

# Lymphatic Education & Research Network Postdoctoral Fellowship Awards Program



Lymphatic Education  
& Research Network

## Proposal Guidelines

Grant Cycle 2016

Deadline:

Friday, January 15, 2016  
3:00 P.M., U.S. Eastern Standard Time (GMT-5)



### Award Period

July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2018

### Award Amount

Up to two (2) two-year fellowship awards ranging from \$87,396 – \$98,304 USD, based upon postdoctoral experience and inclusive of a \$1,500 USD annual expense allowance.

### Research Focus

The Lymphatic Education & Research Network (LE&RN) is committed to promoting and supporting basic and translational research that fosters an interdisciplinary field of investigators conducting lymphatic research. The supported research will improve our understanding and advance the prevention, diagnosis, and novel treatments of lymphedema (primary and secondary) and other lymphatic disorders. Because lymphedema is the most common clinical manifestation of the lymphatic disorders, at least one fellowship in each grant cycle will be awarded to research specifically focused on the mechanisms, pathogenesis, diagnosis or treatment of lymphedema.

Research areas of interest include, but are not limited to, lymphatic vessel biology and pathology; physiological mechanisms of normal and pathological lymphangiogenesis; animal models of the lymphatic system and its disorders; studies (including lymphatic imaging) that address the regulation of lymphatic structure and function. Basic science and translational studies addressing normal and pathological lymphatics in organ systems, (e.g. heart, lung, intestine and brain) and the signaling between lymphatics and other cell types (e.g. immune, adipose and neural) are encouraged.

Studies focused specifically on the technical advancement of imaging technologies or projects in lymphocyte biology, leukemia, lymphoma and conditions secondary to lymphedema such as cutaneous infections, are outside the scope of this program.

### Program Background

LE&RN is a 501(c)(3) not-for profit organization whose mission is to fight lymphatic disease and lymphedema through education, research and advocacy. LE&RN seeks to accelerate the prevention, treatment and cure of the disease while bringing patients and medical professionals together to address the unmet needs surrounding lymphatic disorders ([www.lymphaticnetwork.org](http://www.lymphaticnetwork.org)).

The lymphatic system is a central and vital functional component of the human body, yet historically in the medical research community there has been a serious neglect of this system. Without progress in understanding the lymphatic system through scientific investigation, patients will not have new treatments and cures for lymphatic disorders.

The goal of the Fellowship Program is to expand and strengthen the pool of outstanding junior investigators in the field of lymphatic research. The awards will support investigators who have recently received their doctorates, a critical point in career development when young scientists choose their lifelong research focus. Over time, the Program will seed the field of lymphatic research to assure future leadership, fostering discoveries that will lead to therapeutic advances.

In recognition of a generous bequest from Dorothea M. Weitzner, designated awards will be known as the Henry M. Weitzner, Edna K. Weitzner, Dorothea M. Weitzner and Morton L. Weitzner Research Fellowships. The Medical Foundation, *a division of Health Resources in Action*, administers the Program for the Lymphatic Education & Research Network.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

The Program is accepting applications worldwide from postdoctoral fellows who will meet the following eligibility requirements by the funding start date of July 1, 2016:

- Hold a Ph.D. or comparable degree and/or an M.D. or equivalent from an accredited institution;
- Must work in an academic or medical research institution;
- Must have no more than three (3) years of full-time postdoctoral research experience (see definition below). Eligible applicants will have begun their full-time postdoctoral work by on or after July 1, 2013;
- Commit at least 90% time for research or, at least 70% time for research if the applicant also has clinical responsibilities;
- Apply under the guidance of a Mentor who is an established investigator with an active research program. Mentors are expected to be involved in the planning, execution, and supervision of the proposed research;
- Plan to work in the Mentor's laboratory for the duration of the two-year Fellowship;
- Only one applicant per Mentor may apply per application cycle;
- Submit a project relevant to the mission of the Lymphatic Education & Research Network.

There are no institutional limitations on the number of applicants who may submit applications. Eligibility is not limited to investigators with past experience in the field of lymphatic research.

