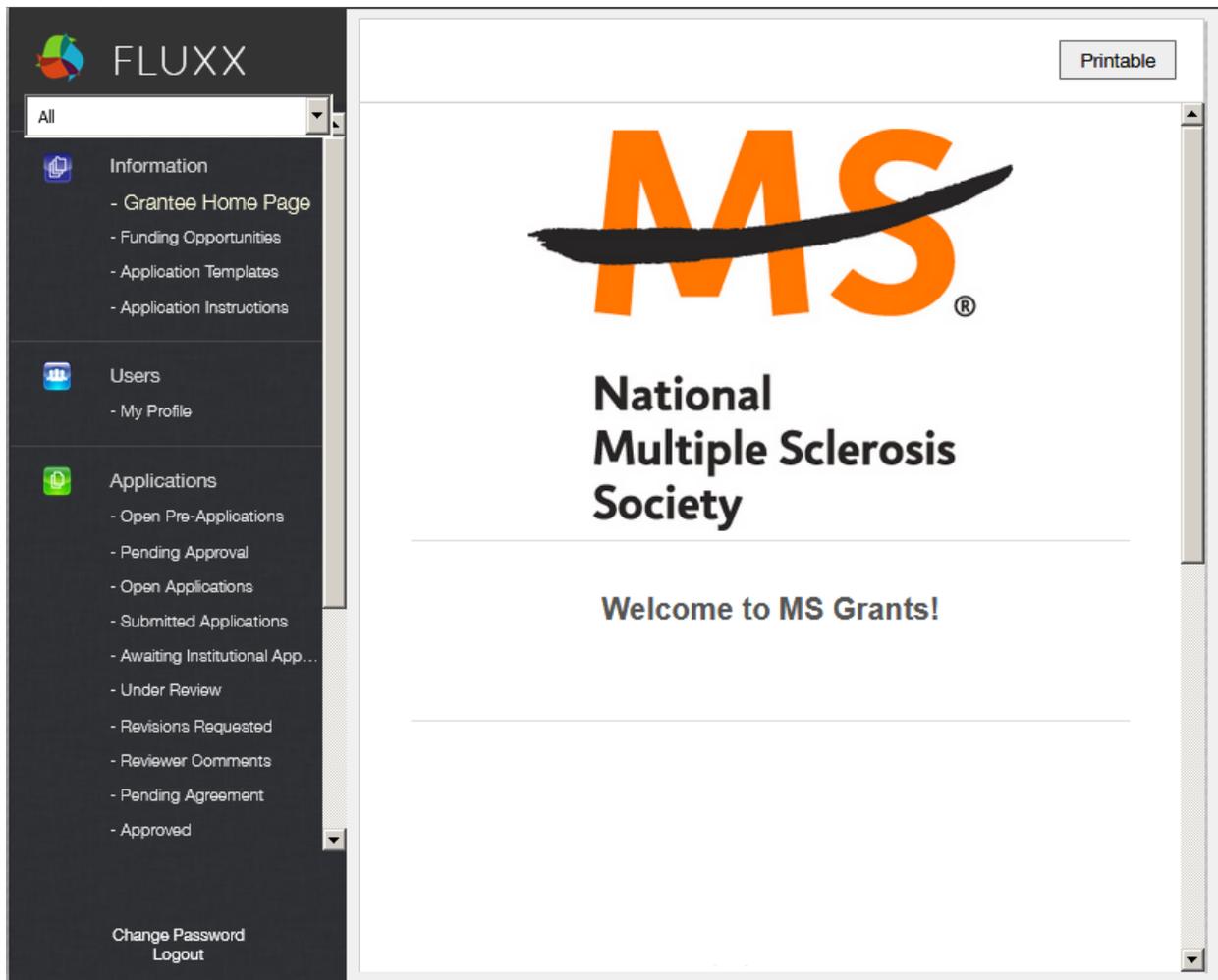
Funding Opportunities

Click on this item to see the funding opportunities that are currently available and the application deadlines. Click on **Apply Now** to start a pre-application.

Application Templates

Click on this item to download any of several documents that you are likely to use in preparing your application. These include the following:

- A PDF file showing the keywords that you will also find in a drop down list in the application. This PDF file is provided to make it easier for you to see the entire list before making your selections.

