



endMS Scholar Program for Researchers IN Training (SPRINT)

2024-2025 Program and Application Guidelines

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Deadline date: February 15, 2024 at 4:00 pm EST

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These program guidelines have been prepared to provide information about the 2024-2025 endMS Scholar Program for Researchers IN Training (SPRINT), one of the endMS National Training Programs.

While every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this document is current, the endMS National Training Program (NTP) reserves the right to modify policies and/or make changes to the program and/or requirements as required. The electronic version of this document, available online, is the most current and should always be used for reference.

Welcome to the endMS Research and Training Network

MS Canada launched the endMS Research and Training Network in 2006 through funds related to the MS Scientific Research Foundation as the flagship investment of the \$60 million endMS capital campaign. The endMS Network has grown a dynamic community of researchers, clinicians and trainees with diverse interests and expertise. As an interdisciplinary group, the network includes a range of disciplines such as cellular and physiological sciences, health care, epidemiology, neuroscience, genetics, pharmacology, rehabilitation, immunology, imaging, sociology, education, applied psychology as well as nursing science.

The NTP is an initiative of the endMS Network aimed to enhance knowledge and skills relevant to MS research, foster opportunities to conduct MS research in Canada and increase the intent amongst trainees to pursue MS research for the long term. The NTP has two main components: endMS Summer School and endMS Scholar Program for Researchers IN Training (SPRINT). It is led by Dr. Christina Wolfson, the Program Director, and Co-Directors: Drs. Marcia Finlayson and Nathalie Arbour, and funded via a directed grant from MS Canada.

Welcome to endMS SPRINT

We are pleased that you are considering joining the program and are excited about the prospects of learning and working together with you to expand the community of trainee researchers who, over time, will become experts and leaders in the field of MS research.

The information in these program guidelines will help you determine if you are eligible for SPRINT and if so, will assist you in preparing an application. To apply for the program, please refer to the online application guidelines available on page 6 of this guide.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

SPRINT is a national training program aimed to enhance knowledge and skills related to MS research among trainees and increase opportunities to conduct MS research in Canada.

Applicants should consider the added value the program would provide them over and above their current training program. It is anticipated that applicants will most likely have completed the required coursework in their respective academic programs and be able to devote the necessary time to the participation requirements of SPRINT.

Trainees enrolled in endMS SPRINT will:

1. Participate in the next **two** consecutive [endMS Summer Schools](#).
2. Receive [travel awards](#) to attend:
 - a. the 2024 and 2025 endMS Summer Schools
 - b. small team mentored meeting(s)
3. Participate in an [interdisciplinary learning project](#).
4. Be assigned a SPRINT mentor and participate in [team mentored learning](#).
5. Receive a [SPRINT stipend](#) of \$ 2,500.

Duration: 13 months starting in June 2024 and ending June 2025

Time commitment required: 2 weeks (endMS Summer Schools) plus approx. 8-10 hours per month (over the period between the two Summer Schools)

Approximate monetary value of SPRINT per trainee including the stipend: \$ 11,000

Description of Program Components

endMS Summer School

The endMS Summer School is an annual interactive education program that aims to enhance knowledge and skills in MS research among applicants at the graduate and postdoctoral/clinical fellowship levels. Attendance at the Summer School is not restricted to SPRINT trainees. **SPRINT and Summer School have separate application and review processes and timelines.** Unsuccessful SPRINT applications will **not** automatically be considered for acceptance into the 2024 endMS Summer School. **SPRINT applicants are advised to also apply separately for the 2024 endMS Summer School so that if the SPRINT application is unsuccessful, SPRINT applicants can be considered for admission to Summer School.**

The endMS Summer School enables trainees from a variety of disciplines to come together in a small group setting to learn about MS relevant research topics. The Summer School's small group sessions are designed to facilitate networking, collaboration and information exchange among participants. While the focus alternates between basic science one year and clinical and population health research the next, sessions are developed to be of interest to all trainees irrespective of their background training. Emphasis is placed on creating an interdisciplinary agenda that strives to offer participants a more comprehensive understanding of the topic being discussed.

