



THE MARILYN HILTON AWARD FOR INNOVATION IN MS RESEARCH BRIDGING AWARD FOR PHYSICIAN SCIENTISTS Request for Proposals

Conrad N. Hilton Foundation

Established in 1944 by the founder of Hilton Hotels, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation works to improve the lives of disadvantaged and vulnerable people throughout the world. The Foundation funds Multiple Sclerosis (MS) research and patient services through its Overcoming Multiple Sclerosis Major Program area. Since the Foundation's inception, it has awarded almost \$40 million in grants in the hopes of finding a cure for those with MS and improving the lives of people living with the disease. Continuing with its long-term commitment to supporting MS research, the Foundation is launching a new cycle of its peer-reviewed award program, the Marilyn Hilton Award for Innovation in MS Research.

More information about the Foundation and its programs can be found on our [website](#).

Multiple Sclerosis Program Goal

The goal of the Marilyn Hilton Award for Innovation in MS Research is to stimulate innovation and advance knowledge that will aid in developing treatments and cures for progressive forms of MS.

The Foundation envisions the Marilyn Hilton Award for Innovation in MS Research as the centerpiece of its MS research funding. The goal of the award is to stimulate innovation and potentially paradigm-shifting research in progressive MS, which may otherwise go unfunded in times of declining funding for research.

In this cycle of funding, the Foundation wishes to encourage the work of investigators who are at early stages of their careers, recognizing that young investigators are a wellspring of new ideas and innovation and that funding at an early stage can make a critical difference to a young investigator's career trajectory. The Foundation has released two Requests for Proposals, both aimed at advancing the work of investigators at early stages of their career.

BRIDGING AWARD FOR PHYSICIAN SCIENTISTS

Recognizing the declining participation of physicians engaged in academic biomedical research and the critical need to support physician scientists conducting research on MS, the Foundation is launching a competition to provide bridging awards for physician scientists transitioning from late postdoctoral training to their first early faculty positions at academic health centers or equivalent institutions. Ultimately, the program's goal is to help establish the research careers of junior-level physician-scientists working on MS.

Award Description: Bridging Awards for Physician Scientists (BAPS) will provide \$620,000 in support over five years to physician scientists (M.D. and D.O.) working on MS (who are committed to an academic career) to bridge postdoctoral/fellowship training and the early years of faculty service.

Proposals must focus on MS research. Depending on the availability of funds and the quality of applications, the Foundation anticipates making up to three awards as a result of this competition.

Competition Deadlines

- August 29, 2016: Request for Applications posted
- November 14, 2016: Applications Due
- January 11, 2017: Finalists Selected
- January – February 2017: Finalist Interviews
- March 15, 2017: - Final Review Completed
- Anticipated Award Announcement: June 1, 2017
- Anticipated Grant Start Date: July 1, 2017

Eligibility Requirements: The competition is open to self-nominations, with no limit of applications per institution. However, applications will only be accepted from institutions with a United States non-profit tax id number. To be competitive for the BAPS award, the ideal candidate must have at least two years or more of postdoctoral experience, be two years away from becoming an independent investigator, have at least one first author or shared first author paper on work considered innovative or impactful, and have a significant publication record.

Applications must be approved and signed by an official responsible for sponsored programs (generally the grants office, office of research, or office of sponsored programs) at the degree-granting institution where the candidate is a postdoctoral fellow. Candidates should contact one of these offices for an authorized signature before submitting their proposal. Although the grant is portable, the Foundation will make the grant to the institution and not the individual.

- Candidates must hold an M.D. or D.O. degree.
- Candidates must not be more than 11 years past their most recent earned clinical doctorate degree. To meet this requirement, applicant must have received their MD or DO degree on or after January 1, 2005. In the case that a candidate has valid reasons for being over 11 years past his or her most recent earned clinical doctorate degree, the candidate can submit a letter detailing circumstances. Exceptions will be decided on a case by case basis.
- Candidates must be a fellow, resident or a postdoctoral researcher and have at least two years of postdoctoral research experience at the time of application.
- Candidates must be able to work in the United States under a valid work visa at the time of application. It is expected that candidates will be able to work in the United States during the grant period and that the faculty position the grantee takes after completion of her/his fellowships will include a path to permanent residency.
- Candidates must submit proposals through institutions with a U.S. non-profit tax id number.
- Candidate must obtain approval and signature by an authorized official at the institution.
- Candidate's proposal must be in the area of basic biomedical, disease-oriented, or translational research on Multiple Sclerosis. Proposals in health services research or involving large-scale clinical trials are ineligible.
- Candidates with a clinical degree not awarded in the U.S. must document past clinical experience. The Foundation strongly prefers that candidates be licensed to practice in the U.S. or have completed a residency in the U.S., but does not make this a requirement for purposes of this grant.

