



## REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Issued By  
*Parkinson Society Canada / La Soci t  Parkinson Canada*

### NEW INVESTIGATOR AWARD PROGRAM (July 2010 – June 2012 Cycle)

<b>December 18, 2009:</b>	<b>Release Date</b>
<b>February 1, 2010:</b>	<b>Letter of Intent Receipt Date</b>
<b>March 1, 2010:</b>	<b>Application Deadline (Online Receipt)</b>
<b>July 2010:</b>	<b>Anticipated Announcement of Award</b>
<b>July 1, 2010:</b>	<b>Funding Start Date</b>
<b>Duration of Award:</b>	<b>2 years (non renewable)</b>

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#### BACKGROUND

Parkinson Society Canada (“PSC”) is pleased to present the New Investigator Award Program (the “Program”) as part of its revitalized Research Grant Program. PSC offers this strategic initiative to provide investigators with an early opportunity, upon completing his or her research training, to develop and demonstrate his or her ability to initiate and conduct independent health research, as typically expected of university faculty members. PSC anticipates that in the initial period of their independent careers, new investigators are in a good position to formulate innovative and fertile research projects. The Program is offered specifically to university faculty applicants who are currently in the first five years of their career as research scientists in Canada. An applicant will typically have completed one or two periods of post-doctoral training and will have a staff appointment that allows the applicant an opportunity to initiate and direct his or her own independent lines of research. The Program provides new researchers with an opportunity to enter into the area of Parkinson’s research, without having to compete with established researchers for grant monies. PSC wishes to encourage continued growth and revitalization in the fields of Parkinson’s research in Canada by supporting individual researchers in their professional development.

PSC intends to provide awards for the support of projects with funding of up to \$45,000 per year over a two year term to outstanding applicants who meet the eligibility criteria of the Program and who have been approved by its Scientific Advisory Board (the “Advisory Board”). Funds awarded under the Program are to be used to cover operating expenses, technical support staff salaries and equipment costs for research grants in Parkinson’s-related areas.

Through this initiative, PSC invites grant applications (“Applications”) from applicants committed to conducting research in areas relevant to the cure, cause, prevention, improved treatment and/or understanding of Parkinson’s disease, other related disorders including: Multiple System Atrophy (MSA), Progressive Supranuclear Palsy (PSP), other Parkinson’s conditions and its implications on society. PSC encourages Applications from the fields of biomedicine, health services and systems research, population studies, and clinical research. This initiative is consistent with, and reflects PSC’s commitment to foster international leadership potential in this area.

The Program is available to individuals who propose to conduct research on the biomedical, clinical, health services and systems and population areas of Parkinson’s. PSC plans to adopt a flexible framework in funding awards under the Program. PSC intends to provide 75% of its funding to biomedical research with the remaining 25% of funding to be awarded to research in the clinical, health services and systems and population areas of Parkinson’s.

PSC invites proposals emphasizing research directed towards closing the gap in understanding and treating non-motor symptoms of Parkinson’s. Applications with the above emphasis that address quality of life or caregiving issues, behavioural and cognitive changes or environmental support will be considered relevant to PSC’s criteria for psychosocial research. Research can involve qualitative and /or quantitative methodologies.

## **FUNDS AVAILABLE**

The Program offers awards for the support of projects with budgets of up to \$45,000 per year over a two year term to exceptional applicants who have been approved for funding by the Advisory Board.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

PSC is committed to supporting the most advanced and/or highest quality of Parkinson’s research in Canada. Applications will be accepted from applicants who meet the eligibility criteria established by PSC (as summarized in this Request for Applications).

Applicants must hold an MD or PhD degree (or equivalent degree) and be graduates of a university recognized by PSC. Applicants must be university faculty members with a position ranking of Associate Professor or less, in the first five years of their career, and must be conducting research for the following institutions and organizations (an “Approved Institution”):

- Canadian post-secondary institutions and their affiliated institutions including hospitals and research institutes; or
- Other equivalent organizations, as determined by the Research Policy Committee of the National Board of PSC in consultation with the Advisory Board, provided that the applicant’s research or research-related activities fall within the mandate of PSC.

Applicants must be able to clearly demonstrate their potential to become an independent investigator during a period of supervised research. The Applicant must currently hold or be appointed to an independent faculty position at a Canadian university. In addition, PSC expects that the applicant be within 5 years

of obtaining his/her first faculty appointment. As of the application receipt date, 1 March 2010, no more than four years may have passed since the date of the applicant's first faculty appointment at a university.