More information including the theme, objectives and the application process for the **2024 endMS Summer School, being held from June 10 to 13 at the University of Manitoba** is available at:
www.endmstrainingprogram.ca/summerschool

Travel Awards

If travel is permitted, travel awards will be provided for SPRINT trainees to attend the 2024 and 2025 endMS Summer Schools. Trainees may also receive funding to attend a small group mentored meeting to work on their interdisciplinary learning project.

An interdisciplinary learning project and team mentored learning

A goal of the interdisciplinary learning projects is to provide trainees with the unique opportunity to expand their areas of research interest in a structured way under the supervision of a mentor and in collaboration with one or more co-trainees from different disciplines. Knowledge dissemination from the projects include the development and distribution of an information brochure for people living with MS and researchers; an article for publication, preparation of an educational newsletter or presentation for people living with MS, etc.

Based on the information provided in the application, teams of three or four trainees from different disciplines will be partnered with a SPRINT mentor (established MS researcher) by the National Training Program and SPRINT Committee. The SPRINT mentors will develop and guide the interdisciplinary project. The SPRINT trainee teams will work on the project with their SPRINT mentor during the period between the two endMS Summer Schools. The project should require approximately 8 hours of work per month and will be developed, supervised, and assessed by the SPRINT mentor.

For a complete list of the interdisciplinary learning projects completed by past SPRINTers, go to the SPRINT page at www.endmstrainingprogram.ca/SPRINT

The 2023-2024 SPRINT teams are working on the following projects:

- A review of comorbidity etiology in MS
- Enhancing patient engagement through science communication
- Building a real-world evidence strategy to inform MS care

As part of the interdisciplinary learning project, trainees will be expected to have one face to face small group mentored meeting with their SPRINT mentor and will be required to present a brief oral presentation on their projects at the 2025 endMS Summer School.

endMS SPRINT Stipend

For the time devoted to SPRINT, trainees will receive a stipend of \$ 2,500. Half of the stipend will be paid in October 2024 and the remainder upon the successful completion of the program following the 2025 endMS Summer School.

Learning Outcomes

SPRINT trainees can expect to expand and strengthen their knowledge and skills in several areas of competence, which may include:

- Written and oral communication;
- Ethical and scholarly research;
- Interpersonal, team and leadership development;
- Multi-disciplinary knowledge exchange; and
- Knowledge and skills related to MS research.

Eligibility

To be eligible, applicants **must be in one** of the following situations:

- enrolled full time in a graduate program at a Canadian university
- be a postdoctoral fellow or a clinical fellow at a Canadian university and have completed a PhD in the last 4 years or less at the time of the application
- completed graduate training and currently enrolled in an undergraduate program (e.g. M.D. program) at a Canadian university

Applicants who are accepted into SPRINT must be enrolled in a program with full time status during their participation in SPRINT (June 2024 to June 2025).

If you have any questions regarding eligibility, contact Anik Schoenfeldt: anik.schoenfeldt@affiliate.mcgill.ca

PREPARATION AND REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

Application procedure Please review the Application Procedures on page 6, for complete instructions.

Deadline: The deadline for completed applications is **February 15, 2024 at 4:00 pm EST**. Incomplete applications and/or applications that arrive after the deadline will not be accepted.

SELECTION PROCESS

Participation in SPRINT is based on a competitive application process. Applications will be reviewed by the endMS Peer Review Committee and selected based on many factors including: the added value of the program to the applicant over and above their current training program, reference letter, education and research experience, publications, as well as where they see themselves in 5-10 years' time. Preference may be given to applicants who hold Canadian citizenship or permanent resident status.

Anticipated Notice of Decision: Mid-April 2024

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

SPRINT trainees are expected to:

- Participate in the next two consecutive endMS Summer Schools.
- Participate in an interdisciplinary learning project (approximately 8-10 hours per month).
- Meet and establish a schedule with their SPRINT mentor to discuss their progress and obtain feedback.
- Participate in face to face team meeting (if able).

