



Lymphatic Education
& Research Network



FAT DISORDERS
RESEARCH SOCIETY

LE&RN/FDRS Lipedema Postdoctoral Fellowship Awards Program

A joint program of the Lymphatic Education & Research Network and the Fat Disorders Research Society

Proposal Guidelines

Grant Cycle 2015

Proposal Deadline:
Friday, August 28, 2015
1:00 P.M., U.S. Eastern Time (GMT-5)

Award Period

December 1, 2015 – November 30, 2017

Award Amount

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

Research Focus

Lipedema is a chronic, painful disorder with a complex pathology of unknown etiology that is predominantly seen in adolescent and adult women. Despite its apparent prevalence, clinical diagnostic criteria and standards remain poorly defined. Lipedema may be indicated by bilateral, symmetrical fatty tissue excess localized to the lower and upper limbs and can associate with hormonal status seen during puberty, pregnancy, postpartum or menopause. However, these empirical indicators lack rigorous quantitative analysis. Furthermore, adipose deposition in lipedema can associate with both microcirculatory and lymphatic dysfunction underscoring the need to understand the interactions between these tissue systems in order to address associated pathologies. Lipedema and Dercum's Disease are clinical diagnoses with overlapping features, with Dercum's Disease being characterized by widespread painful benign fatty tumors.

The LE&RN/FDRS Lipedema Postdoctoral Fellowship Awards Program was developed to stimulate and expand lipedema research, establish its clinical definition, and to understand its pathogenesis. Similarly focused studies addressing Dercum's Disease or the association of these diseases with lymphatic disease are also highly encouraged. This work intends to advance our understanding of these debilitating adipose disorders in order to better treat and prevent them. Improving our understanding of the biology and physiology of lipedema will contribute to differential diagnosis criteria distinguishing lipedema from simple obesity, other lipodystrophies, adiposal diseases and related physiological dysfunction.

The Program supports postdoctoral fellows early in their careers conducting either clinical, translational or basic science research. Fields of study include adipose or lymphatic biology as well as other areas

relevant to lipedema or Dercum's Disease such as physiology, genomics, immunology and endocrinology. Relevant topics include, but are not restricted to:

- Establishing clinical diagnostic criteria for lipedema or Dercum's Disease;
- The genetics of lipedema or Dercum's Disease;
- Distinguishing the biology of lipedema from normal or other hypertrophic adipose tissue;
- The study of adipocyte development and homeostasis in lipedema or Dercum's Disease;
- Hormonal effects on normal and abnormal adipose functions and interactions;
- The role of inflammation and the immune system in lipedema or Dercum's Disease;
- The association of adipocyte dysfunction with impaired lymphatic function;
- The development of pertinent animal models of lipedema or Dercum's Disease.

Program Background

The 2015 Lipedema Postdoctoral Fellowship Awards Program represents the inaugural collaborative effort between the Lymphatic Education & Research Network (LE&RN) and the Fat Disorders Research Society (FDRS) to stimulate research that will improve our understanding of lipedema and Dercum's Disease, and explore their association with lymphatic dysfunction.

With aligned missions, LE&RN and FDRS are collaborating to fund research that will break new ground. 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). FDRS is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization whose mission is dedicated to improving the quality of life for all people affected by adipose tissue disorders through research, education, advocacy and collaboration. FDRS envisions an inclusive international effort to research, treat and ultimately cure all lipedema, Dercum's Disease, Madelung's Disease and Familial Multiple Lipomatosis (www.fatdisorders.org).

LE&RN has retained The Medical Foundation, *a division of Health Resources in Action* to manage the administrative aspects of the LE&RN/FDRS Lipedema Postdoctoral Fellowship Awards Program.

Eligibility Requirements

The Program is accepting applications worldwide from postdoctoral fellows who will meet the following eligibility requirements by December 1, 2015:

- Received a Ph.D. or equivalent and/or an M.D. or equivalent from an accredited institution;
- Commit at least 90% time for research or, at least 70% time for research if the applicant also has clinical responsibilities;
- Have completed no more than three years of full-time postdoctoral research experience;
- Be a postdoctoral fellow under the supervision of a faculty member;
- Conduct the proposed research project at a nonprofit hospital, university or other research institution;
- Eligibility is not limited to those investigators or mentors with past experience in the field.

Applicants must apply for the fellowship under the guidance of a Mentor who is an established investigator with an active, productive research program. The Applicant's Mentor should be involved in

the planning, execution and supervision of the proposed research. The Fellow must be planning to work in the Mentor's laboratory for the duration of the two-year Fellowship. Only one fellow from a mentor's laboratory may apply; however, there are no institutional limitations on the number of applicants who may submit.