### **Definition of Terms**

Postdoctoral research experience is defined as full-time employment, after receiving one's first doctoral degree, as a postdoctoral fellow in a research laboratory or similar professional experience (e.g. positions in biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries) five full days each week. All postdoctoral research experience completed domestically and abroad is counted. Individuals who took time off from their research careers for family or medical leave, or other reasons, should not include their leave time in calculating their postdoctoral research experience. For M.D. applicants, periods of post-graduate clinical training are not included. Part-time employment may be cumulative towards these eligibility requirements and must be documented by the Mentor.

**The Mentor's letter must state the number of years of full-time postdoctoral research experience that the Fellow will have completed by July 1, 2016. If other than full-time experience is being considered in fulfillment of these requirements, this must also be documented in the Mentor's Letter of Support.**

### **Selection Criteria**

The Scientific Review Committee uses the following criteria to evaluate applications:

- **Applicant's** demonstrated competency and potential for an independent career in research;
- Project will contribute to the professional training and growth of the Applicant;
- Qualifications of the **Mentor** and the degree of commitment to supervise and train the Applicant during the research period, and strength of their Letter of Support;
- Letters of Recommendation that attest to the applicant's qualifications, their potential to become an independent investigator, and the importance of the proposed research;
- Strength of publications relevant to the field of study;
- Ambitious and ground-breaking research projects are encouraged;
- **Research Proposal:**
  - Originality of research and importance to the mission of LE&RN;
  - Impact on the field;
  - Hypothesis is clear and objectives are feasible;
  - Proposal reviews relevant studies and literature;
  - Research methodology, data collection, analytical plan and timeline are appropriate to the proposal's aims

### **Notification to Candidates**

Applicants will be notified by email following the determination of available funds. Critiques of the grant applications are not provided to successful or unsuccessful applicants nor is applicant ranking.

### **Terms of the Award**

Please review the Terms of the Award (pgs. 4-8) for information regarding use of the grant funds, indirect costs, reporting schedules and other Grantee and Institutional requirements.

**Submission Instructions** begin on page 9.

**Frequently Asked Questions** are available for download: [www.tmfgrants.org/LERN](http://www.tmfgrants.org/LERN)

## **Terms of the Award**

**Overview:** Awards are made to non-profit academic, medical or research institutions on behalf of the Award Recipients. The laws of the United States place certain restrictions on the manner in which funds awarded to organizations by charitable trusts and foundations may be expended. The institutions are responsible for administering the stipend and maintaining adequate supporting records for training-related expenses.

In recognition of a generous bequest from Dorothea M. Weitzner, designated awards will be known as the **Henry M. Weitzner, Edna K. Weitzner, Dorothea M. Weitzner and Morton L. Weitzner Research Fellowship Award**. The Medical Foundation, *a division of Health Resources in Action* (“The Medical Foundation division”), administers the Postdoctoral Fellowship Awards Program for the Lymphatic Education & Research Network (“LE&RN”). Health Resources in Action (“HRiA”) is a nonprofit organization in Boston, MA that advances public health and medical research.

In order for us to carry out our legal responsibilities, we must ask the Fellow/Award Recipient (the “Recipient”) and the Award Recipient Institution (the “Institution”) to abide by the following:

**Award Amount and Funding Period:** Two-year Awards are made to nonprofit academic, medical, or research institutions on behalf of the Recipient. The LE&RN Postdoctoral Fellowship Award is for stipend only and is based on the number of years of completed full-time postdoctoral experience, as of the funding start date of July 1, 2016. Funds are provided by LE&RN and the bequest of Dorothy M. Weitzner. The Fellowship stipends are roughly equivalent to the 2015 fellowship stipends currently offered by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The awards are issued in U.S. dollars (USD).