- A Word template to use for preparing the narrative for research grant and Health Care Delivery and Policy Research contract applications.
- A Word template to use for preparing biographical sketches.
- An example of a lay summary

Application Instructions

Instructions for all of the current funding opportunities

My Profile

Clicking on **My Profile** will open your individual record. Once open, click on **Edit** to modify your profile. Please make sure all contact information is current.

Open Pre-Applications

As your application moves through the various steps in the system, it will be listed under different sections of the grantee portal. Once you have started a pre-application and saved it, you can retrieve the application to continue to work on it by clicking on the **Open Pre-Applications** link.

Pending Approval

Once you have submitted a pre-application you can find it by clicking on the **Pending Approval** section. Pre-applications listed in this section cannot be edited.

Open Full Applications

Once your pre-application has been approved to move on to a full application, you can access the full application forms here. Full applications that you have worked on and saved can also be found here. These applications can be edited.

Submitted Applications

Full applications that have been submitted can be found here. Applications in this section cannot be edited.

Awaiting Institutional Approval

Full applications that are pending institutional approval for final submission can be found here.

Under Review

Full applications that have been screened by Society staff and advanced to the peer review process can be found here. Applications in this section cannot be edited.

Revisions Requested

Both pre-applications and full applications that have been sent back to the applicant for changes requested by Society staff can be found here. Applications in this section can be edited.

Pending Agreement

Full applications that have been approved for funding but which still require some additional processing and/or submission of documents can be found here.

Approved

Full applications that have been approved for funding and which require no further processing can be found here.

Not Recommend

Applications that have previously been reviewed but were not recommended for funding.

Copying a Previously Declined Submission

If you would like to resubmit a previously declined submission, the application can be found in the Not Recommended section. Click on the application you wish to resubmit, and Click Copy. A new pre-application will be created. You can then make any changes you'd like at that point and/or Submit. When the pre-application is approved, the full application will have all of the previous information not including the narrative or budget. These will need to be added to the application.

THE PRE-APPLICATION

In the past prospective applicants were required to contact a member of the Society's Research Programs staff to obtain clearance before submitting a proposal. While the Society still encourages personal contact and discussion of possible ideas for proposals, in the current system this process has been formalized through the use of a "Pre-Application" step. For each funding opportunity, there is a pre-application that must be completed and submitted to the Society before the applicant can prepare a full application. The pre-application is reviewed by a member of the Research Programs staff to ensure that the research idea is consistent with the Society's mission and research strategies and the nature of the specific funding opportunity. Once the idea is approved you will receive an automated message from the system and you will be able to begin preparation of the full application. In some cases, Society staff may send the pre-application back to you for clarification or changes before final approval. A pre-application is required for resubmissions.

Please Note**: the Society has enacted a deadline for pre-applications. The pre-proposal must be submitted ***1 week prior to the deadline

How to Complete the Pre-Application

Once you are logged in, click on **Funding Opportunities** to see a list of available funding opportunities, along with information on the application deadlines. Find the funding opportunity to which you wish to apply and click on **Apply Now.** This will open the pre-application. Enter a title for your pre-application (this can be changed later) and complete the **Eligibility Quiz.** The Eligibility quiz will establish whether you are eligible to apply for that funding opportunity. If you pass all of the eligibility criteria, the rest of the pre-application will open and you can begin to complete this step. If you fail one or more of the eligibility criteria, you will not be able to prepare and submit a pre-application for that program.

- **Organization:** If you have only one organizational affiliation, the **Organization** field will be pre-populated. If you are affiliated with more than one organization, select the organization that will be the applicant organization from the drop-down list in the top left-hand corner of the page.
- **Principal Investigator:** In the **Principal Investigator** field, select your name from the drop-down list.
- **Primary Signatory:** This is the individual who "signs off" on the application on behalf of your institution, thereby allowing the application to be submitted. If you do not know who this is, just leave it blank and you will have another opportunity to complete this field during the full application.
- **Project Details:** In the **Project Details** text box, insert a brief (500 words or less) description of your proposed project. You can type this in online, or prepare it off line and copy and paste the text into the text box.
- **NIH Bio-Sketch or CV Upload:** Upload your Biosketch as a PDF document

