



# Request for Proposals for a Fellowship

## **2022 I'M IN EMD Serono Neurodisparity Fellowship**

**Advancing Diversity, Inclusion and Equity in Healthcare: Reducing  
Disparities in Neurologic Care for MS Patients**

- Deadline for submitting a Proposal is February 28, 2022
- Proposals must be submitted at [www.grants.emdserono.com](http://www.grants.emdserono.com)

## **Request for Proposals**

### **Synopsis:**

EMD Serono is seeking proposals from eligible organizations (see below) interested in establishing a unique, first-of-its-kind fellowship program that is ***dedicated to reducing disparities in neurologic care for MS patients***, thereby advancing diversity, inclusion and equity in healthcare.

*Note:* EMD Serono is *not* seeking to establish a fellowship program itself. Nor is the Company seeking applications from residents or fellows looking for fellowship opportunities. Rather, EMD Serono is seeking to provide funding to a qualified third-party (medical society, academic medical center, etc.) who will in turn establish a neurodisparity fellowship for up to two fellows.

### **1. Our Commitment**

At EMD Serono, we are deeply committed to increasing healthcare knowledge and advancing patient care. Our corporate vision is to transform lives by developing and delivering meaningful therapies for difficult-to-treat diseases, especially in the area of Multiple Sclerosis (MS).

Closely aligned with that vision is our commitment to corporate responsibility, which includes addressing diversity, inclusion and inequalities in our communities, medical schools, research labs, medical practices, clinical trials, and classrooms. Our financial giving reflects this vision and commitment.

We prioritize our financial support for activities that increase healthcare knowledge and advance patient care, while also advancing diversity, inclusion and equality in the practice of medicine, the treatment of patients, and the training of healthcare providers (HCPs).

### **2. Purpose and Scope of this Request for Fellowship Proposals**

The *EMD Serono Medical Education and Grants Office* is seeking fellowship proposals for consideration that address the following needs:

#### **Advancing Diversity, Inclusion and Equity in Healthcare: Reducing Disparities in Neurologic Care for MS Patients**

##### **a. Background Information**

Disparities in healthcare are a reflection of larger social justice issues we face in America today. Implicit bias permeates virtually every facet of our modern life and healthcare is no exception. Although HCPs take an oath to safeguard the health and well-being of all patients, implicit bias shapes their attitudes and behaviors towards patients, especially those who may be of a different race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or disability status. Implicit bias in physician decision-making significantly contributes to perpetuating

health care disparities. However, implicit bias can be addressed successfully and its impact mitigated in meaningful ways.

In 2017, the American Academy of Neurology (AAN) Diversity Leadership Group (the Task Force) published groundbreaking report with recommendations to the AAN aimed at reducing disparities in neurologic care (often called neurodisparity).<sup>1</sup> Their report, entitled "*Reducing Neurodisparity: Recommendations of the 2017 AAN Diversity Leadership Program*," noted that advances in neurologic care have not benefitted all patients equally.

"A growing body of evidence indicates that barriers to care often fall along racial and ethnic lines, with persons of color frequently having lower rates of evaluation, diagnosis, and intervention, and consequently experiencing worse neurologic outcomes than their white counterparts."<sup>2</sup>

The Task Force noted that other classes, characteristics, and categories of patients – such as women, elders, members of LGBTQ+ communities, Native Americans, prisoners and some religious minorities – also experience neurodisparity.

The Task Force pointed out that neurodisparity "spans the entire breadth and scope of neurologic practice and clinical research" and affects the "entire timeline of care delivery for patients, from acute interventions to subsequent rehabilitation care."<sup>3</sup> In their report, they proposed various practical steps for AAN to take "to position itself to be a leading voice in alleviating neurodisparity,"<sup>4</sup> with the goal being "to start to put into place strategies that ensure that all patients with neurologic diseases receive the highest-quality patient-centered care,"<sup>5</sup> free of racially-centered or other types of implicit bias.

Importantly, the "authors propose[d] strategies in 3 areas (provider/systemic bias, health literacy, and promotion of neurodisparity research and education) that can be implemented to achieve a solution."<sup>6</sup>

The report concludes with the hope that its recommendations "spur the development of more concrete plans" and "serve as a catalyst for further concerted, sustained and far-reaching efforts to combat neurodisparity."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Marulanda-Londoño ET, Bell MW, Hope OA, Leacock RO, O'Carroll CB, Posas J 3rd, Stover NP, Young R, Hamilton R. Reducing neurodisparity: Recommendations of the 2017 AAN Diversity Leadership Program. *Neurology*. 2019 Feb 5;92(6):274-280. doi: 10.1212/WNL.0000000000006874. Epub 2019 Jan 18. PMID: 30659140.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* at 275.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> *Id.* at 276.

