Post-residency Clinical Fellowship
Frequently Asked Questions

As a premier funder of neurosurgical studies, the Neurosurgery Research & Education Foundation (NREF) focuses on providing fellowship funding in basic neuroscience and neurosurgical programs in North America.

Please read this document in its entirety prior to completing the application. After reviewing the application and the answers below, if you still have questions, please do not hesitate to contact the NREF via email grants@nref.org.

1. Can fellowship support be secured from more than one funding source?
   ▪ Funding for a fellowship awarded by the NREF through this program cannot be duplicated by any other outside funding source. For example, a $75,000 spine fellowship cannot receive funding from the NREF at $75,000 and a secondary funding source at $75,000; only one can be accepted. However, a $100,000 fellowship can receive funding from the NREF at $75,000 and $25,000 from a secondary source. If the institution receives funding from another source for a fellowship awarded by NREF through this program, the institution must notify the NREF immediately and return the fellowship funding. Notification must be sent to the NREF Office by email at grants@nref.org.

2. Who can apply?
   ▪ Any academic institution or group practice with an established neurosurgery residency program in North America that qualifies as a non-profit, charitable entity may apply. A for-profit entity is not eligible unless affiliated with a non-profit entity.

3. Is United States Citizenship a requirement for the fellow?
   ▪ No, fellows do not have to be U.S. citizens. However, a fellow must have satisfactorily completed an ACGME-accredited residency training program in neurological surgery (or the Canadian equivalent).
4. How many fellowships are funded each year?
   - The number of grants the NREF Post-residency Clinical Fellowship will fund depends upon the contributions from corporate supporters as well as the number of eligible applications received. The NREF is hopeful that the number of funded fellowships will meet or exceed past funding levels.

5. How can the Fellowship funds be used?
   - The grant is intended to cover the salary and benefits for the fellow first and some, if not all, related non-salary direct costs. Fellowship funds may not be used for indirect fellowship costs.

6. When would this fellowship grant start?
   - The grant period begins on July 1st and ends on June 30th of the funded academic year.

7. How can applications be submitted?
   - The application will be available only online beginning August 1st. It can be found at www.nref.org/en/GrantApplications.aspx/ using your AANS login.

8. What items are required to ensure an application is complete?
   - Letter of Accreditation from ACGME
   - If the fellowship is accredited by the Society of Neurological Surgeons Committee on Accreditation of Subspecialty Training (CAST), a certificate indicating CAST accreditation for neurologic surgery fellowship.
     - If your fellowship is not CAST accredited, an application for accreditation can be downloaded by clicking the following link: http://www.societyns.org/fellowships/snsaccreditationapplicationform.pdf
   - Biographical sketches for pertinent faculty members
   - IRS Non-Profit Status Determination letter, including Federal ID number.
   - All required fields are complete and application is signed

9. When is the application deadline?
   - The application must be submitted by midnight (Central Standard Time), October 1st.

10. Will applicants be notified that their application has been received?
    - Yes. An administrative review of applications will take place after October 1st. If you do not receive an email confirmation by October 15th, please email the NREF at grants@nref.org.

11. When will applicants be notified of the results of the selection process?
    - The Foundation expects to notify each applicant by March 15th, however, the public announcement will be contingent upon receipt of written confirmation from the awardees. The Foundation reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to extend the date to provide notification of awards.
12. How will applications be evaluated?
   - All applications for Post-residency Clinical Fellowships are reviewed and evaluated by a NREF committee. The committee considers, among other things, whether an applicant institution is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (“ACGME”) and whether the institution is accredited by the Society of Neurological Surgeons Committee on Accreditation of Subspecialty Training (“CAST”) in the particular subspecialty area for which it is applying. If a program is not CAST-accredited, it should demonstrate that it nonetheless satisfies the program requirements established by CAST in the particular subspecialty area for which it is applying.

13. Is fellowship accreditation by CAST required to qualify for funding by NREF?
   - No, but fellowship accreditation by CAST is considered by the committee and is strongly recommended
   - Applicants for NREF fellowship grants are required to identify whether their fellowship is CAST accredited. Programs that have applied for CAST accreditation but have not yet completed the process should provide the date their application was submitted and their current status in the accreditation process.

14. How many applications for fellowship funding can be submitted annually from one institution?
   - Institutions may apply for one fellowship per category per year.

15. How are the funds disbursed to the institution?
   - Fellowship grant payments will be made in three (3) increments:
     - 50% by the start of the fellowship (July)
     - 40% in January
     - 10% after final reports are received (see below)

16. What reporting is required?
   - An interim summary report is required to be submitted by the fellow describing his/her experience along with a current accounting of funds within 180 days of the start of the fellowship
   - A final summary report is required by the fellow describing his/her experience along with a final accounting of funds. These reports are due within 40 days of the conclusion of the fellowship. All final reports must be submitted electronically to grants@nref.org.
   - Ten percent (10%) of the grant funds will be withheld until the reports referenced above are received by the NREF. Upon receipt of both reports, the remaining withheld funds will be sent to the grantee institution.

17. What are the accounting requirements?
   - At the conclusion of the fellowships, any unexpended balance of $100 or more must be refunded to the Foundation within forty-five (45) days together with the report of expenditures and accompanying documentation.
Separate accounting of the fellowship grant funds should be maintained at the receiving institution. These accounts, with appropriate and related invoices and payroll information, must be available at all times to NREF representatives.

18. What is the policy on delinquent financial/research reports?
- The Foundation reserves the right to deny additional fellowship grants to any institution where, after proper notification, a fellow has not submitted his/her final reports, and/or the financial officer has not submitted the final report of expenses, as required by NREF. Further, the NREF will not issue final payments to institutions until both reports are received.

19. How should NREF be referenced in publications or presentations?
- The NREF encourages publication of research findings by fellows, but requires that the NREF is cited as a source of support on the first page of the text. In the first usage, reference “Neurosurgery Research & Education Foundation” and “NREF” thereafter.
- When a fellow presents a paper at a professional scientific meeting concerning research findings made during the course of an NREF funded fellowship, the NREF must be cited prior to the beginning of the presentation.
- The NREF should be sent reprints of all papers and publications, including any electronic papers or publications, resulting from work done during the course of a fellowship, even those that appear after the fellowship has concluded.

20. Why are companies working with the NREF on fellowship grant funding?
- Agreements like this with the NREF are intended to help companies support high-quality education and training in neurosurgery in an independent and transparent manner.
- By contracting with the NREF to administer the fellowship grant program, companies are also able to reduce staff time and related internal costs that are associated with the fellowship grant process. Under the terms of agreement, the NREF is responsible for all aspects of the fellowship grant program, including but not limited to the review and approval of grant applications.