- **Project Zip Code:** In the **Project Zip Code** field enter the zip code (U.S. applications) where the work will actually be done. If more than one site is going to be used, this should be the Zip code of the primary or lead site.
- **Estimate of Amount Requested:** In the **Estimate of Amount Requested** field, enter your best estimate of the total cost of your proposed project. This figure is just to allow Society staff to gauge the overall amount of funding that is likely to be requested during a given cycle. This figure will not be used to evaluate whether or not to approve your pre-application and you will be able to change this figure later.
- Once you have completed all sections of the pre-application, click on **Save** to save your work. At this point you can log out and return later to revise your pre-application by pressing the **Edit** button, or you can click on **Submit** to submit your pre-application to Society staff for approval. Saving your application does not send it to Society staff. You must click on **Submit** in order for it to be considered for approval.
- Once you press **Submit**, you will no longer be able to make changes, although you will be able to see your pre-application.

When you submit the pre-application, it will automatically be sent to the appropriate program officer at the Society for review. You will receive notification of approval, disapproval, or the need for changes within *two **business** days*.

THE FULL APPLICATION

Once your pre-application has been approved (generally within two business days) you can log in and begin to prepare the full application. At the grantee portal, click on the **Open Applications** link and then on **Edit** to begin working on the full application. You can work on the various parts of your full application in any order you want, save your work, and return to continue working as many times as you want.

Navigation Tips

There are two types of sections in the application: 1) sections in which you select options or fill in text boxes; and 2) sections in which you upload one or more documents. It is a good idea to click on **Save** as you complete each part of the application.

Black triangles ▶ indicate the sections of the application that will open when you click on the triangle. The default of the application is for each section to be collapsed. You should open each section and complete all of the required components in the section.

The section components can either be drop-down lists, text boxes, or sections where you need to upload one or more files. After you complete a given section, clicking on the triangle again closes that section.

Sections that require one or more files to be uploaded will have a white plus sign on a green background. Click on the plus sign to open the upload dialogue. Click on **Add Files** to browse for the file that you want to upload. Click on the black triangle to indicate the type of document you are uploading. Click on **Start Upload** to upload the file.

To change the document type or delete the file that you uploaded, position your cursor anywhere to the right of the name of the file and click on the pencil (edit) or the minus sign (delete) that appear.

You can complete the sections in any order you wish but all sections must be completed before you can submit.

Project Information

This section includes basic information about the proposed project. To assist you in selecting the **Keywords** that are a required part of this section, a list of available keywords can be downloaded from the Grantee Home Page.

Institutional Official

- In this section you will indicate the institutional official who will be the **Institutional Signatory** for submission of your full application. This is the individual who "signs off" on the application on behalf of your institution, thereby allowing the application to be submitted. You indicate who this is by selecting the individual's name from the drop-down list of appropriate individuals associated with you institution. The primary signatory must be registered with the system in order for you to make this selection from the drop-down list. If the primary signatory is not registered, this individual must go to the MSGrants log on page **https://nmss.fluxx.io** and register.

- Your application is not actually submitted to the Society until the Institutional Signatory has logged on to the system and authorized submission of the application. The Institutional Signatory must be registered with the system and must be the individual designated by you in the **Institutional Official** section of the application. Once you have submitted your application, a system message will be sent via e-mail to the Institutional Signatory stating that an application is pending authorization. The Institutional Signatory must then log on to the system, open the application, and complete the authorization. This must be completed prior to 5:00 PM Eastern Time on the date of the deadline.

- In this section you will also confirm the location of the project and the name of the principal investigator.

- Fill out the information for your Financial Officer. This information will be used if your application is awarded.

Mentor Information
This section asks for information about your mentor and co-mentor (if applicable). If you are currently at a different institution from your mentor, your mentor's institution should be sponsoring and signing off on the fellowship application.

Human Subjects and/or Vertebrate Animals

This section includes information on protection of human subjects and animals. If any documents concerning these assurances need to be included, such as IRB approval memos, they must be included along with any letters uploaded in PDF format as part of the application.