<sup>6</sup> Moawad, Heidi, and Charles Flippen. "Reducing Disparity in Neurologic Care." *Neurology*, vol. 92, no. 6, 2019, pp. 257-258., <https://doi.org/10.1212/wnl.0000000000006901>.

<sup>7</sup> Marulanda-Londoño at 279.

## **b. EMD Serono’s Initiatives to Enhance Diversity, Inclusion and Equality in Healthcare**

In connection with our “*As One For Patients*” and “*I’M IN*” initiatives, EMD Serono has firmly committed to improving diversity and inclusion in its clinical trials and drug development process. In our mission to transform the lives of patients with difficult-to-treat diseases, we understand that our treatments need to meet the needs of a diverse patient population, which means we need to *include* a diverse patient population in our clinical trials and throughout the drug development lifecycle. We also recognize the importance of including diverse healthcare providers in those trials and encouraging the healthcare ecosystem to support those providers. We are committed to continuously challenging the status quo and strive to be at the forefront of enhancing the diversity of our clinical trial populations by including certain historically underrepresented groups. Enhancing diversity in the patient population of our clinical trials, as well as the investigators conducting our research, are important and meaningful steps towards reducing disparities in healthcare.

As another step in our commitment to reduce disparities in healthcare, EMD Serono is answering the call of AAN to elevate the emphasis on neurodisparity and develop “concrete plans” for promoting research and education in neurodisparity. To this end, EMD Serono seeks to make fellowship funding available to support academic institutions in their pursuit of “grooming the next generation of leaders in neurodisparity” to ensure a more equitable future for MS patients.

Reflecting on the Task Force’s recommendations and proposed strategies, EMD Serono seeks to develop neurodisparity-focused leaders by helping to create opportunities through fellowship funding to implement one or more of the proposed strategies.

## **c. Scope of Request for Fellowship Proposal**

EMD Serono is seeking proposals from eligible organizations (see below) interested in establishing a unique, first-of-its-kind fellowship program that is ***dedicated to reducing disparities in neurologic care for MS patients***, thereby advancing diversity, inclusion and equity in healthcare.

- **Therapeutic Area:** Neurology
- **Disease State:** Multiple Sclerosis
- **Eligible Organizations:** Per EMD Serono’s fellowship funding policy, only the following types of organizations may submit a fellowship Proposal in response to this RFP:
  1. **Medical societies** (e.g., AAN, ACNS, etc.)
  2. **Academic medical centers**
  3. **Patient advocacy organizations** – defined as formally organized nonprofit groups that (i) concern themselves with medical conditions or potential medical

conditions and (ii) have a mission and take action that seek to help people affected by those medical conditions or to help their families and caregivers

4. **NIH** -- The U.S. National Institutes of Health and similar federal or state agencies
- **Ineligible Organizations and People:** Proposals will not be accepted from individual HCPs, fellows, residents, physician group practices, physician owned clinics, managed care organizations, pharmacy benefit managers, or hospitals that are not academic medical centers.
  - **Nature of the Fellowship:**
    - As we provide funding for the first fellowship program **dedicated to reducing disparities in neurologic care for MS patients**, we are painting on a blank canvas. We are open to creative fellowship proposals which are thoughtfully designed to address neurodisparity in meaningful, concrete ways.
    - While we do not wish to be prescriptive, the fellowship program should be designed to go beyond the purely descriptive task of identifying the problem of neurodisparity (which has been described by the AAN's report discussed above). It should focus on **potential action items and strategies**, such as those discussed in the AAN report and other resources cited therein, such as the Department of Veterans Affairs' Center for Health Equity Research and Promotion, which aims to test interventions that alleviate health disparities.
      - As a reminder, the Task Force proposed strategies in 3 specific areas:
        1. provider/systemic bias
        2. health literacy, and
        3. promotion of neurodisparity research and education

**Preference** will be given to proposals which seek to **implement** one or more of these strategies to achieve a solution to neurodisparity.

- Please include ideas about how to **maximize the impact** of the work of the fellows participating in the program. In other words, we are not looking for a fellowship program to educate or impact one or two fellows; we seek to support a program that strives to create a ripple effect that has a much greater impact on the institution where the fellow is being trained and, importantly, which can be replicated by other institutions and practices in the country. Publications, presentations, and enduring materials may enhance the ripple effect. "Just as ripples spread out when a single pebble is dropped into water, the actions of individuals can have far-reaching effects."<sup>8</sup> Shoot high for far-reaching effects.
- Also, please consider how to measure the success and outcomes of the fellowship.

