

ECTRIMS-MEDEN FELLOWSHIP

Programme Description and Application Guide

Updated July 2026

The MOGAD Eugene Devic European Network (MEDEN) is a European group of clinicians and scientists who have set up research collaborations and meetings focused on neuromyelitis optica spectrum disorders and myelin oligodendrocyte antibody associated disorder. This fellowship programme will enable the awarded applicant to gain research experience either in a priority project at a MEDEN site, or on a separate project as proposed by the applicant.

KEY INFORMATION

- For scientists and physicians of any nationality holding an MD, PhD, ScD, or equivalent, to provide mentored research training related to MS.
- 1-year funded fellowships
- Citizens of any country are eligible to apply to this programme. However, research must be undertaken within an institution in Europe that is either part of the MEDEN network or otherwise approved by the MEDEN Steering Committee.
- Research must be related to the fellowship subject.
- At the time of application, applicants should not have worked in any capacity at the same institution and/or under the same mentor as proposed in the fellowship application.
- The application requires documents from the candidate, the proposed mentor, and the proposed host training institute, as well as other professional referees.
- The applicant is responsible for collecting all supporting documents and submitting them through the online application system. All documents must be submitted as PDFs.
- Successful fellows and their mentors will be asked to provide progress and financial accounting reports at the end of each year.

Application deadline: 1 December 2026

NOTE: Institutes are not limited to any number of applications, however the same lead mentor may not be proposed in more than 1 application per cycle, all categories combined. Per award cycle, institutes will be limited to 3 awards total among all fellowship categories and only 1 award within any given category.

I. PROGRAMME TERMS

Applicant eligibility:

- Scientists and physicians who hold or are candidates for an MD, PhD, ScD or equivalent professional degree are eligible.
- Applicants must have obtained their advanced degree(s) by the time of application for the fellowship.
- At the time of application, applicants should not have worked in any capacity at the same institution and/or under the same mentor as proposed in the fellowship application.
- It is recommended that applicants have no more than 5 years total of postdoctoral experience beyond their final degree (PhD, MD, ScD or equivalent) at the time of application.
- In general, successful applicants will be under 40 years of age at the time of application; exceptions under special circumstances will be considered.
- Citizens of any country are eligible to apply to this programme. However, research training must be undertaken in a European laboratory or clinic.
- Applicants and their mentors must affirm that there will be no language barriers that will impede the training experience.
- Applicants are restricted to 1 application per annual cycle, across all fellowship categories.

Project Plan and Mentor

- The ECTRIMS-MEDEN Fellowship is a research experience with a focus on a targeted project in the field of NMOSD/MOGAD. Applicants must identify and present a cogent basic, clinical, or applied research project to be undertaken during the fellowship period, in collaboration with the fellowship mentor at the host institution.
- The same lead mentor may not be proposed in more than 1 application per cycle, all categories combined.

If more than one applicant indicates the same lead mentor, the mentor will be contacted prior to the application review to select 1 application to go forward to the evaluation stage.

Fellowship Location

- The fellowship period will be spent in a European research laboratory or clinic focused on problems associated with MS and/or related diseases. **Proposed host institutions that are not part of the list below are possible, but must be approved in advance of submission by the MEDEN Steering Committee by contacting the ECTRIMS Secretariat.**

MEDEN network institutes include:

- **Lyon, France:** Hospices Civils de Lyon, Sclérose en plaques, pathologies de la myéline et neuroinflammation
 - **Oxford, UK:** John Radcliffe Hospital, Department of Clinical Neurology
 - **Berlin, Germany:** Charite-Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Experimental and Clinical Research Center (ECRC)
 - **Verona, Italy:** Neurology Unit, Department of Neurosciences, Biomedicine and Movement Sciences, University of Verona
 - **Barcelona, Spain:** Multiple Sclerosis Centre of Catalonia (Cemcat), Vall d'Hebron Barcelona Hospital Campus, Neurology-Neuroimmunology Department
 - **London, UK:** Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children, Neuroimmunology Centre
- For fellowship applicants who are European citizens, the laboratory or clinic should be located in a different European country from that of the applicant's citizenship.
 - For all applicants, the fellowship must take place at a different institute and in a different country than the fellow's current placement. These conditions are in place to ensure the programme's goal of cross-border exchange. Exceptions may be considered under special circumstances, which must be detailed in the application process.
 - The applicant must determine in advance the fellowship location and identify a proposed mentor, all of which will be considered along with the applicant's own qualifications and research plan in the review and selection process.
 - Institutes will be limited to 3 awards total among all fellowship categories and only 1 award per any given category.