- Participate in the SPRINT evaluation process which aims to provide information to enhance the program and assess its impact.
- Present on their interdisciplinary learning project at the 2025 endMS Summer School.
- Complete brief program progress reports.
- Keep the endMS Program Manager apprised of any changes to their contact information.

SPRINT participants who do not meet the terms and conditions may be asked to leave the program.

SPRINT Alumni

Follow-up on SPRINT trainees after they graduate from the program is an important part of the program evaluation and thus trainees are urged to keep the endMS Education and Training Office apprised of their contact information after completing the program.

Go to <https://www.endmstrainingprogram.ca/newsletters> to view the latest *endMS Spotlight on the Future* newsletter including interviews with SPRINTers, mentors and alumni updates.

Feedback received from former SPRINTers about their experience in the program:

"It helped me to better understand the very different ways that a disease affects a persons' life. It's not just the physical aspect, but all the social implications. This experience has given me a better perspective on the kind of research I would like to do."

"The interdisciplinary projects encourage trainees to explore MS-related topics outside of their own field with an interdisciplinary group of colleagues. This interaction fosters the development of a variety of skills that are crucial to conducting meaningful research, and that can often not be obtained in individual academic programs."

"Participating in SPRINT was a logical next step in my training as I had been involved in MS research for several years, I was excited to learn about the different dimensions of multiple sclerosis addressed outside of my own field of study and to work with people from other disciplines who were approaching MS research with a unique perspective."

"Nowhere else could you enroll in a yearlong adventure especially designed to enhance essential research skills. Through communication workshops, networking activities and multidisciplinary projects, the program provides young researchers with the tools they need to promote their research and to make a significant contribution to the global scientific MS community."

"The overall experience was remarkable. Attending two endMS Summer Schools gave me a nice overview of the state of MS research in Canada both from a fundamental and clinical perspective. I also learned about many different aspects of the disease and developed an integrated vision of my current research interests."

"I think our project has the potential to really help people with MS in their daily lives... I have not only gained confidence in my ability to see a project through to completion, present in public and work as a team but have also developed potential research collaborations. I feel honoured to be a part of this unique network."

This section highlights components of the online application process and provides a description of what is required in order to submit an online application.

Online Application Procedure

The endMS National Training Program uses MS Canada's (MSC) online research grants and awards management system that enables trainees to submit and review applications. MSC uses a grants and awards management system called **ProposalCentral**, which can be accessed through the following website: <https://proposalcentral.com>

IMPORTANT:

Interested applicants **must create a profile on ProposalCentral** through which they can complete the application process. Important things to note:

If you have already created a profile and forgot your login information, click on the “Forgot Your Password?” link. If you have any difficulties registering, logging in, or creating your application, contact ProposalCentral customer support at: 800-875-2562 (Toll-free U.S. and Canada) or by email at pcsupport@altum.com See the ProposalCentral [FAQ](#) for additional information.

For new applicants, ensure that you complete your Professional and Institutional Profiles before starting an application. Completion of the following sections in your Professional Profile is mandatory: Contact Information, Degrees, Personal Data, and Account Information.

Applicants are required to connect their ORCID identifier, a persistent and unique digital identifier, to the ProposalCentral profile. ORCID will connect your iD with your professional information (e.g., grants, publications, funding, etc.). If you don't have an ORCID, you can easily create one in a few minutes.

Please ensure that your contact information (institution, address, phone number, e-mail) are correct and up to date.

Please review the endMS SPRINT Program Guidelines carefully prior to submitting an application. If you have any questions regarding eligibility, please contact anik.schoenfeldt@affiliate.mcgill.ca.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all guidelines are followed and the submitted application contains all required components.

Deadline: The deadline for completed applications is **February 15, 2024 at 4:00 pm EST**.

Applications that are incomplete, do not adhere to the format and assigned PAGE LIMITS, or are submitted AFTER the deadline will be automatically disqualified from the competition.

The endMS National Training Program accepts applications in French. French applications might be translated into English for Reviewer's convenience.

endMS SPRINT APPLICATION

To start your application, login to your ProposalCentral account, click on the Grant Opportunities button at the top right hand corner, and enter “MS Canada” in the search box. You must apply to the program called “endMS SPRINT”.

