

Defense Health Program  
Department of Defense Multiple Sclerosis Research Program  
Funding Opportunities for Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18)

**Due to the current Continuing Resolution, the Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18) Defense Appropriations bill has not been passed. Although funds have not been appropriated for the Department of Defense Multiple Sclerosis Research Program (MSRP), the MSRP is providing the information in this pre-announcement to allow investigators time to plan and develop ideas for submission to the anticipated FY18 funding opportunities.**

FY18 MSRP Program Announcements and General Application Instructions for the following award mechanisms are anticipated to be posted on Grants.gov in April 2018. Pre-application and application deadlines will be available when the Program Announcements are released. **This pre-announcement should not be construed as an obligation by the Government, and funding of research projects received in response to these Program Announcements is contingent on the availability of Federal funds appropriated for the MSRP.**

As directed by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, the Defense Health Agency (DHA), J9 Research and Development Directorate manages the Defense Health Program (DHP) Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation (RDT&E) appropriation. The managing agent for the anticipated Program Announcements/Funding Opportunities is the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP).

Applications submitted to the FY18 MSRP must address at least one of the following **Focus Areas:**

**1) Obstacles to Remyelination and/or Obstacles to Axonal Protection in MS**

- Examples of acceptable studies include, but are not limited to, the roles of inhibitory factors, trophic factors, cell-cell interactions, and cell intrinsic factors.
- Utilization and/or development of models that reflect the disease progression and translational approaches to evaluate benefit are encouraged.

Note: Projects addressing the basic mechanisms of demyelination and neurodegeneration, inflammation or prevention of secondary injury following inflammation will not be considered for funding.

**(2) Correlates of Disease Activity and Progression in MS**

Studies may identify or validate correlates of disease activity and progression using pre-existing specimens and/or data acquired from well-characterized, adequately controlled, and sufficiently powered patient cohorts.

- Correlates include clinical outcome measures, patient self-reported measures, and imaging and non-imaging biomarkers.
- Examples of acceptable cohorts for study include controlled clinical trials, observational studies, and registries. Analyses may utilize existing clinical data and outcome measures, specimens, and/or imaging data.

Note: The study must leverage pre-existing specimens and/or data that are available at the time of application submission; collection of additional data on the existing cohort is allowed.

**(3) Biology and Measurements of MS Symptoms (Exploration – Hypothesis Development Award *ONLY!*)**

- Symptoms may include pain, fatigue, cognitive dysfunction, visual impairment, motor impairment, impaired mobility, loss of bladder control, sexual dysfunction, depression, and anxiety.
- Examples of acceptable studies include, but are not limited to, the following: development of measurements for future interventional studies to alleviate symptoms, rehabilitation, mechanisms underlying symptoms of MS, development and/or validation of outcome measures and tools for symptoms, and observational studies on the prevalence or significance of symptoms.

Note: Studies of disease-modifying or regenerative therapies that secondarily impact symptoms will not be considered for funding.

### **Exploration - Hypothesis Development Award**

Independent investigators at or above the level of Assistant Professor (or equivalent)  
All applications submitted in this funding opportunity **must** address at least one of the following Focus Areas:

**(1) Obstacles to Remyelination and/or Obstacles to Axonal Protection in MS**

**(2) Correlates of Disease Activity and Progression in MS**

**(3) Biology and Measurements of MS Symptoms**

- **Pre-application submission is required; application submission is by invitation only.**
- Supports the initial exploration of innovative, high-risk, high-gain, and potentially groundbreaking concepts in the MS research field.
- Preliminary data not required.
- Maximum funding of **\$150,000** for direct costs (plus indirect costs)
- Maximum period of performance is **2** years
- Clinical trials not allowed.

### **Investigator-Initiated Research Award**

Independent investigators at or above the level of Assistant Professor (or equivalent)  
All applications submitted in this funding opportunity **must** address at least one of the following Focus Areas:

**(1) Obstacles to Remyelination and/or Obstacles to Axonal Protection in MS**

**(2) Correlates of Disease Activity and Progression in MS**

- **Pre-application submission is required; application submission is by invitation only.**
- Supports highly rigorous, high-impact research with the potential to make an important contribution to MS research and/or patient care.
- Preliminary data required.
- Maximum funding of **\$600,000** for direct costs (plus indirect costs)
- Maximum period of performance is **3** years
- Clinical trials not allowed.

A pre-application is required and must be submitted through the electronic Biomedical Research Application Portal (eBRAP) at <https://eBRAP.org> prior to the pre-application deadline. All applications must conform to the final Program Announcements and General Application Instructions that will be available for electronic downloading from the Grants.gov website. The application package containing the required forms for each award mechanism will also be found on Grants.gov. A listing of all CDMRP funding opportunities can be obtained on the Grants.gov website by performing a basic search using CFDA Number 12.420.

Applications must be submitted through the federal government's single-entry portal, [Grants.gov](https://Grants.gov). Submission deadlines are not available until the Program Announcements are released. For email notification when Program Announcements are released, subscribe to program-specific news and updates under "Email Subscriptions" on the eBRAP homepage at <https://eBRAP.org>. For more information about the MSRP or other

CDMRP-administered programs, please visit the [CDMRP website](http://cdmrp.army.mil) (<http://cdmrp.army.mil>).

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