However, institutes are not limited to the number of applications submitted in any given category or application cycle, if they all have different proposed lead mentors

Term

- Fellowships of a 1-year duration will be available.
- In most circumstances, fellowships will be initiated to coincide with the fall academic year initiation in September or October but can begin at any time following the award notification in April that is agreed between host institution, mentor, and fellow.
- The fellowship must be initiated (all paperwork submitted to the administrator; move to training venue complete; work actively beginning) before the end of the calendar year in which the fellowship is awarded. Any exceptions to this must be approved by the MAGNIMS Steering Committee and the ECTRIMS Fellowship Committee.

Funding Support

- ECTRIMS will provide funds of 55,000.00 EUR for a one-year training programme.
- ECTRIMS will also provide economy transportation from the successful candidate's home location to and from the location of the host institute. Travel expenses for family will not be provided. Transportation expenses will be reimbursed directly to the fellow, upon submission of receipts to ECTRIMS.
- ECTRIMS funding will be paid directly to the host institution, which will be considered the employer of the fellow. A stipend will be paid out by the host institution to the fellow according to the institution's own payment policies and schedules.
- ECTRIMS funding must be used by the institution to pay the fellow's stipend ("salary") at the institutionally appropriate rate for the fellow's stage of training. Should there be any remaining funds, the remainder of the funds can be used to support institutional social benefits (health care coverage, pension, other benefits) that may be required by the institution.
 - The expected fellow's total salary, as well as the expected fellow's total social benefits costs per year, must be indicated by the host institution.
 - If the total salary plus benefits exceeds the amount provided by the ECTRIMS funds, it is the responsibility of the institution/ mentor to supplement the ECTRIMS funds to cover the entire required costs.
 - If the annual or prorated ECTRIMS funding is not sufficient for the total required costs of the fellow (salary plus benefits), additional sources of funding that will be used to cover the total costs must be listed.
- It is expected that the research activities to be undertaken at the host institution will be supported by the host institution/mentor. No additional support for equipment,

work materials, consumables, books, journal subscriptions, etc. should be paid for by the fellowship funds.

- Fellows will be expected to attend annual ECTRIMS congresses during the term of their fellowship and to make a presentation (at a young researcher's section or elsewhere) on their funded research. ECTRIMS will separately support travel and accommodations for congress participation.

Activities During the Fellowship Period

- The ECTRIMS-MEDEN Fellowship is intended to be a full-time research and research training experience; however, up to 10% of the fellow's time may be spent on teaching or clinical care not associated with any research project or additional course work, as deemed appropriate by fellow and mentor.
- The anticipated project, including any course work or assistance in a host institution's clinical research, must be described in detail by the applicant and mentor in their proposals to ECTRIMS. See below: **Supporting documentation, Part 1, Point 4.**
- Fellows may be asked to present the work related to their fellowship project and funding at MEDEN meetings during the term of the fellowship.

Changes in the Fellowship Programme Agreement

- It is anticipated that the entire training period will be undertaken with the host institution and mentor as planned. However, in special circumstances, ECTRIMS will consider requests to transfer the fellowship to a new mentor or institution. Authorisation 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.
- An ECTRIMS 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 a fellowship early if the fellow is unable to carry out the training as planned, 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

- At the Fellowships conclusion, fellows and their mentors are required to respond to a short survey and provide a financial report of expenditures, due within 30 days after the completion of the programme. They will also need to complete a narrative report within 6 months of concluding the programme. All reporting forms will be provided by ECTRIMS.