Below is a list of required information and documents as part of the endMS SPRINT application. Satisfactory completion and submission of all documents is required for consideration in the competition.

1. TITLE PAGE

This section contains the following fields that must be completed in ProposalCentral.

Program: Choose SPRINT 2024-2025 from the dropdown menu.

2. DOWNLOAD TEMPLATES & INSTRUCTIONS

The endMS SPRINT Program and Application Guidelines can be downloaded. See Section 8 for instructions on how to complete and upload the templates provided

3. ENABLE OTHER USERS TO ACCESS THIS PROPOSAL

This section is optional and not necessary.

4. APPLICANT/PI

Enter **your name**, institution, program details, and contact information directly into ProposalCentral. Some information may be pre-populated from your profile; please update the information as required.

5. INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND ACCESSIBILITY

The endMS National Training Program (NTP) is committed to fostering a research environment that respects and values diversity and provides equal opportunity for everyone. The collection of self-identification data is driven by this commitment. A harmonized self-identification data collection process allows the governance of the NTP to assess and to monitor the performance of its programs in relation to equity, diversity and inclusion.

The questionnaire is primarily based on the current Statistics Canada census standard, as well as the Employment Equity Act.

Please note that answering these questions is entirely voluntary. Choosing not to answer any or all of these questions will have no bearing on our application for Summer School or for SPRINT and indeed only aggregate data will be reported.

All information collected is kept strictly confidential by the NTP and will be used for statistical purposes only. Your name will not be attached to this questionnaire and it will not be shared with the Review Committee.

6. INSTITUTION

Enter your institution information directly into ProposalCentral. Some information may be pre-populated from your profile; please update the information as required.

7. KEY PERSONNEL

Enter the name(s) and email address(es) of your supervisor or co-supervisors.

8. LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

Provide the e-mail address of your supervisor. **Please ensure that you verify the e-mail address prior to entering into ProposalCentral.** The "Send E-mail" function will send a notification of your application to your supervisor via e-mail. The e-mail will contain instructions and a link to upload the Letter directly to the application. All Letters of Recommendation **must be on Institutional letterhead, dated, and signed by the referee.** The letter must also be submitted in the same language as the application (French or English). Letters of Recommendation are kept confidential and will not be visible to applicants although they will be able to track if they have been submitted.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all documents are submitted by the deadline. Please notify your supervisor as early as possible to give them sufficient time to submit their Letter of Recommendation. Letters of Recommendation submitted after the application deadline may result in disqualification of the application.

9. EDUCATION AND TRAINING (required; maximum length: 1000 words)

Please provide a summary of your education and training to date as they apply to the field of multiple sclerosis research and/or MS clinical care. Include your current position and where you see yourself in 5-10 years. Please provide a description of how you anticipate that the overall endMS program experience and SPRINT specifically, will contribute to your education and training goals as well as how it will facilitate your career goals.

Current Training (required)

Please enter the details of your **current training in progress** including the start date and expected date of completion.

If in transition, also enter the degree/fellowship applied for, the department, the institution and expected date of completion.

10. UPLOAD ATTACHMENTS

To be eligible, the following documents must be uploaded. Do NOT upload any password protected, secured or encrypted documents as they will not upload properly to your application.

Required Uploads	Template Availability
Required Signatures	Yes
Supervisor Letter of Recommendation (blind)	*Instructions will be provided to Supervisor
Transcripts	No
Common CV	No

Required Signatures: Signatures of the applicant and supervisor are required. Electronic signatures will be accepted. A template is provided in Section 2.

Transcripts (required)

Provide the most up-to-date **official** transcripts of your academic record as follows: *If official transcripts are delayed, the NTP will accept unofficial transcripts from SPRINT applicants as part of this online application. Please note, official transcripts will be required at a later date.*

Following completion of a graduate degree, applicants enrolled in an MD program are required to provide: Prior graduate program (PhD or MSc) transcripts and current medical school transcripts

Applicants enrolled in a Residency program are required to provide: Medical school transcripts

Applicants enrolled in a MSc program are required to provide: MSc and undergraduate transcripts

Applicants enrolled in a PhD program are required to provide: PhD transcript AND MSc transcripts (if applicable) or undergraduate transcripts

Applicants enrolled as Postdoctoral Fellows are required to provide: PhD transcripts

Applicants enrolled as Clinical Fellows are required to provide: Medical school transcripts

IMPORTANT:

- i. The **official** transcripts must be provided by scanning both sides of each page and uploading them as a document in the online application.