- **Research involving Human Subjects -** If your proposed research involves human subjects, you must provide a signed and dated approval letter from the Institutional

Review Board or equivalent appropriate committee of your institution as part of the single PDF file uploaded in the Letters section. If approval is pending, indicate that the project has been submitted to the committee for review in the Human Subjects section. Payment for a successful application will not begin until such signed and dated approval is received, reviewed and approved by the Society.

- **Research involving Vertebrate Animals -** If you plan research with experimental animals, you must provide certification that the institution complies with all federal, state and local regulations and with the standards established by the Animal Welfare Acts and the documents entitled "Principles for Use of Animals" and "Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals", available from the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare at http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/olaw.htm. If approval has been granted, a copy of the signed and dated approval letter must be submitted as part of the single PDF file uploaded in the Letters. If approval is pending, indicate that the project has been submitted to the committee for review in the Vertebrate Animals section. Payment for a successful application will not begin until such signed and dated approval is received, reviewed and approved by the Society.

Lay Language Summary of Proposed Project

The lay language summary should describe your proposed research in language suitable for a news release to the lay public. The lay summary is broken into several sections. In each section you are required to address a different element of your proposed project. Please read these instructions carefully and ensure that you address each element. You can type directly into the online text boxes or copy and paste each section that you have prepared using a word processor. If your project is funded, Society staff may make editorial changes to the summary to enhance its clarity.

Mentor's Biographical Sketch

A biographical sketch template is provided for downloading in case you need one. Mentor and co-mentor biographical sketches must be uploaded in PDF format.

Principal Investigator's Biographical Sketch

A biographical sketch template is provided for downloading in case you need one. Biographical sketches must be uploaded in PDF format.

Mentor's Training Experience

Enter the information requested about your mentor's predoctoral and postdoctoral trainees from the past 5 years.

Budget

Budget Items must be entered for each project year. Up to $65,000 per year may be requested for salary, fringe benefits and/or tuition costs. These funds may be allocated in any proportion in each of the award years as agreed upon by the fellow, mentor and

the institution. Specifics of the allocation must be requested in the original application and entered accordingly. Relocation costs may be requested for the first project year. Funds to cover the cost of travel to the training institution are available but only for the fellow and not for family members or for transportation of household belongings. The amount will be sufficient to cover round-trip economy class transportation by air or equivalent.

Proposal Narrative

The proposal narrative is the heart of the application. A template in Microsoft Word format is provided on the Grantee Homepage for downloading. Follow the instructions in the proposal narrative form itself. Sections include: mentor clinical trial participation, career plans, training plan, and literature cited.

Specifications for the training plan are 3 single-spaced pages (including figures but not references), 11 point or larger font, and half-inch margins on all sides. Describe in three pages the formal and informal training programs, including details about the clinical trials with which you will be involved and a description of the relevance of the trials to MS, as well as the planned curriculum relevant to clinical trials. Courses in biostatistics, epidemiology, and other related courses are recommended. Although it is not required, the review committee looks favorably on a training plan which includes the completion of a Master's degree in clinical research or another related topic. <u>Applicants are discouraged from including a detailed independent research project in the training proposal.</u>

Resubmission

If this is a revised resubmitted application, an introduction of **no more than half a page** may precede your research plan to briefly summarize the changes made in response to the criticisms and issues raised by the reviewers of your previous application.

Once the narrative is completed, it must be converted to PDF format and uploaded in this section.

Reference Letters

Enter information for 3 individuals that you would like to request reference letters from. The mentor **cannot** be counted as a reference. The MSGrants system will send automatic e-mail notification to these individuals with information on how they can submit a reference letter in support of your application. It is recommended that you contact your references ahead of time so that they will expect this e-mail request. You will be able to confirm that letters have been uploaded by your references by opening up your application, although you will not be able to view the letters. Letters can be uploaded even after your application has been submitted.

References should be carefully selected. Only those individuals who can make meaningful comments about your qualifications should be selected. They may include

your department chairperson, Dean of your medical school, Chief of Service, or mentor for a research rotation. Request references only from individuals who will be able to submit them in time for submission of the application. All reference letters are due at the application deadline—no exceptions.