Postdoctoral Research Experience (Years Completed)	Year 1 Stipend	Year 2 Stipend	Expense Allowance Per Year	Two-year Total USD
0	\$41,340	\$43,056	\$1,500	\$87,396
1	\$43,056	\$44,844	\$1,500	\$90,900
2	\$44,844	\$46,692	\$1,500	\$94,536
3	\$46,692	\$48,612	\$1,500	\$98,304

The funding period is July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2018. Recipients may postpone the start date for up to three months but the award must be activated on or before October 1, 2016. Although approval is not required, the revised start date must be noted on the Award Agreement signature page. Longer delays may be requested but must be approved by The Medical Foundation division. A delayed start date will not reduce the total award period (e.g. project start date of September 1, 2016 will revise the project end date to August 31, 2018.)

**Institutional Assurances:** The Recipient must adhere to all federal, state, local and foreign equivalent regulations regarding the use of human subjects, animals, radioactive or hazardous materials, and recombinant DNA in this research project. It is the Institution’s responsibility to ensure that all approvals have been secured prior to releasing the Award funds. The signatures of the Authorized

Institutional Representative on the Application Face Sheet and the Institutional Officer on the Institutional Officer Acceptance Agreement confirm this oversight.

**Liability:** LE&RN and The Medical Foundation division do not assume any liability or responsibility for activities supported by this Award including incidents or accidents involving the Award Recipient (whether on travel, in the laboratory, classroom, or elsewhere).

**Scientific Misconduct:** The Medical Foundation division also requires that the appropriate federal, state, local and foreign equivalent guidelines with regard to scientific misconduct are in place and enforced at the Institution. In the unlikely event that a Recipient is involved in an investigation of scientific and/or financial misconduct, he or she will be subject to the procedures in place at the Institution. The Institution must notify The Medical Foundation division of both the investigation and the procedures that the Institution will follow.

According to the NIH/U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, research misconduct is defined as the “fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results.” A finding of scientific and/or financial misconduct must be reported to The Medical Foundation division and may affect the Recipient’s continued eligibility for support under this Program.

**Use of the Award Funds:** The LE&RN Postdoctoral Fellowship Award is for stipend only (not subject to deductions for fringe benefits or indirect costs by the Institution) and is based on the number of years of completed full-time postdoctoral experience, as of the funding start date of July 1, 2016. Although awards are made for two consecutive years, funding of the second year is not automatic and is dependent upon a satisfactory review of first-year progress by the Scientific Review Committee.

At the discretion of the Recipient, \$1,500 of the annual award amount is designated as an Expense Allowance for research supplies, equipment, health insurance and travel to scientific meetings that is the sole financial obligation of the Recipient. With the Mentor’s approval, the Recipient may use the \$1,500 or a portion of it to supplement the Recipient’s salary. The grant monies which have been awarded, including any interest earned thereon, may only be used for the purposes stated in the Terms of the Award.

This Expense Allowance or any portion of it may **not** be used for institutional overhead. Institutions may not automatically deduct any fees from this allowance without the Recipient’s approval. The full expense allowance will be included in each July award payment. Any unused expense allowance in Year 1 may be carried over to Year 2 without a formal request.

The Medical Foundation division and LE&RN do not withhold any amount for U.S. income tax purposes. It is the responsibility of the Recipient to contact the Internal Revenue Service or the Institution’s fiscal office to determine the tax status of the award.

Awards made internationally must comply with applicable United States economic sanctions, anti-terrorism laws, and anti-money laundering laws including, but not limited to, the USA PATRIOT Act, the laws administered by the United States Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control,

Executive Order 13224, and any local laws that apply in the jurisdiction in which the Institution is operating.

**Supplementation of Fellowship:** Because the fellowship stipend may not cover total institutional compensation, supplementation by the Institution is permitted and also encouraged. The LE&RN stipend can only be used as salary support and cannot change its usage of funds to accommodate the supplementation. The total of all competitive fellowship awards plus any institutional supplementation cannot, however, exceed the annual salary or total compensation for the Recipient's position as determined by the Institution. It is not acceptable to hold concurrently a named fellowship from another source that supports a full salary.