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<sup>8</sup> Dalai Lama

- **Budget:** Proposals should not exceed \$150,000 USD.
  - Fellowships funds may be used to pay salaries of Fellows for their work directly within the scope of their fellowship and other direct expenses (such as institutional overhead, etc.).
  - If the fellowship includes any clinical work involving both billable services and research or teaching, EMD Serono’s funding shall be made conditional on funding only the activities devoted to non-billable teaching or research. Fellowships funds shall not be used to pay for salary or any portion of a position that bills for services.
  - Fellowship funds may be used to pay for a fellow’s attendance at a conference or meeting only if the fellow’s attendance is for the purposes of presenting on research or educational activities resulting from the fellowship.
  
- **Selection of Fellows - Independence**
  - Fellows must be selected independently by the organization submitting a Proposal to establish a fellowship program, or if designated by the organization, the institution at which the fellows are being trained or by another independent selection organization.
  - EMD Serono shall not be involved in the review of fellowship applications or the selection of fellows. EMD Serono may be involved in an awards ceremony at which the fellowships are announced.
  - If NIH or another similar federal or state agency is the organization submitting a Proposal, fellows must be intramural physicians at those agencies.

**d. How to Respond to this Request for Proposals**

Requests must be submitted through EMD Serono’s *Request Management System* at [www.grants.emdserono.com](http://www.grants.emdserono.com).

Click this link for instructions on how to use our *Request Management System (RMS)*:



How to Use the RMS

Screenshots of the application process appear in the “How to” document, and also at the end of this document.

**Important:** In the “Program Title” field on your proposal in the *Request Management System*, type in “**RFP: 2022 I’M IN EMD Serono Neurodisparity Fellowship**.” This must be the title of your proposal.

**e. Deadline for Submission of Proposals**

The deadline for submitting a Proposal in response to this Request for Proposals is midnight (EST) on **February 28, 2022**.

If you have any questions about this Request for Proposals, please contact Leigh-Ann Durant, Head of North America Medical Governance, at [leigh-ann.durant@emdserono.com](mailto:leigh-ann.durant@emdserono.com) or (781) 492-7398.

If you have any questions about the EMD Serono Request Management System, please contact Claudia White, our Request Coordinator, at [fundingrequests@emdserono.com](mailto:fundingrequests@emdserono.com) or (212) 589-3507.

#### **f. Other Terms, Conditions and Disclaimers**

1. The purpose of this Request for Proposals is to make eligible organizations aware that EMD Serono is interested in receiving proposals for a fellowship program. It is not an offer to contract or a commitment to provide funding.
2. A decision on all proposals will be made by EMD Serono Grant Review Committee.
3. All organizations must bear their own costs associated with responding to this Request for Proposals and submitting a Proposal.
4. EMD Serono reserves the right to amend or terminate this Request for Proposals at any time and for any reason. EMD Serono reserves the right to not approve any of the Proposals.
5. EMD Serono reserves the right to verify all information provided by an organization in its Proposal.
6. If approved, the organization shall be required to disclose that financial support was received from EMD Serono in announcements, invitations, brochures, and other written communications related to the fellowship.
7. Approval shall be conditioned on the organization's consent to public disclosure on EMD Serono's website, if required by law. The website disclosure will include the organization's name, a brief description of the activity for which funding was provided, and the amount of funding. The website disclosure will be updated quarterly.

#### **g. EMD Serono's Compliance Commitment**

EMD Serono is committed to the independence of medical education for HCPs, including fellowships. When providing financial support, EMD Serono will not do so as a reward or in exchange for prescribing or purchasing EMD Serono products or to induce the prescription or purchase of EMD Serono products in the future. Funding recipients are not expected or obliged to prescribe, purchase, or recommend an EMD Serono product.

#### **h. Screenshots of the fields in the Request Management System with sample language**

Requests must be submitted through EMD Serono's *Request Management System* at [www.grants.emdserono.com](http://www.grants.emdserono.com). See the following pages for relevant screenshots of the system.

**Screenshot of the "General Information" tab (with sample language)**

The screenshot shows the EMD Serono Request Detail page for Request ID 2022-RMS-FEL-107316. The page is titled "Request Detail" and includes a navigation bar with "My Account", "Help", "FAQ", "Privacy Policy", and "Log out". Below the navigation bar is a "My Actions" button. The main content area is divided into tabs: "General Information" (selected), "Request Information", "Budget", "Document Uploads", and "Authorized Signer/Payee".

