# Susan S. Spencer, MD Clinical Research Training Scholarship in Epilepsy

Funded by the American Epilepsy Society, Epilepsy Foundation, and American Brain Foundation

In collaboration with the American Academy of Neurology

Application Deadline: September 10, 2024

**This two-year award supports clinical research training in the field of epilepsy. It is hoped that this program, targeting clinicians who are fellows or new faculty, will foster the development of clinical care providers interested in pursuing careers in patient-oriented research. The late Susan Spencer, MD, an internationally renowned epileptologist, exemplified the qualities of a clinician-investigator. The award recognizes the importance of good clinical research and encourages young investigators in clinical studies in epilepsy.**

The award will consist of a commitment of $65,000 per year for two years, plus a $10,000 per year stipend to support education and research-related costs for a totalof $150,000. Supplementation of the award with other grants is permissible, but to be eligible to apply for this award, the other grant source(s) cannot exceed $75,000 annually.

*The American Academy of Neurology is firmly committed to embracing the diversity among our members, applicants, and reviewers and affirms the importance of equity and inclusiveness within the AAN research program.*

## HOW TO APPLY

1. Visit AAN.com/ResearchProgram
2. Go to "Clinical Research Training Scholarship"
3. Select "Apply now"

**Please only submit one application - applicants are not allowed to submit applications for more than one award. Your application will also be considered for all relevant clinical research training scholarship awards.**

Visit the Frequently Asked Questions portion of the website for more information.

## IMPORTANT DATES

September 10, 2024: Application deadline – Note that this is the deadline for all documents, including those from the mentor and chair. Applicationswill be declined if this information is not submitted by September 10.
January 2025: Notification of recipients
July 1, 2025: Funding begins

## ELIGIBILITY

1. For the purpose of this scholarship, research is defined as "patient-oriented research conducted with human subjects, or translational research specifically designed to develop treatments or enhance diagnosisof neurologic disease. These areas of research include epidemiologic or behavioral studies, clinical trials, studies of disease mechanisms, the development of new technologies, and health services and outcomes research." Disease-related studies not directly involving humans or humantissue are also encouraged if the primary goal is the development of therapies, diagnostic tests, or other tools to prevent or mitigate neurological diseases.
2. Recipient must be an AAN member interested in an academic career in neurologic research with a MD, PhD or equivalent doctoral-level clinical degree who has completed clinical residency or PhD no more than 5 years to the beginning of this award (July 1, 2025). If you have completed both residency and a PhD, your eligibility is based on when you completed residency. If you completed a fellowship of any kind after residency, your eligibility is still based on the date you finished residency.
3. At the time of application, applicants can be epilepsy fellows, postdoctoral fellows, or newly appointed junior faculty members (first two years of appointment). During the award period, it is acceptable for the candidate to be pursuing formal graduate coursework (e.g. MPH) as part of the 70 percent protected time for research.
4. Applicants at accredited US and international institutions are eligible.

## EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Applications are evaluated by reviewers based on the following criteria:

- Quality and originality of the research plan
- Applicant's ability and promise as a clinician-scientist based on prior record of achievement and career plan, and NIH Biosketch
- Quality and nature of the training to be provided and the mentor-specific, departmental, and institutional training environment
- Innovation of the research plan approach
- Project significance: the ability to progress the field or solve an important problem

## REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS FOR APPLICATION

1. PDF of Three-page Research Plan, including brief statements of aims, background, contemplated approaches to methodology and any supporting preliminary data/figures. References do not count toward the page limit. The research plan should be written by the applicant and should represent their original work. However, the applicant is expected and encouraged to develop this plan based on discussion with the proposed mentor. It is appropriate, but not required, for the proposed work to be specifically related to the mentor's ongoing research.
2. PDF of Applicant's NIH Biosketch. See this link for the most recent NIH Biosketch template.

Once the above information is fully completed and **submitted** by the applicant:

3. The **chair** will receive an email with a link asking them to check a box confirming that the applicant's clinical service responsibilities will be restricted to no more than 30 percent of your time and include a list of applicant's non-research related service. The chair will NOT be asked to submit a letter.
4. The **mentor** will receive an email with a link to submit a letter of referencedetailing their support of and commitment to the applicant and the proposed research and training plan. The letter should be 1,000 words or less and specifically indicate the mentor's role in the development and preparation of the applicant's research plan and should include:
   - How the proposed research fits into the mentor's research program
   - Expertise and experience in the area of research proposed and the nature of the mentor's proposed time commitment to the supervision and training of the applicant
   - Mentor's prior experience in the supervision, training, and successful mentoring of clinician scientists
   - Potential for applicant's future research career and comparison of applicant among other residents
5. The **mentor** will also be required to upload a NIH Biosketch.

A successful application should include the following:

- Well-developed hypothesis: The hypothesis is testable and presented in clear language.
- Detailed statistical plan: Statistical methods are well-designed and detailed.
- Strong mentorship: There is clear demonstration of strong mentorship to support the project.
- Feasible primary outcomes: Each aim is feasible, focused, and logical.
- Innovation: Project concept is original, novel, and will advance the applicant's long-term career goals.
- Well-defined training plan: There is a clear and gap-based career development plan.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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