Mentor Letter of Support

The mentor must provide a statement of support for the application. The mentor letter must address the following:

- Recommended duration of fellowship.
- The salary and tuition costs recommended for each year of the award, and the use of departmental and/or institutional funds to supplement salary and/or tuition costs.
- The amount requested for relocation costs.
- A meaningful description of the proposed program of training with an indication of the percentage of the fellow's time to be devoted to clinical trials training, academic courses, clinical duties, and other activities.
- An evaluation of the likelihood that the fellow will make a meaningful contribution to multiple sclerosis as an independent investigator after the fellowship training.
- A brief description of the ongoing activities in the clinic, especially as they relate to the proposed program of training for the applicant.
- A list of current and previous fellows/trainees (for the past 5 years) in laboratory or clinical research and a brief description of their individual research projects.
- A brief description of the ongoing activities in the laboratory (if relevant), especially as they relate to the proposed program of training for the applicant.

DUAL SUBMISION TO OTHER AGENCIES

You are encouraged to apply to other appropriate agencies, in addition to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. If you apply to another agency for support of the same or similar project, be sure to acknowledge the application(s) in the **Other Support** section and where indicated on the **Project Information Section** of the Apply Online system.

SUBMISSION OF YOUR PROPOSAL

Once you have completed the preparation of your proposal, there are several options.

Edit

If you have not as yet submitted your proposal, you can click on the **Edit** button in order to open your proposal for further editing.

Printable

You can click on the **Printable** button in order to see your proposal as a single document which can be printed or outputted as a PDF file using standard browser commands.

Submit

If you have completed preparation of your application, you can submit it.

Save

If you are not ready to submit your application, you can save it to work on it later.

Withdraw (application)

If you do not wish to submit your proposal or continue working on it, you can **Withdraw** it. Once you withdraw an application, it cannot be recovered and so consider this option carefully. This option is generally used when an investigator has inadvertently started a duplicate application.

The Submission Process

Once you are satisfied with your proposal and all sections are marked as "complete," you can click on the "Submit" button. This will lock your proposal for further editing and move it to the **Authorization** step**.**

Cover Page

In our system there is no cover page, cover sheet, or signature page. In place of the former cover page, the system uses an online **Authorization** step that is completed by the Primary Signatory.

Authorization (Institutional Approval)

Your application is not actually submitted to the Society until the Primary Signatory has logged on to the system and approved submission of the application. The Primary Signatory must be registered with the system and must be the individual designated by you in the **Institutional Official** section of the application. Once you have submitted your application, a system message will be sent via e-mail to the Primary Signatory stating that an application is pending authorization. The Primary Signatory must then log on to the system, open the application, and complete the authorization. This must be completed prior to 5:00 PM Eastern Time on the date of the deadline.

CHECKLIST

To assist you in verifying that you have completed all steps in the application process, here is a checklist that you can use once you are ready to submit your proposal.

- ☐ Have you completed all required items in the **Project Information** section?
- ☐ Have you completed all required items in the **Institutional Official** section?
- ☐ Have you completed all required items for the **Mentor Information** section**?**
- ☐ Have you completed all required items in the **Human Subjects and/or Vertebrate Animals** section?
- ☐ Have you completed the **Lay Language Summary**?
- ☐ Have you uploaded **Biographical Sketches** for all professional staff on the project?
- ☐ Have you completed all required items for the **Mentor's Training Experience** section?
- ☐ Have you completed the **Budget** for the proposed project?
- ☐ Have you uploaded your completed **Proposal Narrative**?
- ☐ Have you completed the information for the **Reference letters** for the proposed project?
- ☐ Have you uploaded the **Mentor's Letter of Support** for the project?
- ☐ Has the Institutional Signatory of your organization **Authorized** submission of your application?

HELP IS AVAILABLE

Basic questions about word processing functions such as copying and pasting, pagination, etc. and questions concerning PDF files should be referred to your organization's IT department or a colleague.

If you have any questions concerning the online application process such as using the online screens, file uploads and downloads; questions about National Multiple Sclerosis Society policy or the content of your proposal, please contact one of the following members of the Research Programs team:

Contacts

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Please note that online and telephone support is only available Monday through Friday from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. Eastern Time.