An NIH K Award (i.e. K08, K23, K99/R00), R01 or foreign equivalent grant, awarded to the Recipient, cannot supplement the fellowship. In all circumstances, The Medical Foundation division must be notified of the receipt of additional funding at least 30 days prior to that Award's start date. If such a grant is received prior to the start of funding, the application must be withdrawn and if the grant is awarded during the fellowship period, The Medical Foundation division and LE&RN reserve the right to terminate the fellowship on a case by case basis. In the case of fellowship termination, any funds remaining from the Award must be returned to The Medical Foundation division (check payable to "Health Resources in Action").

**Change of Status:** The Recipient and the Mentor must notify The Medical Foundation division of any change in the Recipient's academic status at least 30 days prior to such change. The Medical Foundation division and LE&RN reserve the right to terminate the Award in the event that the Recipient is promoted to a faculty position or leaves the institution. Likewise, receipt of major additional funding must also be reported to The Medical Foundation division.

**Financial Responsibilities of Award Recipient Institution:** The Institution will keep systematic records of all grant payments and expenditures relating to this Award. Vouchers consisting of bills, invoices, cancelled checks, receipts, etc. will be retained by the Institution for three (3) years after the close of the Award period and will be available for inspection by representatives of The Medical Foundation division or LE&RN during normal business hours and upon reasonable notice throughout this period. LE&RN may, at their expense, examine, audit, or have audited the records of the Institution insofar as they relate to activities supported by this Award.

**Transfer or Termination of Fellowship:** Fellowships awarded by LE&RN are made to the Institution where the named Recipient is conducting research. In the event that the Recipient or Mentor leaves that institution, the Award is not transferable without prior approval of The Medical Foundation division. If the project is terminated for any reason, any unused funds must be returned to The Medical Foundation division within sixty (60) days of the termination of research activity. The check should be made payable to "Health Resources in Action."

**Unused Funds and Reversion:** Should any of the events described herein occur, The Medical Foundation division or LE&RN may demand repayment of all unexpended portions of the fellowship stipend; moreover, all unpaid installments may be cancelled. The Institution is also required to give written notice if there is a change in the Institution's status as noted below:

- A determination, preliminary or otherwise, is made by the Internal Revenue Service or foreign equivalent that the grant does not constitute a qualifying distribution.
- The Institution fails to perform any of its duties, in the judgment of The Medical Foundation division or its Scientific Review Committee, required by the Terms of this Award. In such cases, the Foundation shall provide no less than thirty (30) days termination notice in writing to the Institution, upon which the Institution shall have an additional thirty (30) days following receipt of such notice within which to cure any deemed failures.
- The Institution ceases to be exempt from income taxes under the Internal Revenue Service Code or foreign equivalent or becomes a private foundation.
- There is a material change in the purpose, character, or method of operation of the Institution such as to jeopardize its tax status.

**Medical and Family Leave:** The Recipient may continue to expend any funds allocated to salary during medical or family leave consistent with the Institutional level of paid leave for such purposes. Similarly, budgeted costs for maintaining the research study may be expended during the leave, subject to institutional policies. Re-budgeting of these expenses during leave requires approval of The Medical Foundation division. Medical leave may be a serious health condition of the Recipient or one of his/her immediate family members that makes the Recipient unable to perform the essential functions of his/her positions. Family Leave may be taken for the adoption or the birth of a child. Either parent is eligible for parental leave. The use of medical or family leave must be approved by the Mentor.

**Patents, Copyright and Intellectual Property:** The Recipient should follow the Institution's policies regarding discoveries or any other intellectual property that results from research conducted under this Award. Neither The Medical Foundation division nor LE&RN will retain any rights to intellectual property including patents, copyrights, trademarks, or other proprietary rights that result from the research.

**Reporting Requirements:** Acceptance of a fellowship from LE&RN includes a commitment to provide both Progress and Final Research Reports. The Mentor is required to complete a section of the Progress Report that addresses the Recipient's research plans during the second year of funding. Progress Reports are due in April 2017. Recipients will receive an emailed reminder and an electronic Reporting Form from The Medical Foundation division prior to all Report deadlines. LE&RN and The Medical Foundation division reserve the right to place a hold on funds in cases of non-compliance with these Reporting Requirements.

