

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

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

CLINICAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

1 September 2011:	Release Date
1 November 2011:	Application Deadline (date of receipt)
February 2012	Application Notice of Decision
March 2012:	Anticipated Announcement of Award
1 July 2012:	Funding Start Date
Duration of Award:	2 years

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Background
Funds Available
Eligibility
Location of Training and Supervision
Review Criteria
Terms and Conditions
Reporting Requirements and Terms of Funding
Application Procedures
Contact Information

BACKGROUND

Parkinson Society Canada (“PSC”) believes that leadership in programs of care for those with Parkinson’s Disease is best assumed by medical neurologists or neurosurgeons with special experience, both in the critical management of Parkinson’s and in its clinical research. This leadership entails a capacity to work with the various agencies and disciplines involved in the care of individuals with Parkinson’s to facilitate the development of better treatments for those with Parkinson’s. Relative to the current needs of Canadians with Parkinson’s, there is currently a shortage of leaders involved in Parkinson’s service and clinical research programs in Canada. PSC believes this leadership shortage has the potential to worsen in the next few years.

PSC is pleased, therefore, to offer its clinical research fellowship program (the “Program”) as a strategic initiative to encourage promising young scientists to enter the field of Parkinson's clinical research and to invest in research training that offers promise for future work in the area of Parkinson’s Disease. PSC intends to provide awards in the amount of a maximum of \$50,000 per year over a two-year term to outstanding neurologists or neurosurgeons 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 salary, benefits and expenses for clinical research fellowships in Parkinson's-related areas.

Through this initiative, PSC invites fellowship applications from applicants committed to conducting clinical research in areas relevant to the cure, cause, prevention, improved treatment and/or understanding of Parkinson's disease. This initiative is consistent with, and reflects, PSC's commitment to support innovation and renewal in the national Parkinson's research field and to foster international leadership potential in this area.

The Program is available to individuals who possess a doctoral qualification (MD) in medicine. Funding for post MD clinical research fellowships may be made available to provide support for specialized training in the clinical research aspects of Parkinson's disease. Applicants seeking support for further clinical training should consult PSC's Movement Disorders Clinical Fellowship guidelines.

FUNDS AVAILABLE

The Program offers awards in the amount of a maximum of \$50,000 per year over a two year term to exceptional eligible applicants who have been approved for funding by the Advisory Board.

Parkinson Society Canada (PSC)/Fonds de recherche du Québec – Santé FRQS Partnership Program

For candidates submitting applications to the Parkinson Society Canada (PSC)/Fonds de recherche du Québec – Santé FRQS Partnership Program, the program offers up to two years of support with the possibility of renewal for a third year from FRQS. Stipends in this program for fellowship candidates are the same as that which is offered for Basic Research and Clinical Research Fellowships. The amount of funding available for the third year is based on eligibility for funding renewal in their third year as per regular FRQS competitions and is restricted to FRQS regular funding amounts. Please see FRQS funding guidelines for 2012-2013 amounts (<http://www.frsq.gouv.qc.ca/en/index.shtml>).

ELIGIBILITY

PSC wishes to support training excellence and development of the wide scope of Parkinson's clinical research in Canada. Applications will be accepted from applicants who meet the eligibility criteria established by PSC as summarized in this Request for Applications and who are currently training at the following organizations (an "Approved Institution"):

- Canadian Medical College or Canadian post-secondary institutions and their affiliated institutions including hospitals and research institutes; or
- Other 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.
- ***Candidates for the PSC/FRSQ funding opportunity must submit applications to both FRSQ and to PSC and must indicate that this has been done. Research supported under this Program must be carried out at a University or affiliated institutions including hospitals and research institutes, within the Province of Quebec.***

Applicants must hold a doctoral degree (MD) in medicine, with specialty training experience in either clinical neurology or neurosurgery. Applicants must be graduates of and must have completed training at a university recognized by PSC.

An applicant's proposed fellowship training program should combine direct experience in the diagnoses and treatment of Parkinson's and in the clinical research of Parkinson's. If necessary, PSC recommends the applicants take courses in clinical epidemiology and biostatistics.

International applicants are encouraged to apply; however, priority will be given to Canadian citizens and/or applicants intending to remain in, or relocate to, Canada to continue his or her career following completion of the two-year term of the fellowship.

Applicants must be licensed to practice in Canada or should have a Canadian educational license.

In the evaluation of an application, PSC will typically consider any research experience acquired after the receipt of a doctorate degree as postdoctoral research training. Such work experience may be either full or part time and may be in an academic or private setting. Applicants will be given an opportunity to describe any career interruptions.

LOCATION OF TRAINING & SUPERVISION

Awards granted under this Program shall be held in trust by the Approved Institution at which the proposed supervisor of the successful applicant (an “Approved Supervisor”) holds a faculty appointment.

An Approved Supervisor should be an individual who is a leader in the development of a Parkinson’s program, actively directing research in the field of Parkinson’s disease. An Approved Supervisor must be able to provide the successful applicant with a strong training environment in an academic health sciences centre with a well-established Parkinson’s program in movement disorders. Other training locations may be considered by the Advisory Board, provided that the facility is an Approved Institution and the clinical research or clinical research-related activities fall within the mandate of the Program.