Applicants in junior faculty positions outside of Canada and scientists transferring into the fields of Parkinson's research from another field are both eligible for this award but are subject to the same eligibility criteria established by PSC for other eligible candidates and described in this Request for Applications.

The applicant must be responsible for the intellectual direction of the proposed research, and must be willing and able to assume administrative and financial responsibility for any funds awarded under the Program.

Applicants are prohibited from receiving the payment of a salary, stipend, honorarium, or any similar form of compensation from any PSC grant. Post-doctoral, fellows or trainees are not eligible to apply for funding under this Program. Applicants seeking a fellowship to support trainees at a post-doctoral level or clinical level should refer to PSC's Fellowship Program.

## **REVIEW CRITERIA**

The principal consideration used to evaluate Applications is research excellence potential. There are, however, a variety of additional criteria that may be considered by the Advisory Board in the evaluation process. Each of the criteria listed below will be considered in assigning the overall ranking of the Application, weighting them as appropriate for each Application.

- Are the applicant's conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, and appropriate? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics?
- Does the proposed project build on the existing strengths of the individual researcher and Canadian research in the area of Parkinson's as a whole? Does it contribute to Canada's leadership potential in Parkinson's knowledge in that field? Where does this work position itself in relation to world knowledge of Parkinson's at this time?
- Does the project employ novel concepts, approaches or methods? Are the objectives original and innovative? Does the project challenge existing paradigms or develop new methodologies or technologies? Alternatively, does this project investigate crucial areas that may not be innovative but are meaningful and important to the given field of research? Does it build to the foundation of existing Parkinson's knowledge?
- Is the applicant appropriately trained and well suited to carry out this work? Is the work proposed appropriate to the experience level of the applicant and other researchers (if any)?
- Does the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the project's probability of success? Is there evidence of institutional support of this project?
- Is this project relevant to advancing the understanding of Parkinson's? Does it have the potential to advance the state of science/social science relating to Parkinson's? What can be done with the results of this proposed project?

In addition to the above criteria all applications will also be reviewed with respect to the following:

- The reasonableness of the proposed budget and duration of the project in relation to the proposed research; and
- The adequacy of the proposed protection of humans, animals, or of the environment, to the extent that they may be adversely affected by the project proposed in the application. The Advisory Board will also examine the provisions for the protection of human subjects (if any) and the safety of the research environment.
- Note that the Application does not need to be strong in all categories to be judged likely to have major scientific or social impact and thus deserving of a high priority score. For example, an investigator may

propose to carry out important work that by its nature is not innovative but is essential to expand knowledge and understanding of Parkinson's disease in a given field.

In evaluating Applications, the Advisory Board will give equal weight to the scientific merit of the proposed research and the applicant's personal merit. Therefore, PSC highly recommends that Applications include a clear, concise and comprehensive description of the proposed research.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

This Request for Applications made by PSC is subject to the terms and conditions (the "Terms and Conditions") contained in PSC's National Research Program Application Guidelines (the "Guidelines"), which the applicant shall be deemed to have accepted upon submission to PSC of an Application to participate in the Program.

Failure to comply with the Terms and Conditions may result, in addition to any other remedies PSC may have at law, in termination of the Program and exclusion of the applicant from future grant and fellowship award competitions.

## **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND TERMS OF FUNDING**

All successful applicants shall comply with the reporting obligations outlined in the Guidelines.

PSC requires grant recipients to submit Annual and Final Progress Reports, as well as a Financial Summary detailing the use of the funds awarded under the Program. The advance of the portion of the award to be made in the second year of the term of the Program is conditional upon submission of a progress report to PSC in substance and form satisfactory to the Advisory Board at the end of the first year of the term of the Program. The report shall be submitted to the attention of the Manager, National Research & Clinical Programs at PSC's National Office no later than **1 June 2011**. Progress report guidelines and instructions will be provided by PSC in advance of the report deadline.

The Final Progress Report must describe the results of the successful applicant's project and the Financial Summary must detail the use of the funds under the Program. These reports shall be submitted by the successful applicant to PSC in substance and form satisfactory to the Advisory Board. The Final Progress Report and the Financial Summary shall be submitted to the attention of the Manager, National Research & Clinical Programs at PSC's National Office no later than **1 October 2012**, three months after the termination of the two-year term of the Program.