**Year 2 Funding:** Second-year funding will be approved upon the satisfactory completion of the Progress Report as determined by the Scientific Review Committee. The Mentor is also expected to summarize the Recipient's research accomplishments and plans for the future as part of the Recipient's Final Report. Final Reports are due 60 days following the conclusion of the Award Period. Recipients will receive an emailed reminder and an electronic Reporting Form from The Medical Foundation division one month prior to all Report deadlines.

**Confidentiality and Third Party Release:** Application Materials, Scientific Progress and Final Reports are considered confidential. The Medical Foundation division engages third parties who have the

necessary expertise to review the submitted materials and evaluate the project. Although The Medical Foundation division and LE&RN endeavors to protect the confidentiality of the reports by requiring reviewers to sign confidentiality agreements, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. The Medical Foundation division or LE&RN will not be responsible for any damages resulting from the disclosure of the content of the reports to such third parties.

The Medical Foundation division and LE&RN reserve the right to public acknowledgement of Award information (Award Recipient Name, Institution, Project Title, Award Amount and Research Project Summary). This information will be made available through The Medical Foundation division and LE&RN websites and may be posted on other affiliated organization websites, included in publicly accessible databases of privately funded awards, or published in print form or other media.

**Acknowledgments:** Recipients are expected to share scientific findings in a timely manner through professional meetings and/or publications. Recipients are also expected to submit abstracts to the "Lymphatics" Gordon Research Conference (GRC). Scientific publications or presentations resulting from research supported by the Award must acknowledge *Henry M. Weitzner, Edna K. Weitzner, Dorothea M. Weitzner and Morton L. Weitzner* and the *Lymphatic Education & Research Network*.

**Post Award Reporting:** Recipients agree to update The Medical Foundation division after the fellowship term about any new position, affiliation, or contact information (especially an email address). The Recipient will also respond to requests for information on his/her career progress following the Award and provide his/her current Biosketch. The Recipient understands that this obligation survives the Award period.

*Please continue to the next page for Submission Instructions.*

## **Instructions for Application Submission**

The application process requires completion of an Online Application and upload of a PDF document.

Deadline:  
Friday, January 15, 2016  
3:00 P.M., U.S. Eastern Standard Time (GMT-5)

### **SECTION I: Online Application**

Please use the following links to access the online application:

Begin a New Online Application:

[https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID\\_738?SA=SNA&FID=35072](https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID_738?SA=SNA&FID=35072)

Return to a Saved Online Application:

[https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID\\_738?SA=AM](https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID_738?SA=AM)

The following sections are required within the online application form:

- Institution's Tax ID or Charitable Registration Number (for U.S. and Canadian applicants only)
- Eligibility Quiz
- Applicant Data: Institution, contact and educational background information
- Research Project: Project Title, Keywords, Project Summary, Non-technical Summary, and Mentor information
- Research Classification and Research Area (*\*Research Classification and Research Area are used for administrative tracking purposes only and not used in the scientific review.*)
- Mentor/Recommenders: Online request form for the confidential Letters of Support and Recommendation. Please see instructions below (A).
- Attachments: A PDF document must be uploaded to the Online Application. Please see instructions below (B).

#### **A. Letters of Support and Recommendation:**

All letters must be uploaded to the Online Application for applicants to successfully submit their application. Late letters will not be accepted.

*For additional instruction regarding the monitoring and upload of letters, please review the "Letter of Support and Recommendation Instructions", outlined on Page 13.*

**THREE** confidential letters are required and must be submitted through the online system. They must be from 1) your Mentor (Letter of Support), 2) your Thesis Advisor, Residency Director or equivalent who can comment on your training, and 3) your choice.

Only one Mentor's Letter is allowed. If applicable, any co-mentor letter must be one of the two additional recommendation letters. Collaboration letters are not accepted. All international letters must be submitted in English.

It is the responsibility of the Applicant to obtain these three (3) letters prior to the Online Application deadline. Members of the Review Committees give considerable weight to these letters.