Applications: Applications should contain the following:

- Cover page - the name, title, and complete contact information of the principal investigator (and co-investigator, if there is one), project title, and the names and contact information of their mentor and second reference. The cover page must be signed by both the applicant's mentor (one of two references as described in references below) and an official responsible for sponsored programs at the principal investigator's institution. (Cover page is attached).
- Personal Statement (1 page) - Description of the applicant's career path and long term goals
- Project Description limited to 8 pages (12 font) and containing the following sections: (a) 500 word project abstract in lay language; (b) Specific Aims; (c) background information on current state of knowledge, relevance of the proposed work to MS, and level of innovation; (d) experimental design and methods including a discussion of possible pitfalls and a power analysis/sample size justification; (e) a timeline of the work indicating specific milestones to be completed in the (1-2) year postdoctoral period and during the (3-4) year faculty period; (f) references and (g) facilities available during the postdoctoral period. For the power analysis/sample size justification, the application should state the availability of biostatistical consult if the applicant is her/himself not a bioinformatician. The proposal should address how work can become clinically relevant.
- NIH style biographical sketch for applicant (not to exceed 4 pages).
- Papers- PDF copies of two submitted or published peer reviewed manuscripts.
- Budget: A budget form covering the five-year period with details provided for the two-year postdoctoral period regarding personnel and other costs including indirect costs (limited to 10 percent). If additional salary support will be provided by the applicant's institution during the postdoctoral period, it should be indicated here.
- References - Contact information of mentor and second individual who will submit confidential letters of support. Mentor letter should confirm applicant's status as a fellow within the department. Letters are limited to two pages at most and are to be sent directly to the Foundation at ms_program@hiltonfoundation.org
- *No appendixes with additional information will be accepted.*

Selection Process: The top ranked applicants will be interviewed by expert panel members via teleconference. Taking the results of the expert reviews and the telephone interviews into account, expert panel members will formulate their funding recommendations for transmittal to the Foundation staff and Board of Directors. Applications will be reviewed and ranked on the following criteria:

- Quality of Proposed Research and Potential for Impact – Is the proposed research addressing an important question and likely to add significantly to the knowledge base?
- Innovation - Does the candidate challenge and seek to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms in MS by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions?
- Feasibility of Approach - Is the overall strategy and methodology well-reasoned and appropriate? Is it likely that the specific aims of the project will be accomplished?
- Experience of Investigator - Does the applicant have the appropriate experience and training to carry out the work and the support of experienced and committed mentors?
- Research Environment - Will the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Will the institutional support, equipment, and other physical resources available to the investigator be adequate?
- Appropriateness of Budget and Timeline - Is it likely that the project will be completed in the time proposed with the funds requested?

The Foundation does not provide critiques or written comments on the submitted applications.

Terms of the Award: Awards are made to institutions with non-profit tax ID status in the U.S. on behalf of the awardees. The institution is responsible for disbursing the funds, maintenance of adequate supporting records and receipts of expenditure, and ensuring that the investigator meets all required regulatory compliance.

Awards will provide up to two years of support at \$85,000 yearly for the postdoctoral fellowship level, followed by 3 years of support for the faculty position at \$150,000 yearly. Award recipients are required to devote at least 75 percent of their overall time to research-related activities throughout the 5-year grant period. However, there is no explicit minimum percent effort that must be dedicated to the BAPS award research.

Postdoctoral Fellowship Grant Period: Up to \$10,000 per year can be allocated for research and training expenses with the remainder of the \$85,000 stipend used for the fellow's salary and fringe benefits. The total salary of the fellow may be supplemented by funds from other sources to a level commensurate with the applicant's professional status, previous training and experience, and with the current pay scale of the sponsoring institution. Such supplementation must be indicated in the budget form. Under no circumstances may the salary supplementation interfere with the required 75 percent time commitment to research.

Faculty Grant Period: A faculty position at a U.S. institution must be secured prior to the end of the two-year advanced fellowship period. During the faculty award period, grantees will receive stipends of \$150,000 yearly, inclusive of the 10 percent indirect cost rate. The new faculty appointment may be at the same institution at which the grantee worked during his/her fellowship period, if independence and institutional support at the faculty level is demonstrated, or the new faculty appointment may be at a different institution. The Foundation recognizes that many postdoctoral/clinical fellows will move to new institutions to begin their independent research careers; therefore, this award is "portable." Awards may be transferred only with written approval of the Foundation. Approval will be based on whether the move will enhance the awardee's scientific growth and career development, whether the terms of the award contract will be met, and whether the hiring institution demonstrates adequate commitment to the award recipient's career. A formal request for initiation of faculty support will be required prior to activation of the faculty award period and will require, among other things, a final progress report for the postdoctoral fellowship period. Such requests must be received four months prior to a shift to a faculty position and/or a move to a new institution.