- ii. Applicants who have attended international institutions are required to submit a certified true copy of their official transcript in English or French. Transcripts in a language other than English or French must be translated to one of these two languages. Students must submit a certified true copy of the translation. A certified true copy is a duplicate of an original document that has been verified as true by a commissioner of oath, such as a notary or lawyer. The certified true copy must bear the original signature and stamp of the official authority.

Candidate's Common Curriculum Vitae: CCV (required)

Applicant CV: MSC requires that each applicant submit their CV using the **Common CV format**. The template can be found at <https://ccv-cvc.ca>. Applicable areas are highlighted in the online form. Please note the following steps:

o Choose "MS Canada" as the agency and select the "Personnel" template. Enter all relevant and necessary information and click "Done". Review the CCV data online via a preview of the PDF and submit when complete. Record the confirmation number that is displayed with the status message (which can also be found under the "History" tab and on the first page of the CCV PDF). Save the Common CV to your Desktop and upload it in ProposalCentral. Please **do not submit a draft of your CCV**.

The following sections of the CCV must be completed:

- o **Education and Degrees:** Every degree, including Bachelor's, Master's and Doctorate, must be recorded whether they are complete or in progress. Indicate **In Progress**, if the degree has not been obtained at the time of application. Also include the following information: Degree Type, Degree Name, Specialization, Organization, Degree Status, Degree Start Date (YYYY/MM), Degree Received Date / Degree Expected Date (YYYY/MM) (if applicable), Supervisor(s) (if applicable).
- o **Recognitions:** Indicate any recognitions received, including honours, distinctions, prizes, awards (competitive or not, monetary or not, declined, etc.) and citations.
- o **Employment, Leaves of Absence and Impact on Research:** Explain any gaps in your experience. Please describe any special considerations that have had an effect on your performance or productivity, if applicable. Include any considerations that may have resulted in delays in disseminating your research results, such as health problems, family responsibilities, disabilities or other circumstances.
- o **Activities:** Include both academic and non-academic activities and contributions and define impacts.
- o **Contributions:** Include publications (both peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed), poster and/or oral presentations at conferences, and commercialization activities and intellectual property, if applicable.

11. VALIDATE

REVIEW AND SUBMISSION

Please review the application in full before submitting. Select "Validate" to check for any missing required information or files. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure the submitted application is complete, contains all required components, and adheres to the format and page or character limits assigned

12. APPLICATION PDF

After you complete all the proposal sections, click one of the download buttons to open and download the application pages.

Before downloading, please use the 'Validate' option (in the navigation menu) to verify that you have entered all the required information.

13. SUBMIT

Changes cannot be made to an application once it is submitted. Select “Submit” to complete the submission. You will receive a confirmation email of your submission.

QUESTIONS, ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

For questions related to site technical support, contact ProposalCentral customer support at: 800-875-2562 (Toll-free U.S. and Canada) or by email at pcsupport@altum.com. Hours of operation are Monday – Friday between 9:00 to 16:00 ET.

For all inquiries related to the endMS SPRINT program competition, please direct questions to anik.schoenfeldt@affiliate.mcgill.ca. Hours of operation for administrative support are Monday - Friday from 9:00 to 16:00 ET

The NTP accepts applications in French; please follow the French guidelines on the French [SPRINT page](#).

IMPORTANT NOTE: Unsuccessful SPRINT applications will **not** automatically be considered for acceptance into the 2024 endMS Summer School. There is a separate review process for each competition. **SPRINT applicants are advised to also submit an application for the 2024 endMS Summer School so that if the SPRINT application is unsuccessful SPRINT applicants can be considered for admission to 2024 endMS Summer School.**