## **LETTER OF INTENT**

Applicants intending to submit an application to participate in the Program **must** submit by **1 February 2010**, a letter of intent ("Letter of Intent"). The information contained therein will allow PSC to estimate the potential review workload, avoid potential conflicts of interest in the review process, and verify contact information.

**The Letter of Intent (LOI) is submitted online through the Parkinson Society Canada website at [www.parkinson.ca](http://www.parkinson.ca).** Applicants can select the research application button at the top of PSC's homepage which will redirect the user to the landing page for the research grant applications and online system or they can go to <https://parkinson.sslpowered.com/parkinson.ca/research/rhtml/IndexEN.php> to register and submit their LOI. Confirmations of receipt will be provided automatically upon successful submission.

**\*Please note that failure to submit a Letter of Intent by the above deadline will result in exclusion from the granting competition.**

## APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Application forms must be completed and submitted via the Parkinson Society Canada online research system no later than **March 1, 2010**. Applications for New Investigator Awards include the following:

- PSC Application Face Sheet;
  - Project Narrative (**5 pages**) \*note, indicated page amounts are suggestions only, including:
    - Background of proposed studies (1 page)
    - Specific objectives of proposed studies (1/2 page)
    - Details of proposed experiment, including methods and procedures (3 pages)
    - Statement describing relevance of proposed studies in Canada (1/2 page);
- Lay summary of project (1/2 page);
- Estimated budget, including all significant aspects of the project such as salaries, materials, and operating expenses. Equipment costs in budgets will be allowable up to 20% of the total budget and travel costs for presentation of research findings will be allowed in budgets up to a maximum of \$1500. Estimated budget information should be documented with sufficient detail and justification to allow reviewers to make judgements about the amount of funds necessary to allow the project to proceed (1 page).
- Applicants must include accurate and complete information regarding all other sources of funding support (current or pending), including title, funding source, total amount of funds requested or awarded, inclusive funding period, and percentage effort of the applicant. PSC will not fund institutional overhead costs;
- Biographical information/CVs of the applicant and all other key collaborators (4 page PSC biosketch format).
- A transcript of the applicant's graduate academic record with class standing; and
- Three (3) additional letters of recommendation from professors or instructors under whom the applicant has taken training. The letters of recommendation must include evaluations of the applicant specific to this award.

Any applications in violation of these guidelines will be subject to disqualification at the discretion of the Advisory Board Chair.

Relevant and reasonable support materials, relating to the application, including but not limited to photographs, literature references, publications, letters of collaboration and appendices may be included. The five-page limit applies only to the project narrative and does not include estimated budgets, references, biographical information, ethical approvals or other support documents.

Application Guidelines are available from the PSC Web site at [www.parkinson.ca](http://www.parkinson.ca). Forms can also be obtained by contacting PSC by phone at 1-800-565-3000 or 416-227-3382 or via e-mail at [ivy.lim-carter@parkinson.ca](mailto:ivy.lim-carter@parkinson.ca).

Applications are now submitted digitally through the Parkinson Society Canada online program located on the PSC website at [www.parkinson.ca](http://www.parkinson.ca). Applicants should select the Research Application button at the top of PSC's homepage that will redirect the user to the landing page for the research grant applications and online system or they can go to <https://parkinson.sslpowered.com/parkinson.ca/research/rhtml/IndexEN.php> to register and complete an application form. Confirmations of receipt will be provided automatically upon successful submission of the application.

Incomplete applications or applications received later than **March 1, 2010** will not be considered under any circumstances.

**Note: Applications submitted through the online system can be submitted without signatures. However, following the online submission, the applicant must forward one original copy with all required signatures by March 2, 2010 to:**

Ivy Lim-Carter  
Director, National Research & Clinical Programs  
Parkinson Society Canada – National Office  
4211 Yonge Street, Suite 316  
Toronto ON  
M2P 2A9

**FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE REFER TO**

***THE PSC NATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAM APPLICATION GUIDELINES MANUAL***

**OR CONTACT:**

Ivy Lim-Carter  
Director, National Research & Clinical Programs  
Parkinson Society Canada – National Office  
1-800-565-3000 or 416-227-3382  
Email: [ivy.lim-carter@parkinson.ca](mailto:ivy.lim-carter@parkinson.ca)