Full-time postdoctoral research experience is defined as full-time employment as a postdoctoral fellow in a research laboratory or similar professional experience (i.e. positions in biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries). If research was interrupted for medical leave, to complete clinical training or for other reasons, these months are not considered part of the full-time postdoctoral research experience.

Proposal Review Criteria

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

- Novelty of research and relevance to the Program Research Focus;
- Applicant's demonstrated competency and potential for a career in research;
- Qualifications of the Mentor and the degree of commitment to supervise and train the fellow during the proposed research period;
- Strength of Letters of Support and Recommendation;
- Research methodology, data collection and data analysis are feasible and appropriate to the research proposal's aims.

Notification to Candidates:

Candidates will receive an email confirmation upon submission of their proposal. The results of the review will be emailed in November, and funding will begin on December 1, 2015. Critiques of the grant proposals 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, reporting schedules and other Grantee and Institutional requirements.

Terms of the Awards

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 Award Recipient Institution is responsible for the administrative and financial management of the Award and maintaining adequate supporting records and receipts of expenditures.

The Lymphatic Education & Research Network (“LE&RN”)/Fat Disorders Research Society (“FDRS”) Lipedema Postdoctoral Fellowship Awards Program is administered by The Medical Foundation, *a division of Health Resources in Action* (“The Medical Foundation division”). 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 “Award 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 Award Recipients. The LE&RN/FDRS Lipedema Postdoctoral Fellowship Award is for stipend only and is based on the number of years of completed full-time postdoctoral experience, as of December 1, 2015. Funds are provided by LE&RN and FDRS. The Fellowship Award stipends are roughly equivalent to fellowships currently offered by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The awards are issued in U.S. dollars.

Postdoctoral Research Experience (Years Completed)	Year 1 Stipend	Year 2 Stipend	Expense Allowance Per Year	Two-year Total
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 December 1, 2015 – November 30, 2017. Award Recipients may postpone the start date for up to three months and the award must be activated on or before March 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 January 1, 2016 will revise the project end date to December 31, 2017).

Institutional Assurances: The Award 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: The Medical Foundation division, LE&RN, and FDRS 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 Award Recipient Institution. In the unlikely event that an Award 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 Award Recipient’s continued eligibility for support under this Program.

Use of the Award Funds: The LE&RN/FDRS Fellowship Award is for stipend only (not subject to deductions for fringe benefits by the Sponsoring Institution) and is based on the number of years of completed full-time postdoctoral experience, as of the funding start date of December 1, 2015. 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 Award 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 are the sole financial obligation of the Award Recipient. With the Mentor’s approval, the Award Recipient may use the \$1,500 or a portion of it to supplement the Award 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 Award 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, LE&RN, and FDRS do not withhold any amount for U.S. income tax purposes. It is the responsibility of the Award Recipient to contact the Internal Revenue Service or the Grantee 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 Award Recipient institution is operating.

Supplementation of Fellowship: Because the fellowship stipend may not cover total institutional compensation, supplementation by the Grantee Institution is permitted and also encouraged. The 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 Award 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 equivalent grant, awarded to the Award 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, LE&RN/FDRS reserves 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 Award Recipient and the Mentor must notify The Medical Foundation division of any change in the Award Recipient's academic status at least 30 days prior to such change. LE&RN/FDRS reserves the right to terminate the Award in the event that the Award 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, LE&RN, or FDRS during normal business hours and upon reasonable notice throughout this period. LE&RN or FDRS, 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 the LE&RN and FDRS are made to the institution where the named Award Recipient is conducting research. In the event that the Award 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 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 Medical Foundation division 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 Award Recipient may receive stipends for up to 8 work weeks due to medical leave or family leave if those in comparable training positions at the Institution have access to this level of paid leave for these purposes. Medical leave may be a serious health condition of the Award Recipient or one of his/her immediate family members that makes the Award 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: Award Recipients should follow their Institutions' patent, copyright, and intellectual property policies regarding discoveries that result from research conducted under this Award. The Medical Foundation division, LE&RN or FDRS will not retain any rights to published results or patents that result from the research.

Reporting Requirements: Acceptance of a fellowship from the LE&RN/FDRS Program 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 Award Recipient's research plans during the second year of funding. The Mentor is also expected to summarize the Award Recipient's research accomplishments and plans for the future as part of the Award Recipient's Final Report. Progress Reports are due in September 2016. Award Recipients will receive an emailed reminder and an electronic Reporting Form from The Medical Foundation division prior to all Report deadlines.