When the awardee moves to a tenure track faculty position, any remaining balance of the postdoctoral fellowship portion of the award will be transferred to the faculty institution and added to the faculty portion of the award.

Awardees who change institutions may take with them any equipment or supplies purchased under the award, as well as the balance of any unused award funds, subject to the policies of the original institution.

The Foundation requires institutions to make a monetary commitment to an awardee's career before the awardee begins the faculty portion of the award.

The Foundation prefers tenure-track appointments (or the equivalent if not a degree-granting institution), accompanied by some level of institutional salary support or support for starting a laboratory or both.

The Foundation reserves the right to terminate the faculty portion of the award if the institutional commitment is deemed inadequate and/or the awardee cannot devote 75 percent of his/her time to research. All faculty appointments must be approved by the Foundation.

Annual Progress Reports: Awardees must provide the Foundation with an annual progress report detailing scientific progress. Institutions also must provide an annual financial report. Continued funding will depend on both the timeliness of submission of these reports and their favorable review by the Foundation staff and its MS advisors.

Other Funding: Award recipients may obtain funds from other sources for research in the same or similar areas as that conducted under these grants, so long as there is no direct overlap and no conflict with meeting the terms of the Foundation's award. Award recipients may not hold concurrent NIH K99/R00 awards.

No Cost Extension: During the award period, unused research funds may be carried over to the succeeding year, if the grant is for more than one year. Requests for a no-cost extension at the end of the grant period must explain why an extension is needed and be submitted in writing.

Scientific Conduct and IRB: Awardees must adhere to the federal, state and local regulations regarding the participation of human subjects, and the use of animals, radioactive or hazardous materials, and recombinant DNA in their research projects. The Foundation expects the appropriate federal, state, and local guidelines with regard to scientific misconduct are in place and enforced at all institutions where the Foundation awardees are appointed.

Communications: The Foundation is committed to ensuring that the outputs of the research grants it funds are managed and used in ways to maximize public benefit. Making research data widely available to the research community in a timely and responsible manner ensures that these data can be verified, built upon and used to advance knowledge and its application to generate improvements in health. At a minimum, the Foundation requires submission of full text of published articles to PubMed Central and adherence to NIH data sharing requirements. We strongly encourage the researcher to place data, including unpublished data, resulting from any research funded wholly or in part by this grant, in public repositories in an easily accessible form no later than 12 months after completion of the award.

Scientific publications or presentations that result from these awards must acknowledge the awardee's receipt of the Foundation's *Marilyn Hilton Bridging Award for Physician Scientists Working on MS*. Copies of journal articles and other publications should be sent to THE FOUNDATION along with the annual progress report.

Intellectual Property: Awardees should follow their institution's patent, copyright, and intellectual property policies regarding discoveries that result from research conducted under these awards.

Questions may be addressed to ms_program@hiltonfoundation.org.

CONRAD N. HILTON FOUNDATION

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**SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
GRANT APPLICATION**

Please electronically send your proposal, including cover page, NIH Style biographies, scientific narrative, and requested attachments to the Foundation’s MS program (MS_Program@hiltonfoundation.org) Please title your submission as: Investigator Name.Institution Name.ProjectName.Date. If you have questions or require assistance, contact Elizabeth Cheung at Elizabeth@hiltonfoundation.org.

All applications will be treated with complete confidentiality by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation.

Proposal Title:

Proposal description (1-2 sentences):

Principal Investigator (name and title):

Enter response in each cell below.	
Applicant Legal Name	Please list name of Institution
Also Known As	
Tax ID Number (EIN)	Institutions Tax ID Number
Complete Address	
Main Phone	
Main Fax	
Website	
Fiscal Year End (e.g., June 30)	
Current FY Organizational Budget	Org budget for institution affiliated with tax-id #
Previous FY Organizational Budget	
Name – Principal Investigator	
Title	
Direct Phone	
Direct Fax	
Email	
Authorized Signer <i>(This person signs grant contract for the university)</i>	Enter Yes or No:

Name – Liaison to CNHF	Fill in if different than PI
Title	
Email	
Authorized Signer	Enter Yes or No
Name – Head of Organization	Head of org affiliated with tax-ID number
Title	
Email	
Authorized Signer	Enter Yes or No
Name - Authorized Signer (individual who signs contract if not listed above)	Generally enter Not Applicable
Title	
Email	
Requested amount (USD)	
Term of request (years)	
Project start and end dates	
If multiple years, requested amounts per year	Enter Not Applicable or \$X Yr 1, \$X Yr 2, etc.

Signature of Authorized Signer Date

Print Name Title