Applicants proposing to train at an Approved Institution located outside Canada will be considered to be eligible to participate in the Program, provided that he or she is committed to returning to Canada to pursue his or her career following completion of the two year term of the Program. Submission of an application under these conditions is deemed to be a binding pledge, and successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding agreement with PSC to this effect.

REVIEW CRITERIA

The principal consideration used to evaluate applications is clinical 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. 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.

- Does the applicant show promise of significantly advancing clinical research in the area Parkinson’s disease? Is the applicant appropriately trained and well suited to enter into this work? Is the work proposed appropriate to the experience level of the applicant? Is this project relevant to pursuing a greater understanding of Parkinson’s for the applicant?
- Is the research work that the applicant will be involved in of high quality? Are the applicant’s conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses of the proposed project/area of study adequately developed, well integrated, and appropriate? 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?
- Is the project or project supervisor positioned to build significantly on the existing strengths of the individual researcher? Does the work stretch the experience and professional knowledge of the applicant?
- Is the scientific environment in which the work will be done likely to contribute to the applicant’s learning? Is there evidence of institutional support of the training program?

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

- 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.

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 fellowship recipients to submit Annual and Final Progress Reports. 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 an Annual 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 Director, National Research & Clinical Programs at PSC’s National Office no later than 1 June 2013. Progress report guidelines and instructions will be provided by PSC in advance of the report deadline.

A Final Progress Report detailing the results of the successful applicant’s progress, in substance and form satisfactory to the Advisory Board, shall be submitted to the attention of the Director, National Research & Clinical Programs at PSC’s National Office no later than October 1, 2014, three months after the termination of the two year term of the Program.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Applications must be completed and submitted via the Parkinson Society Canada online research system no later than **November 1, 2011**. Applications for Clinical Research Fellowships include the following:

- PSC Face Sheet
- **Minimum font size of 12 point**, black ink. Six lines per inch. One inch margin with no condensed type or spacing. References can be printed in smaller font, however they must be legible;
- A statement from the applicant expressing his/her interest in the field of Parkinson’s, his/her career goals and evidence of the applicant’s commitment to Parkinson’s disease. This statement should include the relevance of proposed training to the applicant’s future career (1-2 pages);
- Project Narrative (total 3 pages), including:
 - Background rationale (1 page)
 - Specific objectives and training goals (1/2 page)
 - Details of proposed study, including methods and procedures (1 page)
 - Statement describing relevance of proposed studies in Canada (1/2 page)
- Description of where research will be conducted and the resources available there (1/2 – 1 page);
- Listing of all current and pending funding support;
- Official transcripts of the applicant’s complete academic record to date, including degrees and specialty certifications. Foreign transcripts **MUST** be accompanied by a certified English or French interpretation and a clear explanation of the grading system.

- Curriculum vitae, including a summary of any postgraduate experience, listing of any honours and awards, listing of any publications where the applicant has participated as a co-author, first author, sole author, etc. (please specify), including the number of papers, number of book chapters, and number of abstracts, and whether these are published or in press;
- Assessment Forms of Candidates for a Fellowship completed by a minimum of two, and not more than three, sponsors, accompanied by letters of support from each such sponsor. Sponsors should be recent supervisors from the program in which the applicant's specialty training was taken and should include the director of the program in which the applicant's neurology or neurosurgery training was received. Support from a health science centre wishing to appoint a director of a Parkinson's program would weigh in favour of an applicant. **Assessment forms are submitted directly to PSC by the sponsor through the online system. Applicants can request assessments from sponsors via the online application system which will forward a link to the online program.** The candidate should emphasize to sponsors, the need for these to be received by the closing date.

In addition to the foregoing, the applicant should arrange for his or her proposed supervisor to prepare the following information. **Applicants can request this information from their supervisor via the online application system which will forward a link to the online program:**

- Letter of support from supervisor.
- Summary submitted by proposed supervisor outlining the proposed training program, including details of time allocation, publications of supervisor and supervisory experience, as well as a statement from the prospective supervisor(s) describing the training environment and the collaborative milieu, including the clinical responsibilities to be assumed, the teaching to be provided and the research project to be undertaken. **Please note that the prospective supervisor's CV should be submitted using the 4 page PSC biosketch form automatically generated by the online system.**

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

***Applications are now submitted digitally through the Parkinson Society Canada online program located on the PSC website.** Applicants can go <http://www.parkinsonresearch.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.

Applications must be submitted with the required signatures by the due date. Prior to submission, applicants should determine what signatures are needed, print the applicant information sheet (face sheet) and obtain **all the required signatures** for their application. Once obtained, scan the signature page and upload the signed signature page to the PSC online system as part of your submission by the application deadline date. It does not need to be couriered to Parkinson Society Canada.

Incomplete applications or applications received later than **1 November 2011** will not be considered under any circumstances.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE REFER TO:

The PSC National Research Program Application Guidelines Manual available from the PSC Web site at www.parkinson.ca.

OR CONTACT:

Ivy Lim-Carter, Director, National Research & Clinical Programs, 1-800-565-3000 or 416-227-3382, Email: ivy.lim-carter@parkinson.ca