

# **Strength, Science, and Stories of Inspiration (SSSI)-MDA Fellowship for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars**

## **Program Description:**

On behalf of Strength, Science, and Stories of Inspiration and the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA), we are excited to announce a new research funding mechanism for graduate students and postdoctoral trainees working in the muscle disease field. The SSSI-MDA fellowship will be targeted towards creative individuals with high-risk, high-reward ideas that have the potential to unlock new therapeutic avenues for combating muscular dystrophy. Seed grant money will be used to defray the cost of reagents, and NOT for trainee's salary.

## **Eligibility**

A successful applicant will be a graduate student or postdoctoral fellow working in the lab of a mentor at an accredited university in the United States, have published at least one first-author publication, and will provide a statement demonstrating that they have secured financial support for the duration of the award period, through either their mentor's funding sources or other personal awards.

## **Application instructions:**

1. 3-page research strategy, including specific aims (~0.5 pages), significance & innovation (~0.5 pages), and research plan (~2 pages). Expected results and alternative approaches should be included in the research strategy. Although preliminary data is not a required component, applications demonstrating technical feasibility are desirable. Figures may be included but must be contained within the page limit. Margins must be at least 0.5 inches, and font size for text at least 11 (text in Figures may be smaller).
2. Curriculum Vitae.
3. Document declaring source of funding for salary, signed by the applicant and their associated Principal Investigator (PI).
4. Two letters of support, one of which must be from the applicant's PI. In cases of co-mentorship, there must be a letter from both PIs mentoring the applicant, along with a third letter. Letter(s) from the PI must clearly state how the laboratory will be supportive of the applicant pursuing this line of investigation.
5. Expected budget and budget justification for anticipated reagents and a timeline for completing each aim of the proposal (1 page maximum).

## **Financial award and terms of use:**

The winner will be awarded a \$20,000 grant per year for two years to be used for reagents outlined in the expected budget. A maximum of 10% of the funds may go to indirect costs at the host institution. A 2-page progress report will be required at the end of the first year, and a final 2-page report will be required at the end of the project. The winner may be asked to describe their work at future Strength, Science & Stories of Inspiration events.

## **Deadline and submission:**

All applications will be due on March 1, 2017. Funding will begin on August 1, 2017. Please submit applications via email to [strengthscienceandinspiration@gmail.com](mailto:strengthscienceandinspiration@gmail.com).

## **Criteria for Selection:**

The winner will be selected primarily based on their research proposal, previous scientific accomplishments, and commitment of the laboratory to support completion of the project. Applications that are especially innovative, and/or provide a path for the applicant to venture into a new direction and secure additional future funding or independence will be prioritized. All applications will be reviewed by an independent panel of scientists. Their recommendations will be incorporated into a final decision by organizers of Strength, Science & Stories of Inspiration, as well as staff from MDA.