The "General Information" tab contains the following fields and options:

- \* Activity Sub-Type: Fellowship (dropdown)
- \* Therapeutic Area: Neurology (dropdown), \* Disease State: MS (dropdown)
- Choose Additional Therapeutic Area: RFP: 2022 I'M IN EMD Serono Neurodisparity Fellowship
- \* Program Title: Please enter the name of the event. (Text field)
- \* Program/Activity Description: [Insert short description; upload detailed proposal on 'Document Uploads' tab] (Text area)
- \* Decision Requested by Date: 11 Apr 2022 (calendar icon)
- \* Currency: USD (dropdown)
- \* Requested Amount: 150,000.00 (text field)
- \* Estimated Program Budget: 150,000.00 (text field)
- \* Is other financial support being sought for this program?  Yes  No
- \* Please enter the approximate percentage of your Organization/Institution's total annual budget that this request would represent: (dropdown)
- Number of participants in the program: 2 (text field)
- \* Number of participants for which you are requesting support: 2 (text field)
- \* Does this Request have a diversity, inclusion, or equality component to it?  Yes  No
- \* If yes, summarize it in 1-2 sentences: Advancing Diversity, Inclusion and Equity in Healthcare: Reducing Disparities in Neurologic Care for MS Patients (text area)

At the bottom of the form are four buttons: "Save and Back", "Save and Continue Later", "Save and Proceed to Next Step", and "Cancel".

\*Note: You must enter "**RFP: 2022 I'M IN EMD Serono Neurodisparity Fellowship**" in the "Program Title" field. The name of your proposed fellowship program may be entered in the "Program/Activity Description" field, along with a brief description. The details of your proposed fellowship should appear in a document which is uploaded on the "Documents Uploaded" tab of the request (see screenshot below).



**Screenshot of the "Request Information" tab (with sample language)**

EMD SERONO

My Account | Help | FAQ | Privacy Policy | Log out

My Actions

### Request Detail

Request ID 2022-RMS-FEL -107316

Please complete all required fields. An asterisk \* indicates a required field.

General Information | **Request Information** | Budget | Document Uploads | Authorized Signer/Payee

- \* Needs Assessment Summary  
Please provide brief description of the need for funding.  
[describe the need being addressed by your fellowship proposal]
- \* Criteria for selecting a participant  
[identify criteria for selection]
- \* Learning Objectives  
How will the participant benefit from this program?  


Objective	Edit	Action
[objective #1]		
[objective #2]		

Add Objective

Save and Back | Save and Continue Later | Save and Proceed to Next Step | Cancel

\*Note: Two (2) learning objectives must be listed; you must click the "action" icon after each objective to proceed to the next step.

**Screenshot of the "Budget" tab (with sample language)**



[My Account](#) | [Help](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Log out](#)

My Actions

### Request Detail

Request ID 2022-RMS-FEL -107316

Fill in only those fields that apply to your request.

Items that do not fall into a specifically listed category in the budget section should be included in the other section of the budget, and a description should be entered in the comments field. If necessary, a more detailed budget may be uploaded in the Document Uploads section of the request.

General Information

Request Information

Budget

Document Uploads

Authorized Signer/Payee

Please complete all required fields. Asterisk "\*" Indicates Required Field

Currency : USD			
	General Information	Detailed Budget	Difference
Estimated Program Budget	150,000.00	150,000.00	0.00
Requested Amount	150,000.00	150,000.00	0.00

Budget

Budget Item	Amount	Number of People	Estimated Program Budget	Requested Amount	Comments
Salary <input type="text" value="▼"/>	60,000.00	2	120,000.00	120,000.00	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Fringe Benefits <input type="text" value="▼"/>	15,000.00	2	30,000.00	30000.00	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
<b>Total</b>			<b>USD 150,000.00</b>	<b>USD 150,000.00</b>	

Add Row

Save and Back

Save and Continue Later

Save and Proceed to Next Step

Cancel

**Screenshot of the "Document Uploads" tab (with sample language)**

**EMD SERONO**

My Account | Help | FAQ | Privacy Policy | Log out

My Actions

### Request Detail

Request ID 2022-RMS-FEL -107316

This page allows you to upload supporting documents electronically. Some documents are mandatory for upload and indicated by asterisk "\*".

Please feel free to submit any additional relevant documents that may help us review your request (e.g., agendas, proposed faculty, description of the organization, detailed needs assessment, etc.).

**Upload Documents**

Upload documents by specifying a document title below and clicking the Browse button. Select the appropriate file for the document you wish to attach to your request and click the Upload button (maximum upload size = 20 Megabyte).

Documents of the following types may be uploaded: pdf, docx, xlsx, xls, doc, rtf, tif, gif, txt, ppt, pptx, jpg, jpeg.

General Information | Request Information | Budget | **Document Uploads** | Authorized Signer/Payee

\* Is the current Tax Documentation in your profile up to date?  Yes  No

[View Uploaded Tax Documentation](#)

* Agenda	<input type="text"/>	Browse
* Proposal	<input type="text"/>	Browse
* Formal Letter of Request	<input type="text"/>	Browse

**Add Document**

**Save and Back**      **Save and Continue Later**      **Save and Proceed to Next Step**

**Cancel**