End of Fellowship reporting:

- Financial report from host institute must include accounting information from the mentor or host institution (form provided by ECTRIMS) of how funds provided for the fellow were allocated and whether additional funds were provided to the fellow by the host institution or other granting agency (source, amount, purpose)
 - Short “lived experience” survey taken by both mentor and fellow (online link to be issued towards the end of the programme)
 - Fellow to write a narrative report (form to be provided by ECTRIMS) including a summary of training, accepted up to 6 months after the fellowship, to be submitted to their mentor for comment before the fellow submits the completed report to ECTRIMS.
- **Publications that emerge from the work undertaken during the fellowship period should acknowledge the ECTRIMS-MEDEN Fellowship programme for its support.**

Post-Fellowship Follow-Up

- After the training period, it is expected that the fellow will return to their original home institution for employment, or will obtain employment in a different institution. Post-fellowship career plans should be detailed as part of the application process.
- ECTRIMS fellows are requested to maintain contact with the ECTRIMS Secretariat, so that post-training career paths and publications can be followed with the goal of informing overall programme evaluation.

II. APPLICATION PROCESS

ECTRIMS-MEDEN Fellowships will be awarded in a competitive review process conducted by members of a review board comprised of representatives of ECTRIMS and MEDEN. Applications will be evaluated based on the following:

- candidate's qualifications, including education, previous employment history, current employment responsibilities, self-stated goals of training, and an evaluation of the candidate's career plans; as well as their commitment to collaboration and knowledge exchange or transfer;
- the qualifications and characteristics of the proposed fellowship mentor and host institution;
- the proposed research plan, including the Committee's assessment of the scientific quality, innovation, perceived feasibility;
- and the quality of letters of endorsement from the proposed mentor and from referees at the fellow's home institution, etc.

Supporting Documentation

The applicant is responsible for collecting all supporting documents listed in Parts 1 and 2 below and submitting them through the online application system.

All documents must be submitted as PDFs.

Part 1: Documents provided by the applicant

1. A completed online application, available through the ECTRIMS website
2. An abbreviated curriculum vitae (CV) and bibliography of the applicant **via the form "Biographical Sketch" provided by ECTRIMS, available for download in the online fellowship application system**
3. Applicant's statement of intent, to include goals and career plans upon completion of the fellowship, as well as how the fellowship project will be applied in future work. **The "Statement of Intent" form provided in the online fellowship application system should be used.**
4. A project description (not to exceed 5 pages – including figures, tables and references). **The "Project Plan" form provided in the online fellowship application system should be used.**

5. Confirmation of the applicant's ability to communicate in the local language used at the host institution (certifying exam results or personal declaration not to exceed 1 page).

Part 2: Further Supporting Materials

Please be sure to ask referees to clearly identify the name of the applicant on all pages of their letters.

1. From the proposed mentor:

- Letter of endorsement of the applicant, with special reference to any interactions they have had with the applicant and to the proposed project plan.
- Current abbreviated curriculum vitae and bibliography (no more than 5 pages) for the proposed mentor. **The “Biographical Sketch” form found in the online fellowship application system should be used to provide this information.** The applicant is responsible for forwarding this form to the proposed mentor for their use.

2. From the host institution:

- Letter of support from the Head of the Department (or other relevant institutional official) at the proposed host institution accepting the applicant as a fellow, should a fellowship be awarded.
 - Note: If the proposed mentor is the Head of the Department at the proposed host institution, only 1 letter of endorsement/support is necessary.
- Institutional certification accepting the terms of the ECTRIMS fellowship regarding the funding payments and the funding amount. **The necessary form, “Acceptance of ECTRIMS Payment Rules”, is available for download from the online application system.** The applicant is responsible for forwarding this form to the proposed host institute for completion and submission to ECTRIMS.

3. From other referees:

- Up to 2 additional letters of reference from professionals acquainted with the applicant, from their home institution or elsewhere, that addresses the applicant's qualities and likelihood for success in their chosen MS field and career track.

Note: Applicants should not arrange for more than 3 letters of recommendation (1 from the proposed mentor and up to 2 from additional referees). There is no benefit to applicants who provide supplementary letters of recommendation.

Final Reminder and Recap

All supporting documents are to be submitted by the applicant using the online application system by 1 December 2026.

Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.

Notification of ECTRIMS Award Deliberations

The MEDEN review committee will evaluate all proposals after the application period. Notification of the review outcomes will be made by the end of March 2027, to facilitate logistics involved in relocation by the following autumn.

For questions and further information, please contact the ECTRIMS Secretariat at: secretariat@ectrims.eu.