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 Award Recipient's research accomplishments and plans for the future as part of the Award Recipient's Final Report. Final Reports are due 60 days following the conclusion of the Award Period. Award Recipients will receive an emailed reminder and an electronic Reporting Form from The Medical Foundation division prior to all Report deadlines.

Confidentiality and Third Party Release: Application Materials, Scientific Progress and Final reports are considered confidential. The Medical Foundation division may contact third parties who have the necessary expertise to review the submitted materials and evaluate the project. Although The Medical Foundation division endeavors to protect the confidentiality of the reports by requiring reviewers to sign confidentiality agreements, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. The Medical Foundation division 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, LE&RN and FDRS reserve the right to public acknowledgement (including The Medical Foundation division, LE&RN and FDRS websites or in printed publications) of award information (i.e. recipient name, project title, award amount, project summary).

Acknowledgments: Award Recipients are expected to share scientific findings in a timely manner through professional meetings and/or publications. Scientific publications or presentations resulting from research supported by the Award must acknowledge the *Lymphatic Education & Research Network* and the *Fat Disorders Research Society*.

Post Award: Award 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 Award 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 complete application process requires an Online Application and PDF document (uploaded to the Online Application).

<u>Online Application Deadline:</u>
--

Friday, August 28, 2015

1:00 PM, U.S. EST

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=35088

Return to a SAVED Online Application: https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID_738?SA=AM

The following sections are required within the online application form:

- Institution's Tax ID Number
- Eligibility Quiz
- Applicant Data: Institution, contact and educational background
- Research Project: Project Title, Keywords, Project Summary, Short Statement 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 further instructions below (A).
- Attachments: A PDF document must be uploaded to the Online Application. Please see further 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 the last page.

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.

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):

- The Mentor's Letter of Support should describe the Applicant's qualifications and provide a clear mentorship plan (included within the four page maximum) stating how the Mentor will 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 must also be included.
- The Mentor must confirm the number of years of full-time postdoctoral experience that the Fellow will have completed by December 1, 2015.

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 letter. 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 an email request from the online system.

B. Attachment Instructions for PDF:

-Documents listed in items #1 – 7 must be combined into ONE PDF document for upload.

-To begin, download the Proposal Forms (contains the Face Sheet, Table of Contents, and Project Summary template) at www.tmfgrants.org/LERN-FDRS

1. 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), or institutional 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. A template for the Face Sheet is included in the Proposal Forms.

2. Table of Contents:

Follow the Table of Contents and number pages sequentially beginning with the Application Face Sheet as page number one. A template for the Table of Contents is included in the Proposal Forms.

3. Project Summary:

Please include a 300 word summary stating the project's broad, long-term objectives and specific aims. Use the same Project Summary in both the online form and PDF document. A template for the Project Summary is included in the Proposal Forms.

4. Biosketch of Applicant:

The biosketch may be submitted in either the old 4-page NIH format or the new 5-page NIH format. Regardless of the version submitted, applicants must adhere to the page limits, and the following items must be included:

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 and your level of independence on the project. Applicants are requested to include a section on how this fellowship would assist in their future research career path. In addition, explain your current job seeking and other research funding situation.

Applicants who received doctoral degrees before December 1, 2012 must explain the reason for the lapse in postdoctoral research experience in the personal statement. For Clinical Fellows, please describe your career path and the relevance of your work to human health.

b) Positions and honors

c) Publications: List publications in the following categories: a) peer-reviewed articles, b) non peer-reviewed articles such as reviews and book chapters, c) abstracts within the last two years and d) manuscripts in submission. Citations should include all authors, year, title, journal, volume and inclusive pagination. The applicant's name should be in CAPs or bold in the list of authors.

d) Research support (if not applicable, please mark N/A)

5. Research Proposal (maximum of six pages, excluding references cited):

Within the page limit, include the following section to describe how the project may contribute and/or advance the field of lipedema research:

- 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;

Research Proposal Format:

- 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:

The biosketch may be submitted in either the old 4-page NIH format or the new 5-page NIH format. Mentor's must adhere to the page limits. Regardless of the version submitted, the Mentor's biosketch should include no more than 15 publications relevant to the proposal as well as current and pending support for the laboratory. An additional one page listing of previous trainees with their current positions must be included.

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.

Important! 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.

Submit Applications to:

Erin Johnstone, Program Officer
The Medical Foundation, a division of HRiA
LE&RN/FDRS Fellowship Program
95 Berkeley Street, 2nd Floor
Boston, MA 02116

Email: EJohnstone@hria.org

Tel: 617-279-2240, x710

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 5) 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.
- 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).
- 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.