**1. Instructions for Mentor's Letter of Support (maximum of four pages):**

- Describe the Applicant's qualifications and provide a clear mentorship plan (included within the four page maximum) stating how the Mentor will be involved in the planning, execution, and supervision of the proposed research; support the Fellow to further develop his/her independence; and promote their scientific career. A brief description of the research facilities and equipment available to the Applicant should also be included.
- Confirm the number of years of full-time postdoctoral experience that the Fellow will have completed by July 1, 2016. Please explain if other than full-time experience is being considered in fulfillment of these requirements;
- Confirm the applicant can commit at least 90% time for research or, at least 70% time for research if the applicant has clinical responsibilities;
- Confirm the applicant has completed at least no more than three (3) years full-time postdoctoral research experience;
- Confirm degrees obtained outside the United States are equivalent to the M.D., D.M.D., Ph.D. or other doctoral degree.
- Publication and publication history will be used as criteria to judge the productivity of the Fellow. The Mentor must comment on the applicant's publication record.

**2. Instructions for Letters of Recommendation (maximum of four pages per letter):**

- Recommenders should describe their association with the Applicant and comment on the following: the applicant's scientific background; research ability and potential; self-reliance and independence; and critical thinking skills.
- For Ph.D. applicants, a letter of recommendation is required from the thesis advisor. If the thesis advisor is unable to provide a letter, the Applicant must provide an explanation in the PDF upload.
- For M.D. applicants, instead of a thesis advisor letter, please ask for a letter of recommendation from your Residency Director or equivalent who can comment on your training and how they perceive your future potential.

**Please notify your Recommenders early on in the application process and allow them sufficient time to prepare your letters.** It is advisable that you begin an online application immediately, enter the names and emails of your Mentor and two recommenders and then send each the email request from the online system.

**B. Attachment Instructions for PDF:**

- Items #1 – 7 must be combined into ONE PDF document for upload.
- To begin, download the Form Templates document (contains the Face Sheet, Table of Contents, and Project Summary template) and Modified NIH Biosketch at [www.tmfgrants.org/LERN](http://www.tmfgrants.org/LERN)

- 1. Application Face Sheet:** The Face Sheet must be completed and signed by the Applicant, Mentor, and the Office of Sponsored Programs or the Institutional Officer administratively responsible for the oversight of the project. The signatures of the Applicant and Mentor on the Face Sheet will confirm responsibility for obtaining any required human subjects (IRB), animal

use (IACUC), institutional or foreign equivalent approvals. In addition, the Mentor's and Institutional Officer's signatures will confirm that all eligibility requirements have been met. Endorsement by the Institutional Officer confirms that the Institution will commit to appropriate oversight if the project is funded. Once all signatures have been obtained, the Face Sheet should be scanned and used as page 1 of the uploaded document.

2. **Table of Contents:** Follow the Table of Contents and number pages sequentially.
3. **Project Summary:** In 300 words, describe the project's broad, long-term objectives and specific aims. Use the same Project Summary in both the online application and PDF document.
4. **Biosketch of Applicant (maximum of five pages):**  
All applicants must use the NIH Fellowship Biosketch or Modified NIH Biosketch (downloadable [www.tmfgrants.org/LERN](http://www.tmfgrants.org/LERN)). The Biosketch must include:
  - a. Personal Statement - Briefly describe why your experience and qualifications make you particularly well-suited for your role in the project that is the subject of the application. Include a brief 2-3 sentence description of your Mentor's contribution, your level of independence on the project, and a section on how this fellowship would assist in your future research career path. Applicants who received doctoral degrees before July 1, 2013 must explain the reason for the lapse in postdoctoral research experience in the personal statement.
  - b. Positions and Honors – Any Relevant Research should be included in citation form.
  - c. Contributions to Science
  - d. Scholastic Performance
5. **Research Proposal (maximum of six pages, excluding references cited). Within the page limit, include these sections:**
  - a. Background;
  - b. Specific Aims;
  - c. Preliminary data (if available);
  - d. Research design, experimental methods and analytical plan;
  - e. Research limitations and/or potential pitfalls, and;
  - f. Describe how the project may advance research of the lymphatic system and to find the cause of and cure for lymphatic diseases, primary or secondary lymphedema, and related disorders.

Research Proposal Format:

- Include at the top of each page in the margin, the applicant's full name, degree(s) and Institution.
- Arial 11 font and size must be used in the text of the research proposal section.
- Use single spacing within paragraphs, double spacing between paragraphs and at least half-inch margins on all four sides.
- Any figures, graphs, tables or pictures must be included within the six pages. For these visuals, the minimum is an 8 point-font size.
- Appendices are not permitted.

**6. Mentor’s Biosketch and List of Trainees (maximum of 6 pages):**

Use the current NIH general biosketch template or equivalent. All mentor biosketches must include:

- a. Personal Statement
- b. Positions and Honors
- c. Contributions to Science
- d. Research Support
- e. One-page listing of previous trainees with their current positions (included in page count)

**7. Thesis Advisor Explanation (if applicable):** If the thesis advisor is unable to write a Letter of Recommendation, please include a brief explanation of why and who will take their place.

*Out of fairness to applicants who adhere to the guidelines, applications that do not conform to the stated application procedures or that contain more than the specified number of pages or letters will be rejected. Applications that are not properly organized will be rejected.*

**Contact:**

Erin Johnstone, Program Officer

[EJohnstone@hria.org](mailto:EJohnstone@hria.org)

617-279-2240, x710

The Medical Foundation, a division of HRiA

LE&RN Postdoctoral Fellowship Program

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*Revised November 2015*

### **Letters of Support and Recommendation Instructions:**

**THREE confidential** letters are required and must be submitted through the online system. They must be from 1) your Mentor (Letter of Support), 2) your Thesis Advisor, Residency Director or equivalent who can comment on your training and 3) your choice.

### **Applicants/Mentors/Recommenders should refer to the Guidelines (page 9-10) for specific content instructions for the Letters.**

The Applicant must send an email request via the online application form and the Mentor/Recommender must use the website link provided in the email to upload the letter of support/recommendation. It is advisable that you contact your Mentor/Recommenders early on in the application process to allow them sufficient time to prepare your letter.

### **Instructions for Applicants to send an email request to your Mentor/Recommender:**

Within the online application form, on the “Recommenders” page:

- Input the Mentor and two Recommender’s names and emails.
- Check the “Send Email” box for the specific individual you are contacting. (Note: the form default is to have all of the Send Email boxes checked off so be careful to uncheck the boxes for the individuals you are not contacting).
- Click on the “Write Email & Send” button.
- This will bring you to the “Notify Selected Recommenders” page so you can customize the subject and email message for each individual contact.

Within the online application form, on the “Notify Selected Recommenders” page:

- Draft your email.
- Click on the “Write & Send” button. This will send the email to your selected mentor/recommender(s). Included in the sent email is an automatically generated website link that will allow him/her to upload the confidential letter of support or recommendation.
- After sending your email, you will be redirected back to the “Recommenders” page.

**IMPORTANT: It is the applicant’s responsibility to monitor the status of the online recommendations prior to the application deadline. Applicants will not be able to complete the application process if the letters are not submitted. Late submissions will be rejected.**

### **Additional Instructions:**

- Notify your mentor/recommenders to expect the email request from you. If the mentor/recommender does not receive the email(s) within the same day as the request, a spam filter may be blocking them.
- The mentor/recommenders must use the link provided in the email request and log-in with the email address that the Fellow provided. Instructions for uploading will be in the online application.
- The letter of support must be in a PDF format and official letterhead is preferred. Do not password-protect the letters. All letters submitted must be in English.
- When the mentor/recommender submits their letter, it will become a part of your application. You can view the status of your online recommendations each time you log into your My Accounts page ([https://www.grantrequest.com/SID\\_738/?SA=AM](https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_738/?SA=AM)).
- If the mentor/recommender is unable to find the email with the link or if you want to change the Recommender, use the My Account page to access your application, remove that request and restart the process.
- Only one Mentor’s Letter is allowed. If applicable, any co-mentor letters should be one of the two additional recommendation letters.
- Paper copies of the letters of support/recommendation will not be accepted.